

ATTEMPTS AT TRUTH.

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ATTEMPTS AT TRUTH.

BY

ST. GEORGE STOCK.

"Search on for truth—thy toil is sweet,
And sweet the brunt of hopeful strife :
One vision of her snowy feet
Is worth the labour of a life."

ANDREW G. WOOD.



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PREFACE.

MOST of these Essays have appeared before in various periodicals, and are now republished with the kind consent of the original editors. In particular, the article on "Theism" appeared in the *Westminster Review* for October, 1875, and that entitled "Berkeley and Positivism," in the *Theological Review* for July and October, 1879.

In the articles which deal with the subject of morals it will perhaps be felt that the writer is treading more or less in the steps of Mr. Herbert Spencer; nor is it out of any desire to disown an obligation to so great a thinker that the fact is here stated, that he had not at the time those articles were composed read any of Mr. Herbert Spencer's numerous works, except Part I. of "First Principles," on "The Unknowable." Doubtless that was enough to give a turn to thought; and the debt, though indirect, is not less real.

If this book has the good fortune to arrest attention at all, the feature in it which is most likely to excite hostility is the importance assigned to Spiritualism, and the amount of credit attached to its phenomena. Were the author so minded, he could abuse Spiritualism with perhaps a better

right than some of the loudest of its revilers, because his censure would be founded on the experience of imposture, and not on the gratuitous anticipation of it. But there are plenty of people found to perform that office, and the author has therefore thought that the interests of truth, on the whole, will be best served by his dwelling rather on the real claims which, after all deductions have been duly made, he is still convinced that this mysterious subject possesses to patient and respectful consideration.

The writer himself feels or fancies an organic unity pervading these Essays, which may not be so manifest to the reader. If the latter should be struck rather with discrepancies of thought or expression, let him mercifully bear in mind that the following pages are, as their name imports, Attempts at Truth, thrown out at various times and in various moods, and never intended as a formal exposition of a system.

OXFORD, 1st August, 1882.

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ATTEMPTS AT TRUTH.

THE TWO SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT.

COMMON-SENSE and Logic, paradoxical as it may sound, are seldom compatible. It is indeed a frequent remark that the profoundest thinkers and closest reasoners have too often been landed by their logic in outrageous absurdities. The ordinary man accepts facts because they are facts—and no better reason could he possibly have. The philosopher is sometimes tempted to reject them when they will not square with his theories. The oared-boat of Common-sense, which keeps to the river or lake or land-locked bay, may ply hither and thither as convenience prompts; but the stately ship of Speculation, traversing the high seas of thought, is not seldom hurried in by the strong wind of reasoning upon some lee-shore of unreality. We are safe in the humble bark of Common-sense, though it will not avail to carry us far from land; but, if we confine ourselves to it, we cannot hope to enrich our isle of experience with the products of distant realms of thought. The ill-success, so far as truth is concerned, of remorseless reasoners, who hunt down their conclusions with unerring instinct, must of course be due to the nature of their premisses. "True, but insufficient," is the verdict that has to be passed upon the main principles perhaps of every scheme of

philosophy. Nor does this inadequacy in the premisses from which thinkers start lie, as a rule, in mere numerical incompleteness, that is, in leaving certain facts altogether out of sight, but rather in taking a partial and confined view of the facts admitted—in giving preponderance to a single aspect of some truth, where others are equally possible and equally necessary. Truth, like beauty, depends chiefly upon proportion. Exaggerate a single feature, and you must needs caricature the expression. But harmonious balance is not the condition of human activity. The line of progress, whether ethical or intellectual, is not straight but zigzag. One party pushes too much to this side, their opponents too much to that; and between them the world gets on. It is only in the retrospect that proportion is attainable. In reviewing the speculations of an active era of thought we cannot guard too carefully against onesidedness, nor seek too painfully for the standpoint wherefrom different, and seemingly incongruous, views of the same subject may be found not mutually exclusive. In most great speculative controversies we are brought face to face with this difficulty, that many of the deductions from conflicting theories agree equally well with facts. Now though a true conclusion can be got out of false premisses, yet the probabilities are against its happening frequently. We must look for truth, therefore, on both sides; and till we can attain the point of view from which two theories, each of which agrees partially with facts, can be seen to harmonize, must provisionally put up with the appearance of contradiction. We may attain a surface kind of comprehensiveness by following common-sense and ignoring speculation; or we may be onesided and admirably logical; but it is difficult to be comprehensive and consistent too. There is room for faith even in philosophy. Discordances, which reason cannot reconcile, we may still believe reconcileable. Aristotle, a model of intellectual sobriety, saw this very clearly. He could not understand

the coexistence of opposite inclinations in the same soul; but the judgment he pronounces in the matter is "Perhaps we must accept it all the same."* Had he been called upon to justify this very pardonable dogmatism, he would doubtless have taken refuge in his naïve formula—"Now facts are manifestly possible: for otherwise they would not have been facts."†

Why is it that there is so much controversy about the nature of man, so little, comparatively, about lower grades of existence? Partly, no doubt, on account of the greater importance of the subject to ourselves, and because man is the most complex being we know; but chiefly because in this case we have two totally different standpoints of observation, whereas in the case of other beings we have but one. We may view man either from within or from without; and according to the direction of our mind at starting shall we fall in with one or other of the two main currents of thought. For, roughly speaking, we may divide the thinkers who have exercised their minds about the nature of man into two great classes, those, namely, who have looked within and those who have looked without. The former attitude of mind we may call Spiritualism, the latter Materialism. Widely different are the scenes presented to us from the two mounts of observation, the internal and the external.

If we look within, what meets our view? We find the one great reality to be, not matter, but mind. Matter is a mere affection of the percipient; its so-called "properties" at most but the whispers of a wind from without about the doors of consciousness. We find man to all appearance a fountain of causation, a free agent responsible to his own higher nature for his actions, or, in other words, under a mysterious obligation to direct those actions in accordance with the rule of right within. Thus the tendency of mind which we have denominated Spiritual-

* ἵσως δ' οὐδὲν ἦτον νομιστέον εἶναι.

† Τὰ δὲ γινόμενα φανερόν ἐστι δυνατό· οὐ γὰρ ἂν ἐγένετο εἰ ἦν ἀδυνατό.

ism leads to Idealism, to the doctrine of the Freedom of the Will, and, in the sphere of morals, to Intuitionism.

Let us now shift our standpoint and regard man from the outside. What meets our view? He is so many atoms of matter cunningly welded into an organism by the plastic hand of Nature—nothing more. Matter is now everything; mind only one of its properties. The percipient is a product of matter. Man is no fountain of causation now, no well of living water, but a mere channel for the passage of external forces. He is the creature of his antecedents and surroundings; his conduct is the result of circumstances; and his actions, taken in the mass, are subject to laws as strict as those which control the planets in their courses. The internal rule of right is now lost sight of, and we must look without for the explanation of moral distinctions, where we find it only in the experienced results of conduct. Thus the tendency of mind which we have denominated Materialism leads to ignoring everything but the physical nature of man, to the doctrine of Necessity, and, in the sphere of morals, to Utilitarianism.

Such are the different results we arrive at according as we look at man from within or from without. They are reached in what seems a perfectly legitimate way; there appears no flaw in the reasoning on either side; indeed, the only objection against holding the one set of doctrines is that there are equally powerful arguments for the support of the other. Unless then we are willing to stultify human reason our only resource is to suppose that the premisses on both sides are inadequate—that in each case there is some element left out of sight which is essential to catholicity.

A further distinction may also be observed between these two points of view. To look without can only tell us what is; we must look within for what ought to be. To the external or objective attitude is due our knowledge of the Real; it is the internal or subjective that is the

source of the Ideal. Moreover, as the Real cannot go beyond itself, while the Ideal, mirage-like, must be ever in advance, the outer point of view leads rather to investigation of man's origin, the inner to speculation on his destiny. Now the one is the essential condition for the successful prosecution of the other. Only by understanding the laws of his organization can man ascertain the fit direction for his energies; only by reviewing his progress in the past can he expect to accomplish his destiny in the future. Both points of view then are necessary; each is powerless without the other. Limit yourself to the external, the material, the real—and no breeze will waft you from the present; or limit yourself to the internal, the spiritual, the ideal—and you will lack the true compass for the future.

Spiritualism has been defined as "That Philosophy of Man, which regards him as he is to our knowledge, and not as he may be made to appear when considered analogically, or from the point of view of Material Science." We may gather from the very terms of the definition wherein lies the weakness of pure and simple Spiritualism. Do we not know in the case of the individual that the judgment he is led to form of himself in solitude is seldom a correct one? Let him go out into the world and rub against his fellows—he will find that many of the notions he had derived from self-absorbed contemplation were morbid in the extreme. So, if we would judge the race aright, we must not forget to judge it analogically. It may be answered that the comparison is not a fair one, since the race has no fellows—only inferiors. But even to mix with inferiors is better than to have no society at all, provided the notion of caste can be kept out. And this notion is fast giving way before the speculations of modern science; the doctrine of the "spiritual isolation" of man is being abandoned; it is now beginning to be recognized that brutes represent a stage which man has left behind in the progress of development. In all this

there is nothing degrading. What need to go wallow in the mire, even if we discover that we are sprung from slime? The question of man's dignity is not involved in his origin but in his destiny. He may be born in the stable and yet be the Heir of Heaven.

Both points of view then, as we said before, are necessary. It will not do to regard man either wholly from without or wholly from within. If we would gain a full idea of his nature we must contemplate it with equal attention on both sides. Undoubtedly it is difficult to harmonize the consequences that flow from the two views. But is this other than might have been expected? The circumference of a circle is at once convex and concave, and convexity and concavity have different, nay, opposite properties. Is it surprising that some discrepancies should be found between the appearance of man's nature from within and from without? It would seem indeed that whenever we get out into the deep waters of thought we are sure to come across some ominous reef which obliges us to deflect our course; to the right hand or to the left we may sail with safety, but if we attempt to steer straight ahead we shall infallibly split the bark of our logic. Yet the middle course is that which leads into harbour, and, deserting it, we must drift in shoreless seas. It is clear then we must submit ourselves to the exigencies of the voyage, avoid running against facts of existence, and make way as best we can from side to side. Let those make shipwreck who are ashamed to tack. Consistency must sometimes be sacrificed to truth. Both schools have much to teach us, and we must be willing to learn from both. One leads to truth here, another there. Only, in accepting in its proper place a given view, we must remember it is not the only one possible. So in ascending the hill of knowledge we shall best guard ourselves against stupidly discrediting accounts of scenery on the other side because they do not tally with our own observation. At last we

may reach such an elevation as shall enable us to command both prospects at once.

The philosophy which would embrace the whole nature and destiny of such a being as man, "half Deity, half dust," must be Janus-faced, "looking before and after," neither material only nor yet spiritual only. I do not mean that it should be a little of each. Man is not this part dust and that part Deity, but both in one. It is true that so long as our faculties remain what they are, the distinction between subject and object, between the self and the not-self, is insurmountable. But ere long Materialism and Spiritualism may find their reconciliation in some single aspect of the facts of consciousness; even as Ahrimanes and Ormuzd were found in the last resort to be sprung from a common parent.

We have seen that in the sphere of morals the issue of the outward tendency has been Utilitarianism, that of the inward tendency Intuitionism. From the time of Epicurus downwards Utilitarianism has shown affinities for physical science, while Intuitionism has been the offspring of metaphysic. The inward gaze reveals Man Spiritual, with the mysterious aspirations of the soul; the outward Man Mechanical—a creature impelled like others to the pursuit of its proper good.

In this sphere the reconciliation of the external with the internal view seems to offer least difficulty. Indeed, by many it is regarded as an accomplished fact. We may certainly say that Utilitarianism and Intuitionism, seemingly so opposite, are yet to so great an extent compatible as to encourage the expectation that Materialism and Idealism, and even Freedom and Necessity, may yet have their conflicting claims adjusted. Further, it is in this sphere that the incompleteness of either view without the other is most manifest.

It has been often pointed out and often lost sight of that there are two distinct problems in ethical science—one, "What is right?" The other, "Why must I do

what is right?" For a satisfactory answer to the former question we must look without; the latter can receive its answer only from within. Why, then, do moralists of the two schools ever wrangle? Or rather, why are there two schools at all? Partly because the matter is not nearly so simple as it seems at first sight, but partly also because the philosopher who looks without and the philosopher who looks within is equally prone to imagine that he has exhausted the field of inquiry when he has solved his proper problem. If the circle be convex, it is assumed that it cannot be concave too. How far the two problems are from trenching on one another's ground, and how necessary each view is, in this instance, at all events, as the complement of the other, a few moments' reflection suffices to show. For after we have taken the widest inductive sweep of human actions, and have determined what is the common element in all those which are considered right, we have not gained even the rudiments of an answer to the further inquiry, "Why must I do what is right?" The answer to that, if it is to come at all, must come from within; it is idle to expect it from without. Equally idle is it to expect an answer to the question "What is right?" from within. Not because in this case no answer will be returned, but because the answer supplied by one individual may differ widely from that of others. Now, to collect the answers of others and compare them with each other and with our own is to abandon the internal point of view; to reject them is to confine ourselves to a single instance, from which it is impossible to draw a safe conclusion.

To set up Utilitarianism and Intuitionism as rival ethical schools is much the same as to discuss whether morality rests on reason or feeling, whether it be more properly an affair of the head or the heart. This dispute may be settled to the satisfaction of both claimants. Neither the head alone nor the heart alone is sufficient.

The two must be wed before they can produce issue in right action and happiness. From reason comes light, from feeling life and motion. The function of reason is to bring particular cases under a general principle; that of feeling to decide upon the principle, and so determine action. Reason is the rudder of feeling. The man of mere impulse acts, and, as likely as not, acts wrongly. The man of pure reason, were such a being possible, would never act at all, but only speculate, if he could even do that without a motive.

The necessity of a union of head and heart has been proclaimed by more than one moralist; and, when not proclaimed, has perforce been tacitly recognized. Aristotle, "the acutest of mortals," as Macaulay calls him, has been very explicit on this point. In his scheme it is the means to an end only that are supplied us by reason. For the end itself we must look not to the intellectual but to the emotional side of human nature, where we discover the source of all moral action in the general desire for good,* which is the highest form taken by the passional part of man.† Hutcheson, again, the champion of "moral sense," was no mere partisan of feeling against reason. He resolved all virtue into the pursuit of others' happiness, which is to bring it under the domain of reason, maintaining merely that the obligation of benevolence was revealed to us by this moral sense. Hume lays down the same doctrine most explicitly. "Reason," he says, "instructs us in the several tendencies of actions, and humanity makes a distinction in favour of those which are useful and beneficial." Mill, too, in an often-quoted passage, shows himself clearly conscious of the same truth. "The internal sanction of duty, whatever our standard of duty may be, is one and the same—a feeling in our own mind; a pain, more or less intense, attendant on violation of duty, which in properly cultivated moral natures rises, in the more serious cases, into shrinking

* βούλησις.

† ἡρεξίς.

from it as an impossibility. This feeling, when disinterested, and connecting-itself with the pure idea of duty, and not with some particular form of it, or with any of the merely accessory circumstances, is the essence of Conscience. . . . The ultimate sanction, therefore, of all morality (external motives apart) being a subjective feeling in our own minds, I see nothing embarrassing to those whose standard is utility, in the question, what is the sanction of that particular standard? We may answer, the same as of all other moral standards—the conscientious feelings of mankind." Those who have reproached Mill with inconsistency on the score of this passage seem themselves to confuse the two questions, "What is right?" and "Why must I do what is right?"—the question of the standard with that of the sanction of duty. But we need not authority to prove that in all action, whether called moral or otherwise, it is feeling that moves, while the function of reason is to direct motion. The inutility of mere intellect apart from moral force, the danger of strong emotion undirected by reason, are discernible everywhere in history and life.

We may notice in passing the different degrees of esteem in which the two factors of moral action have been held in ancient and modern times. The conception formed of the Deity is a good criterion of the views of an age with regard to the hierarchy of the human faculties. If there be any one point on which modern theologians are agreed, it is that the moral nature of man is what chiefly unites him to Deity. With Aristotle, however, it was νοῦς or intelligence only that formed the link between God and man. The moral virtues were unworthy to be ascribed to God. On the other hand, numberless passages might be picked out from modern writers in which the superiority of the moral over the intellectual part of man's nature is taken for granted. Such an assumption passes unchallenged at the present day; but it would have greatly startled Plato. In those

moral virtues, which we are never weary of extolling, he saw a suspicious connection with the body, while he failed to detect any such secret understanding in the case of the intellect. The moral virtues, he tells us, are gained in a higgledy-piggledy sort of way by custom and practice, whereas intellect alone is in its essential nature eternal (*Rep.* 518, E). If Plato differs from Aristotle in ascribing such virtues as justice and benevolence to his Deity, it is only because he has already purified them from every alloy of the emotions, and brought them under the head of pure reason. Into this absurdity Aristotle does not fall. He acknowledges, as we have seen, that the motive-power in moral action is to be sought in the emotional part of man's nature; desire prompts to an end, and reason enables us to reach it. One might have thought that as the end is higher than the means, so the faculty which supplies the end would be placed by Aristotle above the faculty which supplies the means. But no; he prefers to degrade moral virtue rather than exalt the heart above the head. The change of feeling that has passed over the world in this respect may perhaps best be seen by a comparison of Plato and Comte, who may, each in his way, be considered spokesmen of the science of their age. How great the difference between the pretensions put forward by these philosophers on behalf of the intellect! In Plato's eyes speculation was void of merit except when pursued for its own sake; by Comte speculation for its own sake is bitterly denounced. Comte no doubt runs into a reactionary extreme. But the modern feeling is apparent even in the most strenuous supporters of the dignity of the intellect. Sir John Herschel, in repelling the charge of inutility against the studies of the natural philosopher, says—"He feels that there is a lofty and disinterested pleasure in his speculations which ought to exempt them from such questionings; communicating, as they do, to his own mind the purest happiness (after the exercise of

the benevolent and moral feelings) of which human nature is susceptible." The parenthesis here shows how much a matter of course it has now become for the head to bow to the heart.

In connecting the question of Utilitarianism and Intuitionism with the claims of the head and heart respectively to be considered the governing principle in man, no judgment is meant to be passed on the moral character of either school. The point of connection is this. Utilitarianism has, as we have seen, for its proper sphere the question, "What is right?" the answer to which is a matter for the intellect to determine; whereas the proper sphere of Intuitionism is the other question "Why must I do what is right?" to which no response can come except from the emotions.

Intuitionism, however, as a matter of fact, does not confine itself within the narrow range which we have mapped out for it, but claims to determine the standard as well as the sanction of duty. Its postulate is that there are not only certain motives but certain actions also whose rectitude is apparent to us by their own light independently of all reasoning whatsoever. It does not wait to bring all actions under one head, the benefit of the community, but declares that feeling stamps certain lines of conduct with direct approval, irrespective of consequences, and in defiance of the juggleries of reason which might seem to prove them useless or even prejudicial. The general characteristics of the two rival systems are described so forcibly by Mr. Lecky that it will be well to borrow his words. In the "History of European Morals" he says—"The moralists of the former (the intuitive) school, to state their opinions in the broadest form, believe that we have a natural power of perceiving that some qualities, such as benevolence, chastity, or veracity, are better than others, and that we ought to cultivate them and repress their opposites. In other words, they contend that, by the constitution of

our nature, the notion of right carries with it a feeling of obligation; that to say a course of conduct is our duty is, in itself, and apart from all consequences, an intelligible and sufficient reason for practising it; and that we derive the first principles of our duty from intuition. The moralist of the opposite school denies that we have any such natural perception. He maintains that we have by nature absolutely no knowledge of merit or demerit, of the comparative excellence of our feelings and actions; and that we derive these notions solely from an observation of the course of life which is conducive to human happiness. That which makes actions good is, that they increase the happiness or diminish the pains of mankind. That which constitutes their demerit is their opposite tendency. To procure 'the greatest happiness for the greatest number' is therefore the highest aim of the moralist, the supreme type and expression of virtue."

Strangely incompatible as these two accounts of morality sound, we must yet remember that they are the reports of men who occupy opposite points of view. The Internalist, from the nature of the case, confines his attention to the individual; the Externalist in his broad gaze comprehends the race. Now Intuitionism gives a correct representation of morality in relation to the individual, while Utilitarianism gives no less correct a representation of it in relation to the race.

The starting-point of ethical science is the existence of moral feelings. This is what every theory must take into account. When we turn our gaze in upon ourselves we cannot deny that there is a moral law written upon our hearts, that we have within us a secret, instinctive prompting to do this and to refrain from that, an autocratic voice of Conscience, holding sway amid the various impulses of our nature, commending this and reproofing that, and still acknowledged as of right divine, even when its authority is set at naught. To the individual morality

consists in obeying the law within. It is from this source that we derive the notion of Duty.

Again, when we look outside of ourselves, when we study man under various climes in various ages, we see that the qualities and actions which have in different circumstances been sanctioned under the name of Right are such as make, or have been supposed to make, for the general welfare; that morality rests upon a convention, never expressed and but half-understood; that it is the outcome of a semi-conscious effort to secure the good of society—a natural growth whose laws invite our study. In the last resort we recognize no common quality in the strangely different actions which have been considered right except their supposed utility, and we find that there is no method of disconnecting the idea of right from a line of conduct so sure as to convince men of its utter uselessness. To the race morality presents itself as the pursuit of Happiness.

Duty and Happiness, Conscience and Benevolence, Intuition and Reason—what battles have been fought under these opposing banners! But has not a fair adjustment of their claims been effected by the great doctrine, for the establishment of which the world is indebted to Mr. Herbert Spencer, that the experience of the race generates instincts in the individual? Bearing this principle in mind we may read through Mr. Lecky's words again, and accept both statements, though they are meant to be placed in such striking contrast. It is quite possible for us to believe that the race was originally void of all moral ideas—of all "knowledge of merit or demerit." Possessing, however, an appreciation of its own comfort and well-being, the inevitable result would be that such conduct in the individual as was perceived to promote that end would be approved, and its opposite condemned. Hence would arise moral sentiments, which, transmitted to the offspring as moral instincts, now give ground for the whole doctrine of Intuition. Of the

individual it is true to say that he has "a natural power of perceiving that some qualities are better than others, and that we ought to cultivate them and repress their opposites." Of the individual also it is true to say that the standard as well as the sanction of morality is to be found in Intuition and not in Experience; while for the race the standard is, and can only be, Utility.

WHY MUST I DO WHAT IS RIGHT?

IN the matter of morals the great practical difficulty is not so much to know what is right as to do it. Were every man guided habitually by the highest light of his calmer moods, the world would be a Paradise compared to what it is. Without overlooking the vast amount of evil that results from sheer ignorance—the untold misery inflicted with the best intentions in the world—it may still be allowed that if the will to do right were always present, the most important factor of human misery would be eliminated. Despite startling individual aberrations, there is, among civilized people, a tolerable unanimity as to what conduct is right and what wrong. It is few, indeed, who are ready with an opinion on the abstract nature of right and wrong, but in the main men agree on particular cases, where the passions do not interfere to bias them. To use logical language, they know the extension of the term “right” without knowing its intension. Unable to define “right” and “wrong,” they can yet recognize the individual acts to which these names apply.

We set out, then, from the existence of moral sentiments among mankind at large, or, at all events, the civilized portion of them.

Now, looking into the mind of the individual, we find these sentiments, however generated, existing in various degrees of force. As so found in particular men and women we may call them, for distinction's sake, moral feelings. The existence, then, of moral feelings, of ideas,

that is, of right and wrong, attached to particular lines of action, no one can deny. It is the initial fact of moral science. The Utilitarian, indeed, has been accused of denying it, but he may justly resent the charge. He does not deny the existence of such feelings, but only endeavours to account for their origin. Most things that we know of have had a beginning, and the Utilitarian thinks that moral feelings may have had one too. This the Intuitionalist regards as a profane violation of the sanctity of virtue, and therefore fights as *pro aris et focis* for the eternity and immutability of moral ideas, humming to himself, as he smites at his foe, the pious refrain, "As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be." We saw enough, on a previous occasion, of "The Two Schools of Thought," to lead us to expect this result. The natural tendency of Externalism, as was then remarked, is towards speculation on man's origin, which must be studied on the inductive method if it is to be studied at all. The Internalist, on the other hand, interrogating his own soul, receives an answer in the divine instincts which lead him to virtue. He finds moral feelings in existence, but gets no hint as to their origin. But while content to pause here himself, he should not frown on the adherent of the other method for pursuing his proper quest. No doubt his hostility arises from the belief that moral feelings must necessarily retain the character of the simpler elements out of which they are declared to have been evolved. But surely this is wholly a mistake! There are many noble things that have very dirty roots. Man may, indeed, be a fallen being, as theologians—Jewish, Neo-Platonist, and Christian—tell us, struggling to regain a lost perfection, but it certainly does not discord with what we otherwise know of the workings of the Supreme Energy to suppose that the human spirit, as we now find it, may have been developed upward out of the blind motions of animal instinct. Nor does this supposition derogate from its

dignity. The butterfly, to use a trite simile, is not less the beautiful denizen of air because it once crawled on the damp earth; and even so the soul, having acquired her moral and religious instincts, learns to soar into the light of heaven and bask in the sunshine of the smile of God. We can accept Evolution and not deny Spiritualism. Instead of being pained to trace the brute in man, we should hail the promise of man in the brute. "Sons of the ape, but sires of the angel," if we value not ourselves for what we are now, let us at least imitate the practice of those nations who reckon nobility backwards, from the child to the parent.

Setting out, then, from the existence of a sense of right and wrong in the breasts of ourselves and our fellows, the inevitable problems present themselves to us—

1. What is right?
2. Why must I do what is right?

We have to determine both the standard and the sanction of morality. Here are two unknown quantities. Let us imitate the method of algebra and assume one of them as known. Right, we will suppose, is what conduces to general happiness. The second question then resolves itself into this, Why are we bound to promote the good of all? We must sift this inquiry somewhat before we attempt an answer.

The good of all lends itself readily to a division into our own good and that of others. Granting, then, that right action is defined by utility, we may say there are two kinds of utility—self-interest and the world's welfare; and, corresponding to these two ends, there are two motives of action—self-love and love of others. If the two ends harmonize, well and good, but if not, and there is a common impression that they do not in all cases coincide, the question will arise, which end must give way to the other, and which motive must, in consequence, be preferred. We obtain, then, at starting, a twofold

division of the virtues, or modes of right conduct, into the self-regarding and the social. It is true there are no virtues the benefits of which are strictly confined to the individual. For that "no man liveth to himself" is a great truth which grows into clearer light with time. Nevertheless, there are certain lines of conduct which have a more direct and obvious bearing upon private welfare, and which we are therefore entitled to call the self-regarding virtues. What these are will be best determined by considering the sort of conduct which would be beneficial to the individual in a state of isolation. Let us picture to ourselves Robinson Crusoe in his lonely exile. What sort of conduct will befit him and merit our admiration? To begin with, he will need courage to face the dangers and brave the uncertainties of his position. This virtue, which is little insisted on now, being less to the interest of society than it was when states were smaller, was the first to come into prominence in early times. The incorruptible testimony of language declares it to have so overshadowed the rest as to have given its name to all. This we see in the parallel history of the words *virtus* and ἀρετή, the latter being from ἀνὴρ, a man, as *virtus* from *vir*, and denoting, primarily, courage, or, as we ourselves call it, manliness. Temperance, again, our hermit will need, if he is to keep his body in health, his nerves braced, and have his intellect, like a keen blade, ever ready for use; purity, for the like reasons; prudence, to lay plans for his future welfare; industry, to execute them, and render him happy by occupation; and patience, to endure hardships and persevere in needful toil. In a word, we would praise Robinson Crusoe if, in his solitary exile, he showed himself temperate, pure, prudent, industrious, courageous, and patient. This is the type of character which we find celebrated, in the world's morning, in Ulysses. This hero was conspicuous for the performance of his duty towards himself, unlike his short-sighted companions, who were

perpetually singeing their wings in the flame of appetite till they met their death at last. For the practice of these virtues we have the obvious sanction of personal interest. They were enforced long ago in the Garden of Epicurus from the point of view of pure self-regard, and nowadays their utility does not need so much to be theoretically demonstrated as to be practically encouraged by a plain exhibition of the consequence of their neglect. The evils of intemperance, the wretchedness of cowardice, the terrible effects, moral and physical, of impurity, the disasters that attend idleness and imprudence—all these are themes for the preacher more than the philosopher. They need stating, not because they are little known, but because they are much disregarded. For man's duty, then, to himself, he need not look beyond his own happiness for sanction.

We will now turn for a moment to the social virtues; and, for convenience, will first consider society as reduced to its lowest terms. Let us imagine Robinson Crusoe arrived at that period of his career when his solitude is cheered by the presence of Friday. We have now two human beings dwelling together, and the sphere of morality is in consequence widened. An entirely new ground of action is introduced. Our shipwrecked mariner has now another being to care for besides himself. He loves his man Friday, and his man Friday loves him. This gives room for new modes of conduct, fidelity, self-sacrifice, devotion, and all that comes under the head of benevolence. Nor is this the whole extension of the field of virtue effected by society under its simplest conditions, since all those virtues which were before looked upon as purely self-regarding may now be practised for another's sake, and are thus elevated into the divine sphere of love. Robinson Crusoe knows that his own welfare is essential to Friday's, and that the latter needs the stimulus of example to incite him to the practice of self-control. Under the happy circumstances here

pictured, the duty to one's neighbour is a simple matter, the sole motive that prompts to it being affection. But men in general do not so love one another; and the royal road to the Law's fulfilment is left a grass-grown by-way.

Let us now pass on and suppose our adventurer restored to his country, or rather, let us leave him out of sight altogether, and consider society as it exists around us.

As a matter of fact we do not love our neighbours as we love ourselves. Some few of the more happily constituted natures have one or two objects of affection whose welfare is no less dear to them than their own. But even the best of us can feel no more than a passive goodwill towards the bulk of mankind. But if we do not seek each other's good, we do, as a rule, respect each other's rights. It is justice that keeps the world as straight as it is, not benevolence. In using the word "rights" here, I mean not merely legal, but moral rights; and justice is to be understood in that broad ancient sense in which it covers the whole field of social obligation, and regulates all our conduct, so far as it affects our fellows, but without appealing to the sentiment of love.

We obtained at first starting two incentives to well-doing; in the case of the self-regarding virtues a very powerful one in love for ourselves; and in the case of the social virtues a very weak one in love for others. But it seems that these are not sufficient. For is it either of these motives that really operates upon us when we act, as we call it, conscientiously? When we decide, for instance, to deal fairly by a person whom we have never seen, in a matter where it is our interest to defraud him, and we could do so without risk of detection, it is not affection for the stranger that prompts our conduct; still less can it be selfishness, when we do not think of our own good but of another's rights, and do ourselves perhaps a serious injury. What is it then that takes place in such

cases? We appeal to the notions of right and wrong current among our fellows, as reflected in our own breasts in the form of moral feelings, and allow ourselves to be guided thereby. We do right because we believe it to be right, and are content with the sufficiency of the reason. It is well that we are so constituted as to be thus content; for, search our consciousness how we will, we shall never obtain a clearer answer to the question "Why must we do what is right?" than the circuitous one, "Because it is right to do so." The heart answers with a woman's logic, but its pleadings are none the less persuasive. Here then we discover a third incentive to virtuous conduct in obedience to our own indwelling feelings of right and wrong, which are summed up under the term "Conscience."

Starting with a two-fold division of the virtues into the self-regarding and the social, a subdivision of the latter class has since suggested itself into virtues of benevolence and virtues of justice. Before going further it will be well to make out this latter distinction more clearly. What is the exact difference between justice and benevolence? To this question John Stuart Mill replies, "It seems to me that this feature in the case—a right in some person correlative to the moral obligation—constitutes the specific difference between justice and generosity or beneficence. Justice implies something which it is not only right to do and wrong not to do, but which some individual person can claim from us as his moral right. No one has a moral right to our generosity or beneficence, because we are not morally bound to practise those virtues towards any given individual." Now that the nature of justice is defined by "a right correlative to the moral obligation" is undoubtedly true; but that this right is necessarily vested "in some individual person" would hardly have been said by the author just quoted, had he been drawing precisely the same distinction as we are. I am committing an injustice if I

defraud the public treasury—no one will dispute that—and yet no individual rights are thereby violated; it is against society that I do the wrong. Let us, therefore, adopt Mill's definition, omitting the reference to some individual person. The distinction between Justice and Benevolence is broadly one between works of duty and works of supererogation. I speak according to current conceptions, not in the terms of an ideal morality. There are certain social as well as certain individual rights which law vindicates. If I violate these I meet with punishment. There are other rights, both social and individual, embracing a certain amount of beneficence, which law does not vindicate. If I violate these I incur moral reprehension. But there is a whole range of virtue lying beyond this, beneficent actions which no one expects, and the performance of which excites gratitude; this is the sphere of Benevolence.

Let us now consider how far we have advanced on our way to a solution of the question, "Why must I do what is right?" Corresponding to our triple division of the virtues we have had three motives presented to us—love of ourselves, love of others, and love of right for right's sake. The self-regarding virtues readily suggested to us the motive of self-love. The virtues which come under the head of Benevolence at once called up the love of others. But by far the larger part of the field of right action falls under the third head of Justice. But because these three motives have been suggested in turn by one or another member of our tripartite division of the virtues, it does not follow that the operation of each is limited to a separate class of right actions. As a matter of fact each of these motives has in its turn been exalted by some school of thinkers, at the expense of the rest, and made to support the whole moral edifice.

These three explanations then have been offered of the ground of moral action—that it is love of ourselves, love of others, and simple obedience to the Moral Sense.

Shall we side with some single school, or endeavour to harmonize all? Certainly if it should turn out that the three motives are neither partial in their operation nor at variance one with another, but that all three point in one and the same direction, the most satisfactory answer possible would be returned to our question, "Why must I do what is right?"

That question, it will be remembered, is, on our assumption, equivalent to "Why am I bound to promote the good of all?" Now to the man of extended philanthropy this question receives its answer in the very terms in which it is propounded. Revert now to the original form of our question—"Why must I do what is right?" This also contains its own answer to a person whom we will suppose deficient in benevolence, but with a strong sense of moral obligation. To such a one the practice of the several virtues carries its own inducement in the feeling that prompts thereto. We know that it is right to be truthful, honest, pure-minded, loving, and generous, full of forgiveness and forbearance. Our hearts whisper so, if we will but listen; and the man we are picturing not only listens but obeys, for though he cannot command a feeling which is absent, he can command the acts which would flow from it. Yet, again, suppose the question "Why must I do what is right?" to occur to a person who is neither transported with love for his fellows nor fired with a supreme devotion to duty, and whose chief feeling, in fact, is a strong partiality for himself. What answer is to be rendered to our question now? Evidently, if it is to be answered conclusively, we must make it clear to this average human being that it is his own personal interest to obey the moral law, and that his own welfare is inextricably bound up with that of others. So far as the self-regarding virtues are concerned, the task is perhaps not a hard one. But in reference to conduct generally, can it, indeed, be shown that the interest of the individual coincides with that of humanity? We

will suppose for a moment that this difficulty is surmounted, and that the obligation of morality on the ground of self-regard is clear. But what if this third string to our bow should break, as break it does and will, so long as human nature remains what it is? For not only do men disregard the welfare of others and ignore the dictates of conscience, but they also run counter to their own known interests. Every passion of man's nature wages war on self-regard. This is a mystery as deep as that of the moth and the candle. Who shall fathom it? Yet, explained or not, it is none the less a fact that we find ourselves in the world, fatally dowered with passions innumerable, whose gratification we too often pursue to our own destruction. This characteristic of weak humanity was long ago expounded by the great thinker of antiquity in his chapters on *ἀκρασία*, whereon the words of the Christian Apostle form the aptest commentary—"The good that I would I do not; the evil that I would not, that I do. Oh! wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But neither philosopher nor apostle was peculiar in recognizing what all have felt; nor could the same great truth be better expressed than in the hackneyed words of a poet with very little pretensions to a rigid morality:

"Video meliora proboque,
Deteriora sequor."

Alas for the days when "Wish and Will were brothers"!

Yet it is just because we *can* run counter to every rule of reason that we are moral agents. It is because a conflict of desires is possible to us that virtue is also possible—because we are in the equipoise of Heaven and Hell, with passions that degrade us to the one and aspirations that exalt us to the other. The sphere of moral agency lies in this struggle between contrary desires, between the general purpose and the particular inclination—between *βούλησις* and *ἐπιθυμία*, to borrow

the phraseology of the Stagirite. It is not quite correct to say, as is often loosely said, that virtue lies in the control of the passions by reason. Reason is not an active principle. It will not move us any more than the candle will move us in the dark; but it will enable us to go rightly if we will. Action must always be prompted by desire. We ought therefore rather to say that virtue lies in the triumph of the reasonable desire over the desire that defies reason. But except where desires may, conceivably at least, clash, virtue cannot be. Neither a purely selfish, nor a purely benevolent, nor a purely holy being could be counted a moral agent. But we should not refuse that name to a person in whom any single motive predominated, provided there were others latent within him, ready to spring into action at unguarded moments—and such is the condition of the most single-minded among mankind. There are, perhaps, none so low as to be without even a glimmer of a sense of right; certainly none whose sole motive is benevolence, or who have no desires to tempt them from the path of duty. For us whose souls are swayed by opposite desires the sphere of moral action lies, as we have seen, in the struggle with passion—that deadly struggle in which duty is too often worsted, benevolence forgotten, and our own best interests sacrificed for the gratification of a passing impulse, which leaves nothing behind it but the stings of remorse or the deadness of a lasting degradation. There are, indeed, thinkers at the present day who, with Plato, deny the possibility of ἀκρασία, who hold that it is impossible for us “to know the right, and yet the wrong pursue.” They lay all moral evil at the door of ignorance, and maintain that virtue is necessarily in proportion to knowledge. But this, I venture to say, is mere paradox, a wilful departure from the ordinary usages of language. If this were so, then the humblest artisan who endeavours manfully to act up to his notions of right—and those notions are often of the highest order

—would have more knowledge than the deepest thinker whose life was less pure than his. In a certain sense, indeed, he has more knowledge, but this sense would be more intelligibly conveyed by saying at once that he is a better man. His heart is in a sounder state; he is capable of more unselfish actions and of a higher devotion to duty. But if we are to call this "knowledge," we must remember that it is heart and not head knowledge. The other may have a far deeper insight into the springs of human conduct; he may know what is right better, but act worse. It is vain to urge that moral truths are never really known until they have been assimilated and become part of the life-tissue. This means that they are not known unless they are acted upon; but, in order to become principles of action, they must be embraced as desires of the heart and not merely recognized as conclusions of the understanding. The "mystery of iniquity" then remains as dark as ever, notwithstanding the attempt to explain it by ignorance.

But, to return to our three motives—are they really distinct one from the other? Or are they, as so many maintain, all reducible to one, and that the lowest of them—the love of self? This is the question to which we must now address ourselves. And first we will consider Conscience or the love of right.

Are we to hold with some that Conscience is simply selfishness in disguise, a mere regard for the safety of one's skin? Or shall we with others consider it as the heaven-imparted prerogative of man, eternally distinguishing him from the lower ranges of creation—an inexplicable principle, the mysterious plenipotentiary of the Most High, resident among the passions of the breast and receiving tribute from them, but baffling inquiry into its origin, "without father, without mother, without descent," known by its mandates, obscure in its essence? The latter opinion is held by the Intuitionist, and is, as we have already seen, the natural outcome of his point

of view. He inquires of the oracle of his own spirit, and when the oracle is dumb, he will accept information from no alien source. Now the mind can reveal nothing as to the origin of its own faculties any more than the child, of its proper knowledge, can tell how or whence it sprang. But as Topsy, when interrogated on this subject, said "'Spects I growed," so may we make answer on behalf of the moral feelings. The world, indeed, is rapidly coming round to Topsy's way of thinking, both on this and other points. That man's body may have been developed by slow degrees out of lower forms is probable enough on the face of it, and is now very commonly admitted. But we cannot surely assert this of the body and deny it of the soul, of which the former is merely the external index! We may well acknowledge then that the moral feelings, as found to-day in man, have slowly been elaborated into their present form out of lower grades of consciousness. But while admitting with the Externalist that their origin is conceivably traceable, we need not take lower ground than the Internalist in estimating their present character. When Kant declared that there were two things in the universe which struck him with admiration, "the starry heaven above and the moral law within," he was but faintly adumbrating the dignity of man's spiritual nature. The preference of right for right's sake, the pure loyalty to the moral law which we find possible now is not less divine, because we may first have learned to prefer right from a lower motive. We must keep quite distinct from one another the two questions of what the moral feelings are now and how they became what they are. Into the latter question we will not enter, our business being only with the former. We base our inquiry on the undeniable fact of the existence of these feelings. They attach themselves, it must be remembered, to the self-regarding no less than to the social virtues, though it was under the head of Justice that they forced themselves

upon our notice. This was owing to the failure of other motives adequately to account for a large part of our conduct. But even the virtues immediately conducive to our own welfare have a binding force which is not explicable by that fact alone. We feel that there is more in them than a calculation of self-advantage. Purity, in particular, both of act and thought, bears with it an awful sanctity of obligation which is not referable to private utility. It recommends itself, indeed, on that ground, but we may well doubt whether its attainment would be possible without that yearning for a higher level which breaks out every now and then under the crust of habit. Even in the case of the self-regarding virtues, then, we may perfectly distinguish between love of self and the higher motive of moral feeling.

But while Conscience, or the Moral Sense, is to be distinguished from Self-love on the one hand, we must equally avoid confounding it with Benevolence on the other.

It is not any affection for our fellows that prompts us to the performance of duty in the vast majority of instances. Nay, benevolence is sometimes a more dangerous, because a more insidious, foe to conscience than selfishness itself. In order to do right it is sometimes necessary to harden the heart against those who have the strongest claim on the affections. Isabella would give her life to save her brother; but let him ask her to sacrifice her honour for his sake, and she spurns him as a reptile, so strong is the instinct of chastity. It is sophistry which would say that this is selfishness. How little indeed the moral sense is akin to benevolence may be gathered from the patent fact that it is not always the most conscientious who have most of the milk of human kindness. There is a sort of people whom we may respect but cannot like, from whose hands even favours fall flat and insipid; and the reason is plain, they do not like us. If they do us good, it is not out of love for us, but because

they think it right. But why waste time in proving or illustrating what no one, I think, will deny, that the moral sense, as it exists at present, is something quite distinct from social feeling. Yet it is by acting up to our individual notions of right and wrong that we secure most effectually the good of the community. Nature has not left it to our benevolence to serve our kind. The good of all, which we laid down at starting to be the end of right action, is not best obtained by a direct aim, but by obedience to the moral feelings implanted in our nature. These are God's sign-posts on the road to happiness. Faith in their veracity has always constituted the moral hero. Despite all arguments of utility and the seducement of natural affection, amid the reproaches of friends and the execration of foes, men have clung to their instincts of right, and cried "*Fiat Justitia, ruat Cælum!*" But if right action could really pull down the heavens on our heads, then virtue would be virtue no more. It is Nature's wise provision that men can exalt other motives above the seeming good of their kind, for only so can the real good be effectually subserved.

It remains for us now to make sure that the love of others is really a distinct motive from the love of ourselves.

Here the same caution is necessary as before. The question of the origin of this feeling must not be confused with that of its present character. No opinion is meant to be intimated here as to whether benevolence is or is not a primary principle of human nature. The good of others may have grown from a means into an end, but it is not the less an end now. What we would combat is the notion that love for others, as we find it in men at present, is but a subtler form of self-regard. Let us put an extreme case as a touchstone to try the question. When St. Paul said, "I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ that my brethren of Israel might be saved," had his words a real meaning? Was so sublime

a height of self-sacrifice possible to him? Is it possible to any human being? Or must we set down such a wish, by whomsoever uttered, as the mere hyperbole of enthusiasm, not as a sentiment that might conceivably be verified in action? Let us suppose for one moment the Hell of Theology to be more than a distempered dream, the Devil, miscalled Deity, not purely mythological. Imagine, now, this alternative, too dreadful almost to contemplate, to be seriously offered to a man, at the cost of his own eternal agony, to save from the same lot the being he cherished most, the wife of his bosom, the brother beloved, or the child in whom all his hopes and affections centred. I believe there are many men and women on this earth who, if so awful a choice could be offered them, would not hesitate to doom themselves. And if this be so, then it must surely be admitted that love for others is a principle as different from self-seeking as noonday from night. Self-love has personal happiness, in one form or another, for its object; and we have here the repudiation of happiness and the acceptance of despair. But if it should still be maintained that such a sacrifice might be prompted, not by disinterested love, but by a desire to escape the pangs of remorse, we have nothing left but to urge, what I think may be urged fairly, that though the two motives of self-love and benevolence may, in the highest natures, coincide in manifestation, they are nevertheless felt to be distinct in essence.

But can it be shown that these motives coincide with one another and with the love of right? That is the question which must now engage our attention. So far as benevolence and the love of right are concerned, the conclusion to which our reasonings point has already been intimated. We assumed at starting that the end of right conduct, whereof the virtues are the modes, was general happiness. This, also, is the end of benevolence when at its best and widest. A partial and blind benevolence may transgress the moral law, but a universal and

enlightened benevolence could never do so. It is because benevolence in our finite natures is never universal, that the obligations of morality have to be rested chiefly on other grounds. But it is in the other part of our question that the chief practical difficulty occurs. Can it, indeed, be shown that self-love, which is undoubtedly the ruling principle of human nature, points to precisely the same line of conduct as the two other motives? If this can be made out, there is no rational incentive to a right life which will not have been afforded.

Does, then, the interest of the individual coincide with that of humanity? Is honesty really the best policy? If this mean, "Does virtue necessarily lead to material welfare?" the answer, I think, is plain. An experience wider than that of the Psalmist who had "not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread," enables us in modern times to answer pretty confidently that it does not. It is true many pass for martyrs to conscience who are only martyrs to indolence and lack of energy. Nor yet can it be denied that virtue is often very remunerative. But then it is quite as often the reverse; and a dexterous stroke of dishonesty is not seldom what procures the smiles of Fortune. The fact is simply this, that, so far as concerns the individual, there is no necessary connection between virtue and prosperity. Both vice and virtue may lead either to success or ruin—a truth symbolized under the conception of Fortune. This conception was absent among the Jews, a people penetrated with a profound belief in the necessity and reality of a moral order, yet not extending their horizon beyond the present life. Their religion rested on a system of temporal rewards and punishments. They felt sure that wickedness must lead to misery, and so when they saw misery they suspected wickedness—an easy method of vindicating Divine Justice, but hardly fair to suffering humanity. Animated by this conviction the friends of Job endeavour to torment him into a confession

of iniquity. "Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished being innocent? Or where were the righteous cut off?" The Book of Job, it is true, is a revolt against this conception, yet it does not discard the connection between virtue and private weal. Misery, it seems to teach, if it is not consequent on sin, will be compensated before the sufferer's life is over. In our boyhood and girlhood we are still Jewish in sentiment. The villain of the plot must be hanged and the virtuous hero comfortably married. We do not like the butler being promoted to Court favour, and the baker to the gallows, without due reason assigned in their antecedents. But as we grow older we cease to expect poetical justice even in novels, and are best pleased with those which reflect most truly the actual conditions of life. The good boy, we know, does not always get the holiday, nor the bad boy the flogging. The situations, in fact, are often reversed. Admitting, then, the supreme disregard of Fortune to merit, how can we prove, on grounds of selfishness, that the individual ought to promote the good of his fellows? The problem may be very easily solved by calling in the sanctions of religion. Our religion, unlike that of the early Jews, emphatically teaches the prolongation of man's existence beyond the tomb, and by sufficiently large drafts on future pain and pleasure we can triumphantly demonstrate the coincidence of interest and duty. But then religions come and go, while the need for morality remains. The fear of God is indeed dangerous ground to build on. For let Scepticism once undermine the foundation, and the superstructure will fall to the ground. But into religious motives, whether high or low, it is not our province to enter. For morality, after all, is a matter which has to be settled among ourselves. There is no *Deus ex machina* who will relieve us of this responsibility. We find ourselves together in this world, and it is not quite certain that we shall meet in another. It is plainly our part to improve our present state as much as we can, confident that in so

doing we shall be best fitting ourselves for whatever future may await us, and, if none await us, then this world's advantage will at least have been secured. If any one consider this an inadequate object, what security have we that he would think more highly of another state of being? So, to come back to our question—How can we make it clear to a selfish and uncultivated mind that it is the interest of the individual to pursue the good of the community? Let us candidly confront the truth. Force apart, we cannot do so. It is impossible to construct a chain of reasoning which shall recommend the grand principles of morality to beings whose only thought is to fill their bellies and gratify their lusts. It cannot, in other words, be proved to a purely selfish person that to seek the good of others is the way to secure his own. Fortunately, however, we are not called upon to work up the raw material of animality into the refined product of moral intelligence. Our way is smoothed for us by the existence of moral instincts. These admit of cultivation, and the love of self may then be made to work through them in the direction of human happiness. Given an individual with well-developed moral instincts, and one may see that *his* felicity is dependent on the pursuit of virtue. A violated instinct avenges itself in regret and remorse. Men have counted all worldly loss a gain if it left them peace of mind. The man of trained moral feeling cannot be brought to believe that selfish indulgence is the road to happiness. If he does give way to such indulgence, he sins against light, and the penalty will surely come. But moral instincts of any high order are the product of a fairly advanced state of society. They are slowly elaborated by a complicated process. So far we have been brought on our way without very much consciousness or effort of our own. Instinct comes ever before reason, practice before art. But it is time that we should cease to drift, and begin to bend the winds to our will. The education of the feelings, which at present is

left so much to chance, must be recognized as what mainly contributes to the world's weal or woe.* Our moral sentiments are works of Nature more than of art. But it is man's function to do that deftly and quickly which Nature, without his aid, accomplishes only by slow degrees. There is no presumption in saying so, since man is himself a product of Nature, and his works also must be ascribed to her.

Our conclusion, then, is, that it is only through the education of the moral feelings that self-interest can be brought into harmony with the two higher motives. Selfishness, pure and simple, leads to nothing but disorder. Bearing this in mind we may say with truth, that the three motives point in the same direction. Benevolence has for its express object the good of others, which, at its ideal limit, is the good of all. The love of right leads us by a less direct but more certain path to the same great end. And, finally, self-love may be conciliated to the other two by so cultivating the moral feelings that the pain of violating them shall overpower the pleasure that springs from the gratification of lower desires.

* The reader who cares to pursue this subject could not do better than read a little book called "The Education of the Feelings," by Mr. Charles Bray, of Coventry.

WHAT IS RIGHT?

IN the paper entitled "Why must I do what is right?" we assumed the standard, and proceeded to discuss some of the sanctions, of morality. Taking for granted that Right is simply what conduces to the welfare of all, we contented ourselves with inquiring what motives prompted to the pursuit of that end. But, then, the value we assigned to the unknown quantity is just what would be most vigorously controverted by many thinkers on the subject of morals. They are prepared, indeed, to admit and maintain that virtue conduces to the welfare of all; but they will never concede that it is that which conduces thereto—a very different thing, of course, from the former. For right, they urge, would be no less right, even if it led to harm in the long run, though most of them think the universe so comfortably constituted as to render this result impossible. Logically expressed, the doctrine we are speaking of amounts to this—that utility is an inseparable accident of right-doing, but not the essence of it, not that by which it ought to be defined. But let us listen to one of their own philosophers. Mr. Lecky says:—"Intuitive moralists affirm that the effect of actions upon the happiness of mankind forms a most important element in determining their moral quality; but they deny that morality was either evolved from, or is necessarily proportioned to, utility."

Nor can it be denied that there appears a good deal of reason for this opinion, when we reflect how often qualities and actions the most prejudicial to society are regarded

as the summit of virtue. But, on the other hand, we should bear in mind that morality, at any given moment, ought not to be regarded as a brand new machine, constructed to effect a given object—namely, general happiness; but as an institution, hoary with age, various parts of which have been allowed to linger on after the need they originally met has passed away. Ideas of right and wrong embody, to a great extent, utilities of the past, which may, or may not, coincide with what is best for the present. Our moral sentiments are heir-looms of the race, and though they may have suited the age in which they were generated, they do not necessarily suit another. This traditional nature of the moral sentiments accounts at once for the necessity and for the difficulty of ethical development. For it is only the few who have the discernment, or the courage, to break with the past; and it is at their peril they inaugurate sounder views. More unjust than Polyphemus, Humanity devours its benefactors first.

The indefiniteness of the subject-matter of ethical science is a favourite topic with Aristotle, and this characteristic has not become less salient through lapse of time. Not only does the law within appear different to different persons, but it differs in the same person at different periods of his life. The man who at one time may feel it a moral duty to exercise his benevolence in assisting mendicants, will at another time feel it a moral duty to refrain from gratifying his impulse at the expense of society. The mint of conscience impresses the same stamp of duty upon actions the most opposite. Feeling requires to be constantly enlightened and corrected by reason. Bishop Butler's "plain, honest man," who simply appeals to his own conscience in all cases, will succeed in acting up to the standard of duty current in his day; but if there had never been any but plain, honest men, our moral notions would be now antediluvian. To return, however, to the common instance we selected. Though

conduct which was before approved by the moral sense is now condemned, there has been no real change of feeling, but only a change of opinion with regard to utility. The motive both for exerting and for restraining the impulse to alms-giving, so far as either is an act of duty, is one and the same—namely, a sense of obligation to promote the good of others. But the mere feeling that it is right to promote the good of others in no way assists us to discover wherein that good consists. What two persons entertain precisely the same notion of happiness? Nevertheless, the mutability, relatively to us, of the standard of utility, does not prove that it is not the true standard. Its indefiniteness arises from our ignorance. If we knew man's true happiness, we should know our real duty. Practically the standard is a wavering one: it is only ideally fixed.

Human happiness, indeed, sounds something precise and definite; and to say that virtue is what conduces to it, seems to have power with some minds to lay all the ghosts of speculation. There might be some show of reason in this if all pleasures were reducible to a common standard. But the most thorough-going adherents of Utilitarianism now-a-days admit that pleasures differ in kind—not merely in degree. And this introduces a difficulty from which coarser forms of the doctrine were comparatively exempt. Disgusted with the vagaries of individual caprice, the Utilitarian craves a standard independent of sentiment. What is called right, he perceives, is, or ought to be, that course of conduct which tends, on the whole, to promote the happiness of the human race. And then, perhaps, he thinks the question settled, and a clear rule of life laid down. But let us button-hole him, and address him thus: "Happiness, you say, consists in the attainment of pleasure and the avoidance of pain. Very good. But what pleasure, if, as you yourself admit, pleasures differ in kind?" "The highest, of course, where attainable; where not, we must be content with a lower."

* But a higher pleasure may conflict with a lower, and may admit of attainment only through the endurance of physical pain. An anchorite may be acting on the strictest principles of Utilitarianism if some pleasures are incomparably superior to others. Simeon, on his pillar, may deem a few moments of spiritual exaltation cheaply purchased by appalling agony." Epicurus himself was not to be taken in a trap like this. He reduced the fraction at once to its lowest terms, by boldly declaring that bodily pains and pleasures were the standard whereby all else was to be judged.

Those who boast of rescuing morality from the dominion of vague sentiment by the constitution of an external standard, forget that Utilitarianism very quickly brings us round to feeling again. The morality of actions can be measured only by their effect upon happiness; but then happiness, we are told, consists in gaining pleasure and escaping pain, and pleasure and pain are feelings. If we substitute, as Epicurus did, sensations for emotions, we have lowered our tone without gaining very much in precision. For what common measure have we, after all, even for the different bodily affections? Thus not only is Utility practically a shifting standard, but it is also a highly obscure one. Nevertheless, who can point us to one steadier or more intelligible?

We advance now to a more serious difficulty in the way of accepting Utility as the standard of moral action.

The ancients, indeed, seem never to have doubted that the end of morality was to secure happiness. Plato expressly lays down that the utility of actions is the one and only measure of their righteousness. Aristotle understood nothing else by the terms "good" and "bad," than conduciveness to happiness or the reverse (*Nic. Eth.*, vii. (ii.) § i.). But here comes in the difficulty. Virtue itself, in the system of Aristotle, constitutes, to a great extent, *εὐδαιμονία* or happiness, forming thus both means and end. The same circle reappears in Mill's treatise on

Utilitarianism. He first makes happiness the end, and virtue the means to that end; then he turns round and makes virtue itself part of the end. But being admitted as part of the end, its innate dignity and worth is such as to throw the other constituents entirely into the shade. Such is the inevitable result both in Aristotle's system and in Mill's.

The same difficulty may be stated in a slightly different form, thus :—Right-doing is acknowledged to be one of the highest pleasures of which man is capable. But if right-doing be itself a pleasure, how can right be defined as that which conduces to pleasure? What light does it throw on the nature of a thing to say that it is what it is because it conduces to itself? Would it not be more honest to say at once that virtue is something independent and inexplicable, that shines only by its own light? Or, if we insist on defining virtue as the means to happiness, are we not bound in consistency to subtract virtue from our notion of happiness? There is a rule in Logic that we must not, covertly or otherwise, introduce into our definition the notion itself which is sought to be defined. Now if we define virtue by reference to happiness, and if, at the same time, virtue enter into our conception of happiness—much more if it form the most important feature—are we not flagrantly violating this rule, and involving ourselves in what is called a *circulus in definiendo*?

These are some of the general difficulties which beset the path of the Utilitarian moralist. Let us now state a more detailed objection which has been urged against making conduciveness to mundane welfare the criterion of right and wrong.

Miss Cobbe asks whence comes our tenderness for the infirm in mind and body, on the supposition that moral feelings are no more than inherited prejudices in favour of that course of conduct which is most for the benefit of the community. The care which we bestow upon the weaker

members of society tends directly to counteract the healthy working of the law of natural selection. Must not the obligation to it then be derived from some other and higher source than that of human welfare? That the interests of the community would be best served by cutting off the inferior specimens of the race was a principle largely recognized and acted upon in the pagan States of the ancient world. But the moral sense forbids the same course of conduct now. Few would dare seriously to advocate it.

The answer readily rises to one's lips that the moral progress of the race would be impaired by such a course, as much as the physical would be increased; and that moral welfare is of more importance than physical. But then if morality be the mere handmaid to some end beyond itself (which end, if we subduct morality itself, can be no other than physical welfare), this is to answer that the means are of more importance than the end from which they derive their value. Mr. Greg, in his "*Enigmas of Life*," forces the difficulty still further, arguing that moral progress itself is hindered by philanthropy. We cherish the refuse of the community, and encourage it to increase and multiply at the expense of the nobler elements, thus doing our best to leave a legacy of vice and incapacity to our descendants. If this reasoning be sound, the Utilitarian would seem to stand committed to infanticide and murder out of a rational regard for his kind.

There is one method by which the foregoing difficulty might be met, which I shall only hint at in passing. It is by extending the sphere of utility beyond the bounds of our present and known state of being. If it should be proved that the world we see is not all, but that there is a world beyond, not isolated from this, but closely dependent on it—a spiritual, or at least, non-material world, evolved from a physical basis—it might become clear, on the one hand, that conduciveness to happiness is, as the Utilitarians declare, the true and only standard of right

and wrong; and, on the other hand, that we have, by some happy instinct in certain cases, divined what is conducive to happiness on the whole, in spite of its apparent inappropriateness in a purely physical sphere of existence. We might then see that infanticide is as unwise as plucking fruit before it is ripe, and would condemn capital punishment on the like grounds with transportation, as merely changing the locality of the evil without attempting to eradicate it.

Such an answer might be given for what it is worth; but morality is far too practical a concern to be allowed to rest on any merely hypothetical basis. Let us therefore see what answer can be returned without pushing our inquiries beyond the known limits of human existence.

In discussing the questions whether and in what sense conduciveness to happiness can truly be said to be the standard of right and wrong, it is obviously necessary to have before our minds a clear conception of what is meant by happiness. Happiness is *not* mere physical welfare: there is no happiness apart from virtue.

Semita certe

Tranquillæ per virtutem patet unica vitæ.

So far as happiness is possible to man, it lies, as Aristotle said long ago, in the free play of our faculties, especially the higher of them. Virtuous conduct and feelings constitute indeed so important an ingredient in the happiness of any high nature, and can compensate for so many minor ills, that it is easy to run into the Stoical exaggeration, and say that virtue alone is happiness. But virtue alone is not happiness. A man may be eminently virtuous, and yet unhappy. Rob him of love; take from him wife and child, with all life's tender domesticities; blast his most cherished hopes and ambitions; expose him to penury, neglect, and scorn; and though greatness of soul may prevent him from sinking under his misfortunes, is it not mere affectation to pronounce him happy? In order for

a man to be, in the full sense of the word, happy, it is necessary not merely that his moral instincts should be satisfied, but all the needs of his nature—physical, social, moral, intellectual, and æsthetic. Now the aim of life is the perfect development in every man, and the gratification in due proportion, of all sides of his nature. In so far only as modern society is tending towards this goal, are we making real progress. But to say that such conduct in the individual is right as tends in the long run to promote the welfare of all, amounts to saying that a man's nature ought to be so constituted as that in gratifying it, he is tending to help and not hinder a like gratification on the part of all his fellows. The problem of morality then is, to determine the line of action among the individual members of society which will furnish the most equable adjustment of the claims of each and all. Before this problem can be solved in practice, the happiness of the human unit has to be moulded into conformity with the happiness of the mass. Morality is a process of mutual accommodation. Hence virtue in the individual necessarily implies a reference to the production of the same quality in others. We cannot in this case draw a sharp line of demarcation between means and end. For the end is the harmony of all natures; the means are the harmonization of each, so far as each singly can be made harmonious, while so many strings remain out of tune.

Ideally, then, happiness and virtue are inseparable; happiness standing to virtue in the relation of whole to part. Hence the attempt logically to explain the conception of virtue by that of happiness must be acknowledged futile.

But though man's conception of happiness at present implies and includes virtue, it by no means follows that it always did so. In all questions connected with man, as with Nature generally, it is essential continually to have before our minds the idea of growth. Neither virtue nor happiness have any fixity: both are essentially pro-

gressive. This fact, of course, infinitely complicates all ethical inquiry. But what of that? It is under the actual conditions of the problem that we must apply our minds to its solution. Could we trace back the history of man into its dim beginnings, we might perhaps reach a period when his nature was purely animal, and when physical well-being might seem the only happiness possible to him. But man is, and was ever, a gregarious animal; and the individual was at no time free to follow his own bent unrestrictedly, but had to rub on as best he could with his fellows. The exigencies of social existence would imperatively demand certain lines of conduct essential to the very existence of the community; these, though pursued originally from sheer necessity, would become first easy and finally pleasant from custom; and, by the law of heredity, what had been blind habit in the ancestor would become blind instinct in the offspring. Thus, even while we were contemplating man's nature as purely physical, the seeds of the moral and spiritual would already have been sown within it, to germinate in time into the perfect fruit of virtue. For the moment other than purely selfish instincts have been generated; in however faint a degree, their gratification becomes as essential to the happiness of the individual as that of any other part of his nature. The conception of happiness then must rise in proportion as man's higher faculties are called into exercise. And this process would seem to have been continually going on, the gratification of faculties, which were originally mere means to a comparatively low end, being incorporated into the end and sublimating it by their infusion. Thus finite, but infinitely progressive, man pursues ever the retreating image of his own happiness.

Happiness, then, is not to be regarded as a fixed quantity, after the fashion in which the older Utilitarianism attempted to formulate it. It is a progressive conception, ever deepening, and absorbing into itself more of

the spiritual at every stage of its growth. When this dynamical conception of happiness has been substituted for the older statical one, all cogency at once vanishes from the question, "Why should we bestow care upon the infirm in mind and body?" when urged as an objection to Utilitarianism. It is absurd to ask us to further our happiness by choking the feelings of tenderness and sympathy, which have come to form one of its main ingredients. The gratification of these feelings has an intrinsic bearing upon happiness which is quite incommensurable with physical effects. We should be happier in a world where all were cripples and all kind, than in a world where every one was blessed with physical vigour, which he employed to the detriment of his neighbour. But besides the intrinsic value of tenderness, as a constituent element in happiness, it might be argued that its extrinsic effects, penetrating as they do into every department of life, are such as far to outweigh the evils that may arise from its exercise. In this way the special difficulty urged by Miss Cobbe and Mr. Greg may be met without abandoning the standard of utility. As for the previous difficulties, it will be seen that they have not been met but accepted. But in spite of all difficulties, utility, or conduciveness to happiness, in the highest sense, must be regarded as what makes the difference between right and wrong, until some one has shown what else it can be.

HUME ON MIRACLES.

THO-DAY the teaching of Protagoras is triumphant. What says the voice of the age? "Man is the measure of all things, and I am the man who is the measure. Whatever I cannot understand, whatever I cannot harmonize with facts already ascertained, is not, cannot, must not be true. There is a certain space within which Nature is at liberty to work; there are certain bounds which she may not transgress. There is one class of facts which I shall always be glad to have reported to me, another class which I shall accept on no man's testimony. Confine your attention (says the spirit of the age addressing the interpreter of Nature) to such facts as I am familiar with; all beyond these are fiction and unreality: for they are inconceivable to me—And am I not the measure of truth and the measure of existence?"

Such is the utterance of our age of enlightenment; and its practice is worthy of its precept. Let men only keep well within the groove of their predecessors, and they will be hailed as prodigies of science, pioneers of progress, priests of Nature; let them step aside, and they will be hailed with derision, and exposed to the venom of the *Quarterly*. Let a man follow up Newton's experiments with regard to the spectrum analysis, or discover thallium, and he will be proclaimed the greatest spectroscopist or metallurgist of the age; let the same man acknowledge the bare facts of Spiritualism, and he will be proclaimed a fool.

For the scientific sanction accorded to this spirit—I do not say for its prevalence, for the cause of that lies deep down in the constitution of the human mind—Hume is mainly responsible. In bringing—as I shall do—an accusation of blindness and prejudice against Hume, I have no doubt that I shall enlist against me the feelings of those whom I would most gladly conciliate; but as I am myself firmly persuaded of the truth of Hume's general principles, and am equally firmly persuaded that these principles do not land us in the conclusions of the *Essay on Miracles*, I have good hope that I may be able to render this point at least worth the attention of others.

Among all our English philosophers Hume is, perhaps, on the whole, least assailable by logic. His principles are not congenial to the pride of human nature, but they are in the main incontrovertible. His thought is so sound and so clearly expressed; he is so careful not to let himself be hoodwinked by fancy; he dives with such determination beneath the perplexities of appearances to the simplicity of truth, that he has generally managed to win silent assent where he has not secured applause. But the greatest men have their weak points, and the acutest intellects will be led astray if they desert the dry light of reason for the will-o'-the-wisps of prejudice. Against the free-thinker the same objection often lies as against the most bigoted dogmatist, that of being misled by his feelings. Feeling is undoubtedly the most important element in human nature, but it by no means follows that it should usurp the functions of the rest. Feeling is an engine whose work is the direction of action, not the discovery of truth. In searching for truth let a man simply follow reason as his guide, careless if he be thus led into the camp of his enemies, and he will be pretty sure to find her. This single-minded devotion to truth it was not Hume's to render. He was superior to many prejudices, but he could not bring him-

self to descend from the aristocratic exclusiveness of intellect. His philosophic soul shrank from contact of belief with the despised vulgar, and the still more despised churchman. Religions were nothing but the imposture of priests or the policy of law-givers, acting upon the superstition and credulity of the people. No good thing could come out of Nazareth.

In the eighteenth century free-thought had not won for itself the position which it now occupies. The infidel was intensely hated and intensely feared, and he hated intensely and despised intensely in return. The enemy of revelation was then looked upon by the orthodox as necessarily the enemy of morality too; while the infidel, on his side, had not come clearly to distinguish between special forms of religion, and the ineradicable religious sentiment which gives life to the dry bones of all. But, without further preface, I must proceed to examine Hume's arguments.

Hume commences operations by taking up a position from which I have no wish to dislodge him, and which few would deem it prudent to assail, namely, that experience is our only guide in reasoning concerning matters of fact. We must watch his movements and catch him outside this stronghold before we can hope to overthrow him. In the genuine spirit of Positivism, and in perfect accordance with his general maxim, he goes on to say, "The reason why we place any credit in witnesses and historians is not derived from any connection, which we perceive *à priori*, between testimony and reality, but because we are accustomed to find a conformity between them." So far we can go along with Hume; but listen now to what follows! "But when the fact attested is such a one as has seldom fallen under our observation, here is a contest of two opposite experiences. . . . The very same principle of experience, which gives us a certain degree of assurance in the testimony of witnesses, gives us also, in this case, another degree of assurance

against the facts which they endeavour to establish ; from which contradiction there necessarily arises a counterpoise and mutual destruction of belief and authority." It is quite true that there is a conflict here between belief and authority, that is to say, authority is confronted with an absence of belief, for the simple reason that belief is the product of association, and that where ideas have not been connected in the mind, there belief cannot be ; but there is no conflict of experiences. To say there is, is to confound the absence of experience in favour of a fact with the presence of experience against it. If, on the one side, there is the positive evidence of a witness in favour of a fact, and on the other there is no evidence against it, where is the contradiction ? The evidence of the witness may of course be of much or little worth ; but that is a question which must be estimated on its own merits, and its decision will depend on our belief in his veracity, our knowledge as to whether he had any motive for falsehood, the likelihood of his being deceived, his love for attracting notice or creating surprise, and so on. If we were fully satisfied as to the competency of the witness, we should be very unwise to withhold belief from the fact related by him, simply because it had not come within our own experience. The unsoundness of the mode of reasoning now under consideration is well exemplified by the case of the Indian prince who refused to believe the tale that, in certain countries, water became so hard during cold, as to support men walking on its surface. This was not conformable to his experience, and, therefore, he thought himself justified in disbelieving it ; but it was not contrary to it, because he had never witnessed the effect of extreme cold upon water. The Indian prince was mistaken, but his error was a very natural one, arising as it did from the unavoidable narrowness of the human mind, joined to limited acquaintance with the laws of Nature. The same apology is the only one that can be offered for the views of Hume

himself. Thus the philosopher is in the same boat with the savage, for whom, indeed, he shows a manifest fellow-feeling. Any one anxious to vindicate the honour of Hume will at once be prompted to maintain that he is here speaking of occurrences which violently contradict our experience, instead of such as are merely not included in it, but he has himself shown the contrary by distinguishing these cases as the marvellous from the miraculous, which he next proceeds to discuss.

Having defined a miracle as "a violation of the laws of Nature," Hume goes on to say, that "as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined." Now, what in the name of wonder is the meaning of the expression "an unalterable experience" in the mouth of an experientialist? It was from Hume himself I learnt that experience could only refer to the past. But this slip may be condoned as not really affecting the argument. Every one may satisfy himself from reason that he has no ground for believing in the continuance of the laws of Nature, and every one may satisfy himself from feeling that he is perfectly certain to believe in it all the same. The point to be noted is, that our knowledge, like everything else, rests on the basis of instinct. But no law of Nature amounts to more than this, that a given cause has an invariable tendency to produce such and such an effect. Any cause may be counteracted, and apparently violated by the intervention of others. The essential question about miracles, therefore, is not, as Hume puts it, "Are the laws of Nature ever violated," but "Do there exist causes—hitherto unrecognized—which have power to defeat the effects of known natural agents?" There is a tremendous body of evidence, coeval with history, in favour of the existence of such causes; but it is constantly set aside, just as it is by Hume, the first part of whose essay culminates in

the assumption of the following position:—"As an uniform experience amounts to a proof, there is a direct and full *proof*, from the nature of the fact, against the existence of any miracle; nor can such a proof be destroyed, or the miracle rendered credible, but by an opposite proof which is superior." Need I point out that, unless by "experience" be meant Hume's private and particular experience—in which case the argument will not hold—there is a direct assumption here of the very point to be proved; for the question is not whether miracles can occur—with that the experientialist has nothing to do—but simply whether they have occurred and do occur. The illustration which Hume chooses brings out the *petitio principii* in a still clearer light. As an instance of the miraculous—and nothing is miraculous in his sense of the term, unless there be an uniform experience against it—he takes returning to life from the dead, thus coolly assuming one of the principal points at issue between himself and his religious opponents. However much any one may admire Hume's conclusion, he cannot, at all events, admire his way of arriving at it.

In the second part of the essay Hume repents of the extreme liberality he has been guilty of in the first, and hastens to point out that no evidence can amount to proof, and consequently that nothing can ever counterbalance the presumption against a miracle. Four arguments are brought to prove this; but the first alone would have been sufficient, for it simply begs the question over again, under the form that there never was a miracle duly attested.

The second argument is a very good one. It is based on the love of wonder and the spirit of religion, by which of course he means superstition and fanaticism. These will undoubtedly account for a good many thriving lies.

The third argument is, that miraculous relations are most common amongst ignorant and barbarous people. That is no doubt true, and the cause is not far to seek.

In an early age, before men have obtained settled ideas about the course of Nature, one thing obtains credence as easily as another. But it is by no means true, that accounts of miracles are the mere product of a dark age. Else what shall we say of the miracles of Christ and His disciples, wrought in the streets of Jerusalem and in the market-places of Greek towns? What shall we say of the miraculous cure effected by Vespasian in the streets of Alexandria, recorded by the sceptical historian Tacitus, and borne testimony to after the death of the emperor, when there was nothing to be gained by falsification? What shall we say of the numberless miracles of the Jansenites? What shall we say of the Irvingites? What shall we say of modern Spiritualism? Our literature of to-day teems with miraculous relations. I do not know that Robert Owen and his no less celebrated son; Alfred Wallace, the naturalist; Professor Crookes, the metallurgist; Dr. Huggins, the spectroscopist; Cromwell Varley, the electrician; Serjeant Cox, the lawyer; the late Lord Lytton, the late Professor De Morgan, Dr. Ashburner, Dr. Gully, Professor Challis of Cambridge, and so on, can exactly be taken as types of ignorant and barbarous people.

The fourth argument is merely a dialectical one. It was of considerable force to confound Hume's orthodox opponents, but does not tend in the least degree to elucidate the truth. It is briefly this: miracles are alleged to have been wrought in support of every religion. Only one religion can be true. Any miracle, therefore, alleged in support of any one religion, is so much positive evidence against a miracle alleged in support of any other religion.

The time has long gone by when religions could be regarded by thinking men as the mere inventions of priests and law-givers. No doubt, in every form of religion which ever soothed or elevated the heart of man (and many have done so besides our own) there has

been an element of the divine, whatever that may mean—something, at all events, that is more than human, something that is beyond our ken. Why then should not all have had their share of the miraculous? But as I am sedulously avoiding theories, I refrain from entering on this point.

Such are the four arguments which Hume brings against the credibility of miracles. He then proceeds, out of his own mouth, absolutely to refute what he has said under the first head. There is something one cannot help admiring in the extreme effrontery of this proceeding. Hume knew that his adversaries, as bigoted as himself, but in a different direction, would have nothing to say in defence of Romish miracles; and it was sufficient for his purpose if he triumphed for the hour. Listen to the following passage, and judge, impartial reader, whether it ought to have been written by an opponent, and not rather by an advocate of miracles! He is speaking of the extraordinary events that took place at the tomb of Abbé Paris, the famous Jansenist. "The curing of the sick, giving hearing to the deaf, and sight to the blind, were everywhere talked of as the effects of that holy sepulchre. But what is more extraordinary, many of the miracles were immediately proved upon the spot before judges of unquestioned integrity, attested by witnesses of credit and distinction, in a learned age, and on the most eminent theatre that is now in the world. Nor is this all; a relation of them was published and dispersed everywhere; nor were the Jesuits, though a learned body, supported by the civil magistrate, and determined enemies to those opinions, in whose favour the miracles were said to have been wrought, ever able distinctly to refute or detect them. Where shall we find such a number of circumstances agreeing to the corroboration of one fact? And what have we to oppose to such a cloud of witnesses, but the absolute impossibility or miraculous nature of the events to which they relate? And this surely, in the

eyes of all reasonable people, will alone be regarded as a sufficient refutation."

Thus we see that, when all has been said, Hume comes back to a simple restatement of his belief in the absolute impossibility of miracles. As if an experientialist could assert any event to be impossible! His famous argument comes to this—A miracle cannot happen, because it would be a miracle if it did. By the illustrations he has chosen, he has cleverly made his sophistries irrefutable by his immediate adversaries, men who believed that the Protestant religion must win its way to a spiritual throne by strangling all its brethren. As a specimen of eristic, the *Essay on Miracles* is admirable; but, as such, its aim is not truth, but triumph.

THE MEDIUMSHIP OF THE EMPEROR VESPASIAN.

SOME so-called miraculous occurrences, of a kind perfectly intelligible, or rather, I should say, perfectly familiar to Spiritualists, are recorded in the life of the Roman Emperor Vespasian. Invisible powers might seem to have interested themselves in placing him on the throne of the Roman world. While still Emperor more in name than reality, and insecure in his new position, the usurper lacked that "divinity which doth hedge a king;" but, as a set-off against this defect, a prestige of no ordinary kind was supplied to him by his being used on a very public occasion as a healing medium. The following is the account of this as well as another curious incident, given by the historian Tacitus:—

During the months in which Vespasian was waiting at Alexandria for the set period of the summer breezes, when he would be sure of a prosperous voyage, many miracles took place, which were thought to show the favour of Heaven, and a special regard of the divine powers for Vespasian.

One of the common people of Alexandria, who was known to have a disease of the eyes, threw himself at the feet of Vespasian, imploring him with tears to heal his blindness. This was done by the advice of the God Serapis, an object of special worship among this superstitious race. The suppliant prayed the Emperor to condescend to wet his cheeks and eyeballs with his spittle. Another man who was diseased in his hand, was prompted by the same God to entreat that he might be trodden under Cæsar's foot. Vespasian at first received them with ridicule and disdain. Finding them urgent, he was divided

between dread of the imputation of vanity and hopes of success inspired by the earnestness of the suppliants backed by the voices of flatterers. Finally he called upon his physicians to pronounce whether such cases of blindness and disease could be overcome by human aid. The physicians were particular in their reply. In the former patient, they said, the sight was not irrevocably gone, and might be restored if the obstacles were got rid of; in the latter the diseased joints might be made sound again, if a healing force were applied. Perhaps it was the pleasure of the Gods to effect this, and the Emperor had been chosen to the divine office. Lastly, if the remedy were successful, the glory would be Cæsar's; whereas if it failed, the ridicule would fall on the poor wretches themselves. So Vespasian, thinking that his fortune could carry all before it, and filled with confidence in himself, assumed a joyous look, and performed what was asked of him, amid the excitement of the crowd of bystanders. Immediately the hand was restored to use, and the blind man saw again the light of day. Both facts are still related by the persons present, now that all motive for falsehood is gone.

Vespasian, hereupon, felt a strong desire to visit the seat of the Deity, in order to consult him upon affairs of State. Having previously issued orders that all persons should be excluded from the Temple, he entered it himself, and was intently occupied in prayer when he caught sight behind him of one of the chief men among the Egyptians, by name Basilides, whom he knew to be lying sick at a distance of several days journey from Alexandria. He inquired of the priests whether Basilides had come into the Temple that day, and likewise of the people whom he met whether he had been seen in the town. Lastly, he despatched horsemen, and ascertained that at the point of time in question Basilides had been eighty miles off. Then he concluded that it must have been a supernatural appearance, and inferred the meaning of the response from the name Basilides.

We are fortunate in having another account of the same incidents, which I subjoin in order to impress upon the reader how strong is the historical evidence for them. It is from the pen of Suetonius Tranquillus, in his biography of Vespasian. It differs in certain slight particu-

lars from that of Tacitus, just sufficiently to show that the two are independent, and consequently mutually corroborative :—

Accordingly he undertook a civil war, and despatched troops and generals into Italy, meanwhile crossing over himself into Alexandria, so as to hold the keys of Egypt. Here having a wish to take auspices as to the security of his empire, he ordered all persons to be kept away from the Temple of Serapis, and entered it himself unattended. After engaging in deep prayer to the God, he at length turned round, and found himself presented with boughs, garlands, and offering-cakes, according to the custom of the place, by the freedman Basilides; though it was quite certain that no one had let him in, that he had for some time been suffering from a weakness of the sinews which interfered with his entering the Temple, and that he was then at a considerable distance. Immediately afterwards there arrived a despatch announcing the overthrow of the forces of Vitellius at Cremona, and the death of Vitellius himself in the city.

Vespasian's authority was unlooked for and still fresh, and weight and majesty were wanting to it. These were now supplied. One day as he sat on the tribunal, one of the common people who had lost his eyesight, and another who was lame, presented themselves before him at the same moment, begging for aid against their maladies after a method revealed to them in their sleep by Serapis. "He would restore the eyes of one," they said, "if he would spit upon them, and impart strength to the leg of the other, if he would deign to touch it with his heel." Incredulous of success, he scarce dared to try the experiment. At length, however, he gave way to the solicitations of his friends, and attempted both cures in a public manner before the assembled multitude, with complete success.

The following is the way in which Hume sums up the evidence for the above instance of healing mediumship:—

One of the best attested miracles in all profane history, is that which Tacitus reports of Vespasian. . . . Every circumstance seems to add weight to the testimony. . . . The gravity,

solidity, age, and probity of so great an emperor, who, through the whole course of his life, conversed in a familiar manner with his friends and courtiers, and never affected those extraordinary airs of divinity assumed by Alexander and Demetrius. The historian, a contemporary writer, noted for candour and veracity, and withal, the greatest and most penetrating genius, perhaps, of all antiquity, and so free from any tendency to credulity, that he even lies under the contrary imputation of atheism and profaneness. The persons from whose authority he related the miracle were of established character for judgment and veracity, as we may well presume, eye-witnesses of the fact, and confirming their testimony after the Flavian family was despoiled of the empire, and could no longer give any reward as the price of a lie. . . . To which if we add the public nature of the facts, as related, it will appear, that no evidence can well be supposed stronger for so gross and so palpable a falsehood.

"So gross and so palpable a falsehood!" This is all that Hume has to set against his own formidable summary of evidence. He answers reason with stolid disbelief. It is melancholy to see so keen an intellect thus hopelessly clouded by prejudice. Yet it little becomes Spiritualists to blame Hume or his followers, since in nine cases out of ten their own difference of belief is simply due to the accident of experience. The fact is, it does not seem ever to have dawned upon Hume that miracles could be regarded in any other but an evidential light. To accept Christian miracles was with him to accept the Christian religion; and to accept the miracle at Alexandria would have been to accept the Egyptian religion. But Hume, although in error, was too strong for the Protestant divines of his day. They wished to maintain exclusively the early Christian miracles. He pointed to non-Christian and Roman Catholic miracles; among others, to the famous cures wrought in his own lifetime at the tomb of the Abbé Paris, and asked very forcibly, "If these miracles, as both you and I admit, are false, while yet they are so amply attested, why do you ask me to accept

miracles resting on a weaker evidence?" The evidential view of miracles, however, has of late been pretty well knocked on the head. If we were to accept the teaching of the biggest miracle-monger, we would have some very queer prophets. Those who see in the appearance of the Madonna at Lourdes an attestation of the claims of the Holy Catholic Church, cannot, of course, quarrel with others who may have a fancy to rehabilitate the faded divinity of Serapis, on the strength of the miracle at Alexandria. Let both sides enjoy their evidence. We, meanwhile, will enjoy both miracles, storing them up as data by help of which we may hereafter arrive at a comprehension of important psychological laws.

POSITIVE VIEW OF SPIRITUALISM AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF FORCE.

HE who claims too much for a thing does it no less harm than he who denies it its due; and there is no worse enemy to a cause than an inconsiderate friend.

It is in the interest of Spiritualism that I propose to examine a discourse entitled "God and Immortality, viewed in relation to modern Spiritualism,"* by Dr. George Sexton, one of the most able and eloquent supporters that Spiritualism has in the field, but who, it seems to me, might accomplish more, if he aimed at less.

Spiritualism does not give us an assurance of immortality, nor is it such an antidote to Atheism as the Doctor imagines. What Spiritualism may perhaps claim to effect is to bring down the idea of continued existence after death from the heights of religious faith to the level of ordinary knowledge, and make it a fact as universally known and appreciated as the fact of mortality is at present. Surely this is enough for the mysterious movement to accomplish in the face of the tendencies of the present age! Surely there is ample ground here for panegyric without adding unmerited praises!

Again, it is of little use running a tilt against modern philosophy; it is worse than idle to dub it with such names as "cold, cheerless, materialistic," and to ascribe to

* Published by James Burns, 15, Southampton Row, Holborn, London.

it the aim of "crushing out the great heart of humanity." Philosophy speaks according to her lights. Her aim is truth, not the training of the emotions. Men do not wish to believe that they are dust, to dust returning—brief bubbles on the great ocean of life, appearing but to disappear. Be assured, that if they believe this they are convinced against their will. I speak of men in their better moments, not as when, sense-ridden, they are ready to barter their birthright for a mess of pottage. It is absurd to blame Philosophy for not enlightening men as to their future, for her very end and aim is to gain light, and she gives us all she can. There is certainly a tendency among men to shut their eyes to evidence when it tells against their opinions, but just in so far as they give way to this tendency, they become unphilosophic. Science and Philosophy are good; no evil will come from them; though much may come from an erroneous notion of what Science and Philosophy have to teach, and this erroneous notion, it seems to me, Dr. Sexton is doing his best to encourage.

As we draw to the close of Dr. Sexton's pamphlet we find that all his arguments for the existence of a Deity have been a mere concession to our weakness, since the matter has already been put beyond the reach of doubt by the elaboration, perfection, and popularization of the old *à priori* argument by Mr. Gillespie of Torbanehill. "It were as easy," we are told, "to upset the propositions of Euclid as those of Mr. Gillespie." And yet all men are not of one opinion with regard to theology, though there has seldom been a heretic in geometry! Strange the difference of credit attaching to the propositions of Euclid of Alexandria, and to those of Mr. Gillespie of Torbanehill! Were we obliged to encounter Mr. Gillespie, this declaration from Dr. Sexton would be discouraging; but, as good luck will have it, we are not called upon to cope with this unanswerable logician, for the simple reason that if the Deity exists, his existence

is a matter of fact, and no matter of fact is susceptible of demonstration. All deduction is hypothetical, and its sphere is strictly confined to the relation of ideas. Perhaps, then, what Mr. Gillespie has so firmly established is, not the existence of the Deity as a matter of fact, but the idea of his existence as a necessity of thought. Even this, it would seem, affords no fit ground for a lengthy discussion. Either there has been a beginning or there has not. If there has not, then a First Cause is out of the question; if there has, it is as easy to conceive that Matter came first and developed into Mind, as that Mind came first, and created Matter. I say the one is as conceivable as the other, because neither is so; the limits of our conception being determined by our experience, while of an absolute commencement we have had no experience.

Abandoning, therefore, a dispute which must of necessity be barren of results, let us examine whether Dr. Sexton has brought forward such arguments as render the existence of a Personal Deity (for it is for that Dr. Sexton contends) probable as a matter of fact. Now, the first thing which strikes us is, that not one of the arguments used is drawn from Spiritualism; all are derived from the much-maligned Science and Philosophy of modern times. Perhaps the two authors upon whom Dr. Sexton has levied the heaviest contributions are Mr. Grove and Mr. Charles Bray, one of whom, so far as I know, has not turned his attention to Spiritualism; the other, accepting the facts, expressly repudiates the theory. If any proof, therefore, of natural religion has been adduced in this pamphlet, it is not special to Spiritualism, but common to Science; and we may fairly quarrel with the title-page as raising expectations that are not fulfilled. When Dr. Sexton comes more particularly to the subject of Spiritualism, he contents himself with the simple affirmation that "Atheism and Spiritualism are totally incompatible." Now, Atheism is on the face of it illogical, and is incompatible with common sense and

common honesty. The Atheist is only the theologian in disguise, and with equal arrogance, though without the same excuse, presumes to pronounce a final decision on matters he cannot possibly understand. Disbelief is a very different thing from scepticism, though the latter term is often ignorantly used for denial; it is, in fact, only another form of belief. The man who disbelieves any proposition must believe its contradictory. But, granting all this, it is hard to see why Atheism should be more incompatible with Spiritualism than with anything else. Any arguments which tell for Atheism with regard to what lies on this side the grave, would tell for it equally with regard to what lies beyond it. If we can conceive the material world as originating and sustaining itself, we can conceive the spiritual world as doing the same. But, it may be said, Spiritualism has, at all events, conclusively proved that thought is not the mere result of material organization, and may exist independently of it. What of that? In the first place, Materialism is not necessarily Atheism. It is quite possible to hold that "the Lord liveth and reigneth," and that "He is the same and His years shall not fail," and yet to hold, as the Jews of old seem to have done, before they borrowed the belief in immortality from the mystics of the East, that life terminates at the grave, that God has made our lives as a span, and that "the dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence;" and there would seem to be deep religion in such a conception, if the essence of religion be self-abnegation. In the next place, even if the cause of Atheism is at present identified with that of Materialism, what has the Atheist to do but to change his ground? If matter may be conceived to exist independently of a Deity, why not mind?

Dr. Sexton, then, has not made out a special case for Spiritualism as against Atheism. This, I think, will be readily acknowledged. But in the arguments he has

drawn from the common stock of scientific knowledge has he proved his point? Or has he not rather mistaken altogether what is within the power of Science to accomplish? If I object to Dr. Sexton's line of argument, it must not be understood that I have any wish to call in question his conclusion; but because an object may be legitimate is no reason that it should be compassed by fraud and violence.

Dr. Sexton's argument may be summed up thus: Though we think that we know a great deal about Matter, the only thing of which we have any real knowledge is Force. We know only of one originator of Force, and that is Will. Will implies Intelligence. We have therefore no right to deny that wherever we find Force there also is Intelligence. This Intelligence must be conscious, because unconscious intelligence is nonsense. The conclusion we are desired to draw is, that Science proves that everything going on in the world about us is the direct result of the conscious action of a Supreme Intelligence. It is my purpose to show that hardly one of the above propositions is true, and the conclusion ill-concluded.

As my general attitude is to be thus hostile, I am glad to be able to agree at starting with the Doctor's remarks as to the more extended acquaintance we possess with Spirit than with Matter. True, we know neither the one nor the other in themselves; our knowledge is confined to their modifications. But external phenomena, or modifications of matter, are revealed to us by means of the senses, which are the channels of communication between Spirit and Matter. In the case of all external phenomena, then, we study Spirit and Matter in their mutual relations, and any knowledge we gain of modifications of matter is accompanied by a corresponding knowledge of modifications of mind. Sensations are thus common ground between Spirit and Matter. But with regard to Emotions, Thoughts, and Volitions, how stands the

case? Here we have plentiful knowledge of modifications of mind not necessarily accompanied by a knowledge of corresponding modifications of matter. It is true such knowledge may be had, and is being rapidly gained by the advance of physiology: but that is another question; the point to be insisted on here is, that we start with a far wider knowledge of Spirit than of Matter. Accordingly, we find that savages invariably explain Nature by reference to themselves; we find also in Dr. Sexton's school of thought manifest traces of the same primitive tendency.

But while admitting that our knowledge of Spirit is more extensive than that of Matter, can we go on to say that the only thing with which we have any acquaintance is Force, as Dr. Sexton, following in the steps of Mr. Charles Bray, would have us do? Let us see what this means. Mr. Grove says ("Correlation of Physical Forces," p. 22), "I use the term Force in reference to them (the affections of matter) as meaning the active principle inseparable from matter which is supposed to induce its various changes." On which Bray remarks: "But as the 'various changes' are the only things known to us why assume that they are inseparable from matter, or that there is any matter at all?" Now, in the first place, it is surely a contradiction to assert that there is change, and yet to deny that there is anything which changes; and in the second place, what is really and directly known to us is neither Spirit itself, nor yet Matter, nor yet Force, but merely a series of subjective states. Our minds are so constituted that we cannot help believing some of these subjective states to be caused from without. Further, while we seem compelled on the one hand to believe that there is something which experiences the subjective changes of which we are conscious, so we seem compelled on the other hand to believe that there is something which undergoes the objective changes which are supposed to correspond with them. The former something we call Spirit, the

latter Matter; but we know neither the one nor the other in itself, only their changes; and, moreover, it is our knowledge of the series of mental states alone which is primary. An accomplished metaphysician (*pace ejus dixerim*) like Mr. Bray, is of course perfectly aware of this. He says: "But when we speak of either matter or force we speak only of the external cause of our sensations and ideas; why not then continue to use the term matter as heretofore?" His answer is, that Force is a more convenient term, as being more general, and including both sides of creation—Matter and Spirit. "Force, in its different modes of action, as Light, Heat, Electricity, Galvanism, Chemical Affinity, Attraction, and Repulsion, is sufficient to produce half the phenomena around us. Life and Mind, which are correlates of Force, or other modes of its action, are sufficient to produce the other half." The reason urged in favour of substituting the term Force for the term Matter seems to tell quite in the opposite direction. Doubtless it is an advantage to have a common term embracing both Matter and Spirit; but the advantage of this is slight compared with the disadvantage of using a general term to the exclusion of a special one. However much a higher intelligence might afford to confound the human mind with lower natural agencies, surely to us it is all-important to have a term which will distinguish ourselves from what is not ourselves, the thing which receives impressions from the thing which causes impressions? But even if it were ever so desirable that Matter should be dethroned, and its very name and notion banished from our minds, still there is no reason why Force should reign in its stead. Matter has, at all events, a show of legitimacy; Force is a mere modern upstart. Matter we seem compelled by the constitution of our minds to believe in; with regard to Force we are under no such compulsion. Let us briefly review the whole question, and see what can be said by the partisans of either claimant.

So far as immediate knowledge is concerned, we are confined within the narrow limits of our own minds. All that we are aware of are certain mental states. Our consciousness is presented with a perpetual series of ideas and feelings, or, as Hume calls them, impressions. To a certain class of impressions, namely, sensations, we find ourselves obliged to assign an external cause. Reason, however, tells us that of the cause itself we can know nothing; we can only study it in its effects, and these are sense-impressions. The external cause it has been the custom to call by the time-honoured name of matter. We are now told that we ought to call it force. It matters little by what name we call it, so long as we bear in mind that we are completely ignorant of it. We may remark, however, in passing, that even the slight advantage claimed for the new term by Mr. Bray, namely, that it includes spirit as well as matter, is negatived by the fact that we have already a term in use of equal comprehensiveness. The term "substance" is used equally for the unknown recipient of impressions, and for the unknown cause of them.

So far, we have looked at the question from the metaphysician's point of view, and we have found that, instead of our knowledge being confined to Force, we have no knowledge whatever of Force. Let us now look at it from the point of view of the scientific man. Science, being "educated common-sense," does not trouble her head any more than the vulgar with the perplexing problems of metaphysics. With what then does Science deal? She is never weary of proclaiming that she deals only with phenomena. These are of two kinds, internal and external. Internal phenomena are the states of mind already spoken of. What then are external phenomena? The raw material furnished by the senses is worked up by the subtle chemistry of the brain into a form very different from that under which it entered the laboratory. The picture of the world in our minds is something that could

only exist for beings constituted like ourselves. This picture is no stationary one, but a dissolving view; any portion of it regarded as separate from the rest is called a phenomenon. But to Science the world is a real world, and no picture—no whisper from the regions outlying consciousness, no revelation from the thing which is other than oneself. To the eye of Science there are *bond fide* bodies existing outside of us, whose laws it is her province to explore. These bodies act and re-act upon one another, and Science observes certain uniformities to exist in the mode of their inter-action. These uniformities she calls "laws of phenomena." Beyond these laws Science can never get. She can tell somewhat of the order in which phenomena take place, can distinguish between variable and invariable conjunctions; but why any one phenomenon should be succeeded by any other is a problem she does not attempt to explain. She accepts the facts as she finds them, only examining how these facts may be, most conveniently assorted and brought under heads; if possible, under a single head. Those, therefore, who maintain that events take place according to fixed unvarying laws, do not imagine, if they know what they are about, that they are solving the mystery of the universe. On the contrary, they mean thereby that they cannot solve it, that they know how things take place and cannot tell why. What then is Force? It is a convenient term to express a certain ascertained order of phenomena, nothing more. Force is not the efficient of phenomena. Science knows nothing of efficiency. It is merely a shorthand expression for a series of physical antecedents and consequents. To suppose that one body cannot act from a distance upon another except through the intervention of something called Force, is the old error exposed by Brown of believing "power" to be an entity existing apart from substances. From the point of view then of the man of science, we find that about Force, in any sense in which it may be used to denote

more than phenomena, we know absolutely nothing. Let us look at a particular instance. Gravity or attraction is one of the Forces, or rather forms of Force, of which we now-a-days hear so much. Now, what in this case is really known to us? Simply the fact that bodies tend towards one another in a certain way. The force of gravity or attraction, or whatever we may please to call it, is simply a figment, a kind of presiding deity, by a belief in which we are saved from the Fetishism of supposing that individual bodies are self-directing. There are three stages of philosophy. In the first, you explain a thing by itself; in the second you explain it by something else;* in the third, you don't explain it at all. This last, though appearances may be against it, is the truly scientific stage, and our age is a Socrates to its predecessors.

But not to combat Dr. Sexton merely on general grounds, let us consider the particular kinds of knowledge which he supposes us to have of Force.

Motion, he says, is the condition of human cognition, and motion "must be regarded as a particular manifestation of force." "We see in consequence of the motion of light in falling on the eye; hear through a movement of the atmosphere; taste only when a sapid body becomes dissolved—that is, undergoes molecular change; smell when odoriferous particles are escaping into the atmosphere, and are thus brought into contact with the Schneiderian membrane of the nose; and touch when resistance is offered—that is, motion interrupted." Now there is no firmer friend to Force than Mr. Charles Bray, and *he* says that "motion is nothing—it is the mere mode of action of Force, and the transference of it in greater or less intensity from one point of space to another." By this reckoning it would seem that since "all knowledge is limited to motion," and motion is not

* This second stage includes part of the first and the whole of the second of M. Comte's three stages.

Force but merely its mode of action, and Force only acts in relation to bodies, that all knowledge must really be limited to bodies. But perhaps Dr. Sexton co-ordinates mechanical motion with the various forms of force. Let us inquire what motion really is. It has certainly a name to itself; but is it, therefore, a thing in itself? Evidently not. Motion is change in position, and position is relation in space. Motion is therefore a word indicative of a series of relations existing between bodies or between different parts of the same body. In fact, turn the matter how we will, we shall never get an inch beyond phenomena—either external phenomena, which are states of body, or internal phenomena, which are states of mind. The province of science is to ascertain the sequences that obtain among these two classes of phenomena, in themselves and relative to each other.

We have thus found that from the metaphysician's point of view, if Matter be unknowable, Force is no less so; and that from the point of view of the man of science, Force is only a convenient term for registering phenomena. So much, then, for Dr. Sexton's first proposition, that the only thing of which we have any real knowledge is Force.

The second proposition which Dr. Sexton advances is this, that "in all our experience we know of but one originator of force, and that is will."

Now, what will originates, or seems to originate, is motion; and we have seen already that motion and Force are two different things; better still, we have Dr. Sexton's own warrant for putting a distinction between them. He quotes approvingly from Charles Bray to the effect that force "is not motion, but the cause of motion; it is not the action, but the agent." What Dr. Sexton ought to have said, then, is, that the only force, or origin of motion, of which we are conscious is will, from whence he would have gone on to deduce that wherever we see

motion, that is to say, wherever we infer force, we must believe in the presence of will.

Into the interminable controversy about the Will I do not care at present to enter; nor shall I follow Dr. Sexton's example and assume it as decided in favour of either side. Suffice it here to remark that the position that will does originate motion, or is anything more than an occasional accompaniment thereof is becoming more unsafe every day, and is expressly repudiated by that very philosophy of Force upon which Dr. Sexton draws so largely. That philosophy represents Mind, and with it Will, as a mere correlate of the other forms of Force, Vital, Chemical, and Mechanical, as only one among the many shapes assumed by that mysterious Proteus who is only known to us by his disguises, and whom we have never yet been able to seize and force into a confession of his tale of wonder. The doctrine that must be admitted to be prevalent to-day, whether we like it or not, is the reverse of that the truth of which is assumed by Dr. Sexton. Living beings, we are told, are not fountains of causation. It is true we may see animals now lying at rest, now starting into sudden activity, without apparent cause. But appearances deceive. The air of spontaneity attaching to their movements is an illusion arising from the fact that the antecedents are not, as in the case of material objects, physical, but mental, and consequently hidden from our observation. Could we follow out the whole chain of causation, we should see motion following on volition, while volition followed on a chain of mental antecedents, the earliest of which was the result of some action of matter upon the senses, which itself had either a material phenomenon or a volition for its antecedent, and so on for ever.* If this doctrine be true, Will has no title to

* These words were written in 1874. The author is aware that they do not represent the latest theory of science, in which consciousness and physical changes are regarded as two parallel series which never

be called an originator of motion : it is merely one link in an endless chain ; but I am the less anxious to urge such considerations, as we may with all safety grant Dr. Sexton everything he requires under the present head, not only that Will is an absolute commencement, a tiny First Cause in every speck of humanity, the child and image of the great First Cause of all, but also that it is a power of contraries, making itself to be or not to be, and not merely determining its existence, but its form. All this may be granted without involving the final conclusion.

The second proposition, therefore, we may make a present of to Dr. Sexton, unruffled by the consideration that he has laid violent hands upon it. The third proposition is, that Will implies Intelligence. So, no doubt, it does ; but not at all to the extent that Dr. Sexton insinuates. We must recollect that in this question we are not concerned with Will as a power capable of exercising control over the desires, but simply as a force producing motion. In the latter sense, no one claims it as the special prerogative of man. Now, we must recollect that the lowest animal originates, or seems to originate, motion equally with man, a fact which Dr. Sexton seems strangely to ignore. The amount of intelligence, therefore, implied in the origination of motion is not necessarily greater than that of the snail or worm. But as this proposition hangs on in some measure to the last, let us not mar the liberality of our gift by cutting off the appendage. Let us make a still further concession to Dr. Sexton, granting, as before, that there is in man a power called Will, no mere phenomenon among phenomena, no pool supplied by streamlets of desire, which are to issue again in action, but itself a well-head of causation, and, besides, that it is in virtue of his being the conscious possessor of intelligence that this power intermingle. This theory pictures as it were a vast chain of physical causation, some few links of which are fully irradiated by consciousness.

resides in him. Instead, therefore, of efficient causes being entirely hidden from our view, we have a full knowledge of one. Let us see what use Dr. Sexton makes of his assumption and our concession. "Hence reasoning from what we know as falling within the range of human experience, to what occurs in the great universe around, there is but one conclusion to which we can logically come, which is that a Divine volition governs the whole, and that without this primal power nothing had ever existed." This is logical, certainly, if it be logical to generalize from a single instance. We know one efficient cause; this is, therefore, the only one. Shades of Bacon and Mill, your labours were spent in vain! Our concessions, as thus turned to account by Dr. Sexton, of course, necessitate the admission of what we have set down as the fourth step in his argument, namely, that we have no right to deny that wherever we find Force, there also is Intelligence. We have no right to deny it, certainly, according to Dr. Sexton's logic, in which a single instance, in a case precluding observation and experiment, is sufficient to prove a rule.

Here let us recapitulate. We have seen that outside ourselves, at all events, we nowhere find Force, but only its manifestations, and we have reduced the object of our knowledge from an abstraction, the cause of an abstraction (force, the cause of motion), to the series of phenomena with which we really are acquainted. Not to seem captious, however, we have spoken of motion as a real thing; and we have conceded that within ourselves we are conscious of a force that originates motion, namely, Will; we have further conceded that Will never exists apart from the highest form of Intelligence of which we know anything; thus granting, when our concessions are put together, that there is one efficient cause known to us, namely, an intelligent Will. But this is not enough for Dr. Sexton. He goes on to ask us

to grant that, because an Intelligent Will is known to originate some phenomena, it must, therefore, originate all; because there is one kind of efficient cause, there is, therefore, no other. Here our complacency fails us. We are willing to stretch a point to oblige Dr. Sexton, but we cannot fly in the face of all the canons of Induction.

How comes it, then, that some people find a certain degree of force in arguments like those of Dr. Sexton? The reason is not far to seek. Will is the only antecedent of motion of which we are conscious. Our conceptive faculty is limited by our experience. Will being the only antecedent of motion, other than motion itself, of which we can conceive, we leap rashly to the conclusion that it is the only one possible.

Having thus come to issue with Dr. Sexton as to the logical necessity of supposing an Intelligent Will to underlie the phenomena of the universe, it is superfluous to discuss whether or no this intelligence must be conscious. I may remark, however, in passing, that it is not quite so certain as Dr. Sexton takes for granted that unconscious intelligence is nonsense. We have heard a great deal of late from high authorities about "unconscious cerebration," and though it does not seem to me that the phenomena of dreaming, of sleep-walking-and-talking, and of Mesmerism, can fairly be taken as proof of unconscious action of the mind, because the mind may be perfectly conscious of what it is doing at the moment, though it utterly forgets it afterwards, still, even in our waking hours, we seem to have proofs of mental action, unattended with consciousness. When ideas suddenly start up in the mind, we know not how, there must be some subtle chain of association which links them on to the ideas that have gone before. Sometimes, by a painful effort, we are able to compel our minds to trace out the missing links; more often they defy our scrutiny. But at all events, whether discovered or undiscovered after-

wards, they were not, at the time being, consciously present to the mind in the same way that the thoughts they connect together are. The mind does not travel slowly and industriously up hill and down dale, but puts on seven-leagued boots, and stalks from hill-top to hill-top. From such simple considerations, and without having recourse to physiology, we would seem to be warranted in inferring that consciousness is only an accident of intelligence.

In the cases above spoken of, the transition from an abnormal to a normal state may possibly superinduce forgetfulness; but in the case of a train of thought carried on in the mind when awake, if we are equally conscious of the whole of it, why should we remember one part and forget another?

I turn now to the second religious doctrine which Spiritualism is supposed to place beyond the reach of doubt, namely, the immortality of the soul. On this point I may be very brief. Continued existence after death is of course not the same thing with immortality. The most that the survival of one change can do is to afford a presumption that we shall survive others. But the pitcher may go often to the well, and yet be broken at the last. Again, therefore, Dr. Sexton, in his eagerness to advance the claims of Spiritualism, seems to have overshot the mark of sobriety. But in this case I have little quarrel with him, since to most minds a future life and immortality mean one and the same thing, and there is, therefore, not so much fear that when certain pretensions put forward on behalf of Spiritualism are found to be empty, its just claims will be disallowed.

It is on the question of the existence of a Deity that I conceive Dr. Sexton to have taken up ground injurious at once to Spiritualism, and to the doctrine he seeks to establish by its means—to Spiritualism, since he has not even attempted to justify the claims he has put forward for it; to the doctrine in question as resting its evidence on a false basis. We have seen that Dr. Sexton's pre-

mises, where they are not demonstrably false, are assumptions of points still under dispute, and that even granting these assumptions, they fail to establish the desired conclusion—that conclusion being that the existence of God is proved by science. Do I mean then to deny the existence of God? Far be it from me. We have each and all of us a witness to the unseen in our hearts; but it was not science that put it there. Science does not give us our conception of a Deity; the utmost it can do is to modify that conception, so as to bring it into accordance with advancing knowledge; it may criticize, but cannot create. It is a great mistake to fancy that religion can be established by argument, and that the intellect can pierce the clouds of heaven. The scientific man on being informed that “all Nature proclaims an Infinite Mind that governs the universe” calmly assures us that “he has no need of the hypothesis of God;” and he is right too, since science does not pretend to go beyond second causes or to transcend phenomena. If Dr. Sexton, therefore, is wise, he will not entrust a doctrine the truth of which he has at heart to the tender mercies of such an ally. He will admit that the spheres of religion and science are distinct; and will plead for the recognition of God as a necessity of the heart, but not as a necessity of logic.

VALUE OF *À PRIORI* REASONING IN THEOLOGY.

IF it be possible to demonstrate the existence of a Deity, it is right that we should apply ourselves diligently to the comprehension of the successive steps of reasoning which lead up to so important a conclusion. Doubters and deniers, however intelligent and honest they may be esteemed, are, on this supposition, chargeable with downright dishonesty, inexcusable negligence, or invincible dulness. For a demonstrative argument enchains the assent of the understanding. It is impossible to conceive the conclusion not to be true, if the premises from which it is deduced be admitted. And we may remark here that, though much valid reasoning may be founded on a false or doubtful assumption, we cannot pronounce a truth to be demonstrated unless the argument start from self-evident principles. When the premises are self-evident, the ultimate conclusion, however remote, however, in itself, obscure, borrows all their strength, provided no violation of the laws of reasoning has been permitted to creep in between. If any one, therefore, were to demonstrate the existence of a Deity, he would for ever shut the mouths of opponents, at least, of all on whom it would be worth while to expend argument. Whoever attempted to gainsay him, would have to take his choice between the epithets of "knave" and "fool." Such being the case, I was surprised at an assertion thrown out by Dr. Sexton (a gentleman for whom I entertain a sincere respect), to the effect that this feat had actually been accomplished

by Mr. Gillespie, of Torbanehill. But it seems that Dr. Sexton is not without good company in this opinion. Sir William Hamilton and Lord Brougham, with a host of other luminaries, appear to have been of the same way of thinking. At least, they bestow high praise on Mr. Gillespie's demonstration of the existence of a God. Now, a demonstration is worthless if it do not prove its point. We are entitled, therefore, to infer that these persons shared Dr. Sexton's opinion, that the fact of the existence of a Deity had been established by Mr. Gillespie "with the certainty of a mathematical demonstration."

If this achievement has really been performed, our first thought naturally is, "What a pity it was not accomplished sooner!" It is perfectly appalling to look over an old book-shop, and observe the amount of paper, and, no doubt, thought, that has been wasted on both sides of the question—wasted, I say, because, what admits of demonstration, is no fit subject for controversy! But, it is when we turn to our own times, which touch us more quickly, that the regret becomes most poignant. How many a true and tender soul has there been of late, in this period of the decay of old methods of thought, who has found head and heart hopelessly at war—to whom the sun seemed blotted from the heavens if he were deprived of his faith in a God such as he had been wont to believe in, and who yet could find no reason for his faith! And what anguish might have been spared to these if only Mr. Gillespie had been at hand to heal!

It also cannot fail to strike us as a little remarkable that a conclusion, all the data of which have been in possession of mankind so far back as the constitution of their minds has been the same as at present, should have been left to a gentleman of this late period to arrive at—not so left because unattempted, but after having been tried again and again, and all to no purpose, even by such intellects as those of Clarke and Locke. The inadequacy of the reasoning employed by these two great thinkers,

has been ably pointed out by Mr. Gillespie, who thereby reminds us of the custom of the priesthood at Aricia, where it was incumbent upon him who aspired to serve at the shrine to slay his predecessors in single combat before handling the holy things himself.

Such thoughts as these rush into the mind on hearing that the controversy of ages has been laid at rest for ever. But it would not be the first time a great truth has been missed, for want of some one able to put two and two together; nor the first time men have perished when aid was within their reach. Moreover, Mr. Gillespie has had the advantage of learning from the failures of his predecessors. But were the matter ever so improbable, it would be poor reasoning, indeed, to pronounce it impossible on no other grounds than that.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the chain of reasoning advanced by Mr. Gillespie in his "Argument, *a priori*, for the Being and the Attributes of the Lord God, the Absolute One, and First Cause."

By way of preamble I will venture to make a suggestion. It is much to be wished that in some future edition of the "Argument, *a priori*" (say in a "Sceptic's own"), when certain deficiencies, which I hope to point out, shall have been corrected, Mr. Gillespie would complete the scientific appearance of his work by prefixing, after the manner of Euclid, such definitions, axioms, and postulates as he has made use of. No doubt the axioms are hardly, if at all, more than what are common to all reasoning whatsoever. Still, in dealing with so capital an argument, it seems desirable that even these should be set down. Every reader would in that case know exactly what ground he was treading upon.

Now for the task before us.

DIVISION I.—PART I.

Mr. Gillespie's first proposition lays down that "Infinity of Extension is necessarily existing." Under the head of this proposition I have simply to invite the reader's attention to the extreme modesty, and consequent safety, of Mr. Gillespie's initial assumption. We are merely asked to admit that we have in our minds an idea of space, and that we cannot, by any means, get that idea out of our minds. The following axiom, or postulate, "We cannot conceive the external Infinity of Extension non-existent," joined to the definition, "Everything the existence of which we cannot but believe, is necessarily existing," results in the proposition stated above. Whether space is to be considered a substance or a mode, whether it exists in the mind only, or out of it as well, whether it be God or matter, or an attribute of either, or a form of human thought, we are, happily, not called upon to decide before starting. Otherwise, some little time might elapse before we got fairly on our way. For with regard to the nature of space, every possible opinion is maintained by some one with pertinacity. But Mr. Gillespie's demonstration is intended for all, and he very properly takes up his position on common ground. He has his own opinion, as we know from other sources, which he holds with a plenary assurance, namely, that space is a mere attribute of a substance—God; but he does not seek to cram it down our throats at starting. In fact, we set out from the position that "space is—space," a doctrine which Mr. Gillespie himself holds in no high esteem, but which is a good comfortable one, nevertheless.

Proposition two lays down that "Infinity of Extension is necessarily indivisible." We shall see that this is as unexceptionable as the preceding, when once we understand the meaning of the term "divisible." And this ought not to be a matter of extraordinary difficulty, since we have a clear definition given us—"Divisibility" means

"possibility of separation," and again, "To say Infinity of Extension is necessarily indivisible, is as much as to say, the parts of Infinity of Extension are necessarily indivisible from each other." Now, to divide matter is to alter the relative position of its parts in space; but we do not, and cannot, alter the position of the parts (if the term be allowed) of space itself. We can divide space mentally, in the sense of fixing our attention on a certain amount of space to the exclusion of the rest. In any other sense the division of space, mental or actual, involves a glaring violation of the Law of Contradiction. It amounts to supposing a certain portion (metaphorically speaking) of space to be, and yet not to be, the self-same portion of space. It is, then, only by a metaphor that we speak of space being "mentally divisible." We speak thus "in the sense of partial consideration only." The metaphor, it is true, is a valuable one, and there is no need to abandon it. But, in the literal sense of the words, Mr. Gillespie's second proposition defies contradiction. Before passing on, it will be well to observe that we grant, and by the constitution of our minds are compelled to grant, more than Mr. Gillespie requires. For his purpose it is only necessary we should admit that Infinity of Extension is indivisible; but it is equally true that pure space or extension, whether finite or infinite, is indivisible.

To this proposition a scholium is appended, to the effect that "It is a necessary consequence, that the thing, the parts of which are divisible from each other, is not Infinity of Extension; nor any part of it." This speaks for itself.

We have, then, a corollary to the same proposition, setting forth that "Infinity of Extension is necessarily immoveable." This is defined to be "equal to saying, the parts of Infinity of Extension are necessarily immoveable among themselves." To the corollary again we have a scholium which declares "that the thing, the parts of which are moveable among themselves, is not Infinity

of Extension; nor any part of it." Both to the corollary and its scholium we must heartily accede.

Proposition 3 lays down that "There is necessarily a Being of Infinity of Extension." Against this no one can have any reasonable objection. For a thing must either be capable of existing by itself, or else not. If the former is the case with "Infinity of Extension," that is just what is meant by the term "Being." If the latter, then we have our being, or substance, in the thing on which Infinity of Extension depends. This is a dilemma from which there is no escape.

The wording of part of what comes under the head of the present proposition is open to a trifling criticism. Mr. Gillespie says, "First, If Infinity of Extension subsist without a substratum, then it is a substance. And if any one should deny that it is a substance, it so subsisting; to prove, beyond contradiction, the utter absurdity of such denial, we have but to defy him to show, why Infinity of Extension is not a substance, so far forth as it can subsist by itself, or without a substratum." If this be meant as an argument, and it is put in that shape, it assumes the point at issue. But in point of fact what Mr. Gillespie means is this—"If you object to my using the word 'being' interchangeably with 'substance,' show some reason for your objection." He says this knowing that no good reason will be forthcoming. But surely it would have been neater to have formally laid down the implied definition, "A being is that which can subsist by itself." Anyone who dislikes this definition, instead of clamouring for its removal, should desist from arguing with Mr. Gillespie. Henceforward, then, "there is necessarily a Being of Infinity of Extension." The B is Mr. Gillespie's. We do not generally spell "thing" with a T.*

* "Thing," without note or comment, is rather a question-begging word. It is used above in its very broadest sense, in which, so far from being opposed to "person," it includes it. The reader will kindly bear in mind that these are two distinct propositions—1, God exists; 2, The existence of God admits of demonstration. No man, I conceive, is warranted in denying the first or in asserting the second.

The statement we are next called upon to accept, in proposition 4, is that "The Being of Infinity of Extension is necessarily of unity and simplicity."

Now if the being here spoken of be infinity of extension itself, the acknowledged indivisibility of infinity of extension carries the two characteristics above mentioned along with it. The other being requires more looking after. Mr. Gillespie's method of proving his point in this case is, briefly, as follows:—"It is intuitively evident," he says, "that the Substratum of Infinity of Extension can be no more divisible than Infinity of Extension itself." Then infinity of extension being, admittedly, of unity and simplicity, because indivisible, it follows that the substratum must be so also. But what is meant by asserting it to be intuitively evident that the substratum of infinity of extension can be no more divisible than infinity of extension itself? This point will require some moments' reflection to elucidate it. Is it meant that, as a general truth, whatever can be predicated of an attribute can be predicated of the substance which has the attribute? Let us investigate a particular case—a lump of sugar is a being. (Start not, reader! We are bound to call it so.) This being is possessed of an attribute, sweetness. Sweetness again may be said to be a simple quality incapable of analysis. Yet we are not forced to the conclusion that we cannot melt a lump of sugar in our tea. The sweetness may be one and indivisible, without the sugar, of which it is an attribute, being so. Since, therefore, the proposition under consideration is in this sense obviously untrue, we must not so understand it, if there be a better sense to put on it. But perhaps it will occur to the reader that while in the illustration chosen we have been dealing with a substance as clothed in the concrete, Mr. Gillespie never deals with it but as in the nudity of the abstract, that while we have been thinking of the whole congeries of attributes which forms our idea of a substance, Mr. Gillespie means by the terms only the

incognisable something which underlies, or is supposed to underlie, these attributes. This is undeniable: but, at the same time, the case is not altered in whatever sense the word "substance" or "substratum" be understood. It is true, indeed, that whatever may be predicated of an attribute may be predicated of the incognisable something underlying it in respect of the given attribute. But inasmuch as the incognisable something may have other attributes, in respect of which the thing in question may not be predicable, it follows that we are not at liberty to make the predication concerning the substance in itself. But to say that something may be predicated of a substance in respect of a given attribute amounts to no more than saying that something may be predicated of the given attribute itself. The very same lesson might have been derived from a contemplation of the humble being we before selected as an instance. Though a lump of sugar cannot be pronounced to be in itself simple and incapable of analysis, yet so far forth as the attribute sweetness is concerned, it certainly is so; but this again is a mere repetition of the statement that the attribute in question is simple and incapable of analysis. Applying these considerations to Mr. Gillespie's words, we see that from the indivisibility of infinity of extension he could only have been warranted in inferring that the substratum of infinity of extension is indivisible so far forth as its attribute of infinite extension is concerned, which is only another way of saying that infinity of extension is itself indivisible. Neither, then, can this be what Mr. Gillespie means; for we cannot think he would have omitted so essential a limitation. It is not, therefore, as an instance of a general axiom at all that the proposition in question is pronounced self-evident; but we are to understand that there are circumstances in this particular case which render it self-evident that a certain predicate is as applicable to the substratum we are concerned with as to its attribute. And so, no doubt, there are. For suppose a

thing infinitely extended, filling all space in the height, and breadth, and depth thereof. Such a thing must be completely motionless and indivisible. We cannot divide (except in the sense of partial consideration) without moving, and motion is impossible where there is no room to move in.*

After this comes a corollary, not derived directly from proposition 4, but from the assertion, whose meaning we have just been investigating, that was thrown out in support of it. The corollary lays down that "The parts of the Substratum of Infinity of Extension are necessarily immoveable among themselves."

After this again we have a scholium, which runs thus—"On the whole, therefore, the thing the parts of which are divisible from each other, is not the Substratum of Infinity of Extension, nor any part of it. And, the thing, the parts of which are moveable among themselves, is not the Substratum, nor any part of it: Part, in the sense of partial consideration only." To the separate members of this scholium, under a slightly different form, we have already said "Amen:" but a good thing will bear repeating.

Next, Mr. Gillespie proceeds to demonstrate that "The Material Universe is finite in extension." This is introduced as a sub-proposition. Some explanatory remarks are prefixed under the heading of "Postulata," of which I venture to give the gist in my own language. In the first place, Mr. Gillespie shrewdly remarks that only one reason can, by any possibility, be assigned for the allegation that "the Material Universe is of Infinity of Extension," to wit, that it is "the Substratum of Infinity of Extension." In other words, no reason can be assigned for the doctrine that the material universe is of infinity of extension, except that the said universe is infinite in

* The impossibility of motion in a plenum is conceded throughout this paper. It might be controverted, in which case Mr. Gillespie's demonstration would break down at an earlier stage.

extension. This is honourably distinguished by Mr. Gillespie from "an assertion made without the support of any reason at all." Perhaps the reader may not take so lenient a view. In the next place, the doctrine that "the Material Universe is a Substratum of Infinity of Extension" is identified by our author with contending that "the Material Universe is a thorough plenum—which is the equivalent of an absolute or completely incompressible solid—of Infinity of Extension." We, by the laws of dialectic, are bound to follow suit. Before plunging into the proof of the proposition we are now engaged on, it may be advantageous to take a review of the present state of the argument. It has been admitted, and must be admitted by all when the meaning of the words is understood, that "There is necessarily a Being of Infinity of Extension." In view hereof three hypotheses may be started—first, that the Material Universe is this Being; second, that Infinity of Extension is itself the Being; third, that Something Else is the Being.

The opponent, imaginary or otherwise, who maintains the first of these hypotheses, is soon forced to bite the dust. "We know of a certainty," as Mr. Gillespie justly declares, "that some parts of the Material Universe are divisible from each other;" and we know it thus certainly, as he does not add, because experience has often apprised us of their actual division. Then by dint of the first half of the preceding scholium, the adversary is at once laid low. Mr. Gillespie, I am sorry to say, hits him with the other half after he is down. Even apart from this display of vindictiveness, however, the victory redounds more to the discredit of the vanquished than to the glory of the victor. For, if by the "Material Universe" is to be understood "a thorough plenum—which is the equivalent of an absolute or completely incompressible solid—of Infinity of Extension," it involves a palpable contradiction to maintain that the Material Universe is, strictly speaking, infinite. There cannot be such a thing

as a thoroughplenum, if motion be possible—and experience assures us that it is. We do, then, seem to have valid ground of reason against a belief in the omnipresence of matter.

But there is a looser sense that may be put upon the phrase, "infinite extension of matter." It may not be meant that matter is ubiquitous, but only that we should be liable to come across it occasionally, could we travel in a straight line to all eternity; that, however vast the oceans of vacuum traversed, there would still be continents and islands of matter to be encountered, nor would we ever reach an "Ocean-stream," as it were, of emptiness, which would be absolutely without a material shore. In other words, matter and void between them may be infinitely extended, and that not in the sense of void enclosing matter, but of the two occurring everywhere in alternate layers. On this supposition, matter alone is not the substratum of infinity of extension—that is to say, is not, truly and literally, infinitely extended. Infinite extension is not a mere mode of matter and impossible apart from it: because it is equally an attribute of void. This Mr. Gillespie has clearly seen; and he properly concludes, in the scholium appended, that neither in this sense is matter the substratum of infinity of extension. To put it differently, because the extension of matter here spoken of is not truly infinite, not being continuous, he justly maintains that it is not correct to talk of it as infinite. But Mr. Gillespie nowhere shows that matter and void do not extend alternately, in whatsoever proportions, as far as our imaginations can serve to carry us, and farther too, if the latter expression have a meaning. He has not made clear that matter and void, as forming one whole, are not, to translate into his own dialect, the Being which is the Substratum of Infinity of Extension. His scholium does not demonstrate that matter *with* hollow gaps would not serve as the substratum of infinity of extension, but only that matter, with hollow gaps—a quite different thing—will not do so.

The truth is, the question whether there be limits to the habitat, so to speak, of matter, is one which we have no means whatever of deciding. Experience is obviously incapable of an answer; while the "*intellectus nudus*," as represented by Mr. Gillespie, is wisely silent on the subject. The point is not one for the expression of opinion, but for profound ignorance, and the hearty confession of such ignorance.

It is now time that we should advert to the fact that, although to talk in the loose sense described above of the "*infinite extension*" of matter may be very well in common parlance, it will not do in a metaphysical discussion. The assertion that the whole made up of matter and void together is the being which is the substratum of infinity of extension is only another way of enunciating the second hypothesis given above, namely, that infinity of extension is its own substratum. This will be evident from the following considerations:—Infinity of extension being an attribute of matter and void conjointly, it follows that extension itself is equally an attribute of matter and void. This being the case, the substratum of extension, whether finite or infinite, must be looked for only among the qualities which those things have in common; all qualities of matter not shared by void must be purely accidental and irrelevant, and capable of being removed without the substratum of extension being at all affected. What the common quality is need not be a matter of long search, since void possesses no positive qualities but the single one of extension. So that to say matter and void between them extend everywhere, is to say that extension is the substratum of extension, and that the substratum of infinity of extension is no other than infinity of extension itself. Thus we see that the common notion of the infinite extension of matter, when looked into, is found coincident with the second of the three hypotheses with regard to the nature of our necessarily existing "*Being*." To attribute infinity of extension to a

thorough plenum of matter we have found absurd, unless we are prepared to admit that motion is a delusion: but if by the term material universe be meant a combination of matter and void, we have seen no reason for denying it the attribute of infinity of extension.

We now come to a "General Scholium as to Extension," in which Mr. Gillespie calls attention to an ambiguity of language, and (following Locke) proposes a measure for its avoidance. "Here are two sorts of extension. The one sort, that which the Material Universe has: And the other the extension of Infinity of Extension." That is the ambiguity. And the remedy suggested is to confine to the former idea the word "Extension," and to express the latter by the word "Expansion." It is with the latter idea we have been dealing throughout; so that all that has hitherto been said of Extension, the reader must now consider as having been said of Expansion.

With regard to this scholium the commentator is again forced to dissent somewhat from his author. It is true there is an ambiguity to be avoided with regard to the word "extension;" and we much need the sign-post of language to keep us from taking a wrong turn. Nevertheless, I cannot help thinking that to say there are two sorts of extension is a somewhat misleading way of expressing the fact that we sometimes use the word "extension" for space itself, sometimes for the quality of occupying a certain amount of space. This point will bear dwelling upon—Material objects must exist in space, though they may change their whereabouts indefinitely. When we talk of the "extension" of a material object, we do not mean the particular portion of space occupied by it at a given moment, but an amount of space equal to that portion. Wherever an object may be, this amount will be the same, provided the object has not been physically compressed or expanded. In any sense of the word, however, extension is (literally speaking) indivisible.

Matter may be actually moved and divided; not so its extension. It is absurd to speak of the extension of matter as divisible, except arithmetically, or "in the sense of partial consideration only."

From the considerations urged in the general scholium, Mr. Gillespie extracts the doctrine of "penetration." Even where matter exists, there exists besides, on any view of the case, another and immaterial being. Matter does not dislodge space, for the very good reason that there is nothing to dislodge. On the hypothesis, therefore, that our being is infinity of extension itself, the doctrine of penetration expresses no more than the admitted fact that matter exists in space. But on the hypothesis that the thing of which infinite extension is an attribute is something of which we have as yet no cognisance, a more important result follows, namely, that there is a being other than space, which "must penetrate the material universe, and every atom, even the minutest atom of it."

Let us proceed to examine the next link in the chain of reasoning. At the point of the argument we have now reached, Mr. Gillespie seems to think the old honours fail. Not content with calling the thing, which, for aught yet shown, may be nothing more than infinity of extension, a "Being" (it is the B we complain of) he now confers upon it the title of "Spirit." The thing is done rather in a corner—in a sub-scholium. But when the ceremony is over, Mr. Gillespie faces round boldly enough, and declares that no one can "righteously" object to his calling our being an "Infinite Spirit." Now, I venture to think that we may, righteously enough, remark that the term "Spirit" is generally understood to imply more attributes than the sole one of extension, the attributes, to wit, of personality and intelligence; and that since our being may perhaps fail to make good its claim to the possession of these attributes, it is premature to dub it straight off with the appellation "Infinite Spirit." Some people even deny extension of spirit. There is no need

to enter into that question. But because spirit may have extension, it by no means follows that everything which has extension is spirit. However, our dispute is about things, not words. We may call our being by any name that suits Mr. Gillespie, provided we are careful to bear in mind that we not thereby invest it with a single attribute which it is not demonstrated to possess.

Proposition 5 sets forth that "There is necessarily but one Being of Infinity of Expansion." This is quite incontrovertible on the hypothesis which we must never lose sight of, unless forced to relinquish, namely, that infinity expansion may itself be the being. It is evident there can be only one infinity of expansion. For if there were another, where would it be? If it be answered, "In the same place as the first, namely, everywhere," we may safely ask the objector wherein the two differ, so as to prevent our considering them identical? It remains for us to inquire how Mr. Gillespie secures his position on the other possible view. He sets off thus—"And, as 'tis evident there can no more be more than one Substratum of Infinity of Expansion (whatever that Substratum is) than there can be more than one Infinity of Expansion." To which he afterwards adds—"And, therefore, any one who asserts he can suppose two or more necessarily existing beings, each of Infinity of Expansion, is no more to be argued with than he who denies, Whatever is."

Now this is no fit place to quarrel with Mr. Gillespie about his postulates. Still it may be permitted to remark that in view of the mystery of penetration, in initiating us into which Mr. Gillespie has himself played the part of hierophant, this declaration sounds very arbitrary indeed. A spiritual being and a material being can co-exist in the same portion of space. That is granted. Why, therefore, should not a spiritual being co-exist with a thorough plenum of matter, of infinite extension, supposing such a plenum to be, on other grounds, possible? Why not two spiritual beings co-exist throughout space? Why not any

amount of spiritual beings? But we are very ignorant; and Mr. Gillespie may be acquainted with something in the nature of spirit, which renders spiritual beings mutually exclusive as regards space, though matter and spirit are not so. Besides, as we should be put beyond the pale of argument were we to maintain the existence of an infinite number of spiritual beings, each of infinite extension, it will be more discreet not to maintain it. "Then, there is, necessarily, but one Being of Infinity of Expansion." Here ends the First Part of the First Division, and with it our comments thereupon—save for one word in conclusion. The following is the present state of the argument:—Although the universe, which, if we admit the reality of motion, we are compelled to conceive of as a combination of matter and void, may be, nay, to our minds, is of infinite extension, yet that statement amounts to no more than a reiteration of the initial assumption that infinity of extension necessarily exists. Consequently, if Mr. Gillespie can demonstrate that infinity of extension, or as we ought now to call it, expansion, is not itself a being, but a mode of some being or substance other than the universe, he will be fairly on his way to the desired conclusion.

DIVISION I.—PART II.

Proposition 1 asserts that "Infinity of Duration is necessarily existing." Granted. .

Proposition 2 further declares that "Infinity of Duration is necessarily indivisible." Granted also. But the admission will not render our watches superfluous. What Mr. Gillespie means is that we cannot cut time with a knife.

We have next a corollary establishing that "Infinity of Duration is necessarily immoveable." The corollary is tantamount to this proposition—"The parts of Infinity of Duration are necessarily immoveable among themselves,

really or mentally." Certainly we cannot make to-day come after to-morrow, or to-morrow before to-day.

In proposition 3 we have it asserted that "There is necessarily a Being of Infinity of Duration." Most undoubtedly there is something that endures for ever—if nothing else, at least duration itself. Which last is equivalent to saying that we cannot rid our minds of the notion of time, "Because, everything the existence of which we cannot but believe is necessarily existing."

Proposition 4 sets forth that "The Being of Infinity of Duration is necessarily of unity and simplicity."

If the being in question be infinity of duration itself, we may grant this without hesitation or reserve. If it be a substance whose duration is infinite the case will require a keener scrutiny. Let us commence by admitting that the substance if indivisible is necessarily also of unity and simplicity. The question then resolves itself into this—Is a thing which has lasted, and will last for ever, necessarily indivisible? As in the parallel case of extension Mr. Gillespie makes short work of the matter—"For, that the Substratum of Infinity of Duration is no more divisible than Infinity of Duration, is a self-evident truth." Here again we must pause to inquire the meaning. It cannot be meant that in all cases any attribute which may be predicated of an attribute of a substance may be predicated of the substance itself. The meaning therefore must be that, in this particular case, there is something which renders it self-evident that, if a thing had no beginning and cannot be put an end to, neither can it be minced to pieces. And so, in a certain sense, there is. For it may be said that if a thing be cut into halves the thing ceases to exist, and two other things begin to exist in its stead. It is not open to us, therefore, to maintain that any given material object is necessarily eternal. For even if it should never meet with disintegration, it may still be conceived to be divided and so be conceived as ceasing to exist. But

why a substance should not be eternal in some shape or other, if such an expression be allowed, no reason whatever can be assigned. The upshot of the matter is, that Mr. Gillespie's proposition is true, if we are to regard change of form as equivalent to the cessation of existence: otherwise there is no reason why a thing should not be at the same time divisible and eternal. Mr. Gillespie's use of language may of course be the correct one, but it is important not to confuse the two notions.

We now advance to scholium 1 on the preceding proposition. "The Substratum of Infinity of Duration being necessarily indivisible, that is, its parts being necessarily indivisible from each other; it is a necessary consequence, that the thing, the parts of which are divisible from each other, is not such Substratum, nor any part thereof." This is certainly a necessary consequence in the sense above defined.

After this comes a corollary. "It is a corollary from the proposition, The parts of the Substratum of Infinity of Duration are necessarily indivisible from each other, that they are necessarily immoveable among themselves." This also must be granted with the same restriction.

Then scholium 2—"And the parts of the Substratum of Infinity of Duration being necessarily immoveable among themselves; it is a necessary consequence, that the thing, the parts of which are moveable among themselves, is not such Substratum, nor any part thereof." Again undeniable, if to change form, or to become many instead of one, is the same thing as ceasing to exist. Of course, in that sense only, undeniable. For to say that the parts of matter are moveable with respect to position is no argument at all against matter, in one shape or another, being eternal. With respect to time indeed (and a similar limitation is always required in arguing from the possession of an attribute by an attribute of a substance to the possession of the same attribute by the substance itself) the parts of matter are immoveable.

The body of the offspring cannot come into existence before that of the parent, nor the fruit of the tree precede the tree itself.

Mr. Gillespie now proceeds to demonstrate, in a sub-proposition, that "The Material Universe is finite in duration." To the demonstration there is prefixed a "Prolegomenon," against which it is necessary to enter a protest. For our author speaks as though his opponents, as a matter of course, would maintain that infinity of duration is inconceivable apart from matter. Whereas all that any opponent, who knows what he is about, will wish to maintain is, that the material universe may, for aught Mr. Gillespie can show to the contrary, be eternal. There is no "indissoluble bond in our conceptions" between matter and infinity of duration; nor between any other substratum and its attribute, seeing that the same attribute may be possessed by more than one substance. The conception of an attribute does not necessarily imply a particular substratum as its correlate.

Not to weary the reader by unnecessary prolixity, let it be stated at once that Mr. Gillespie does triumphantly demonstrate that the material universe is finite in duration, in his meaning of the words, in which the material universe is the equivalent of matter, and division or change of form identical with cessation of existence. But matter is still matter, however much divided; and that matter, irrespective of form, may not be eternal, both a *parte ante* and a *parte post*, he has not attempted to demonstrate, and we may be quite sure he never will. Yet this is precisely what everybody means who speaks of matter as being eternal. It remains, then, that matter, irrespective of form, may be eternal; or, in other words, may be the substratum of infinity of duration.

In a scholium which follows, Mr. Gillespie makes game of all who uphold the doctrine of the eternity of matter. If such persons agree with himself in considering change of form to be the same thing with cessation

of existence, his remarks are very much to the point, otherwise they are thrown away.

We next encounter a proposition bearing the unassuming title of "Corollary from Sub-proposition." It lays down that "Every succession of finitely extended substances is finite in duration." The case of "a succession of substances of Infinity of Extension," we are not invited to discuss. That, we are told, would be "we know not what," an assertion which, however undeniable, hardly solves the question of the eternity or non-eternity of such a succession of substances. The other case—namely, that of a succession of substances finite in extension—resolves itself into two heads. Under the first of these falls the consideration of "a succession of substances which are in the Material Universe." The proof of the proposition under this head is brief enough. "For, seeing that the whole finitely extended Material Universe itself is finite in duration, every succession of substances which are in the Material Universe must, therefore, be finite in duration, too." "The Material Universe" means matter pure and simple. Now, we have allowed that any given congeries of matter is finite, because divisible; but that matter may not be eternally shifting from shape to shape has nowhere been demonstrated.

The other head contains the case of a succession of worlds. This is disposed of on the ground that any succession involves motion, which seems disputable with regard to succession in time. But, without going into that point, it will be sufficient to remind the reader that it was only motion of parts, as implying division, which was shown to be fatal to infinity of duration, and that only in the sense in which change of form is identical with cessation of existence. Motion of a thing as a whole carries with it nothing to militate against the idea of eternity in any sense whatever. As if conscious of a weak case, Mr. Gillespie brings in at the end a preliminary bar

to any such supposition which he assures us is "overwhelmingly potent." The bar is that the imagined succession "would be but our own old Material Universe, itself, in disguise." Well, if it be so, it seems far from improbable that our own old Material Universe, with a perpetually new face on it, will last for ever, despite Mr. Gillespie.

Proposition 5 asserts that "There is necessarily but one Being of Infinity of Duration." The case in which the being of infinity of duration is no more than infinity of duration itself we may grant at once. The other case, that "there can be but one Substratum of Infinity of Duration," Mr. Gillespie considers to need demonstration no more than the former. He merely says "'Tis manifest." To us, however, it is far from manifest. There may, for aught we know to the contrary, be any number of beings all co-eternal together; and granting that there are, no one shall force us into the contradiction of maintaining that, despite thereof, there is but one Eternal. True, there is but one Eternity; but we can conceive as many eternals as there can be monads accommodated in infinite space, leaving them a little room to take exercise in.

DIVISION I.—PART III.

We started, it will be remembered, with three Beings, all of whom had at first equal claims on our attention. After the demise of one of them, the "thorough plenum," we had the remaining two running a neck-to-neck race for the final honours of deification. Then, in the Second Part, two fresh beings appeared in the field—namely, Infinity of Duration, and Something other than the Material Universe, infinite in duration. This state of things, for obvious reasons, must not continue. So at this point it becomes necessary to effect a general clearance. Two of our Beings must be knocked on the head altogether, and the remaining two knocked into one. Let us watch Mr. Gillespie in this masterly manœuvre.

The proposition with which we have now to deal is that "There is necessarily a Being of Infinity of Expansion and Infinity of Duration." This is tantamount to declaring that the being of infinity of expansion, and the being of infinity of duration are not two beings, but one. How then does Mr. Gillespie demonstrate this? He commences operations by demolishing, by means of a *reductio ad absurdum*, the supposition that space and time exist as independent entities, thus knocking two Beings on the head altogether. It remains then that space and time exist, severally, only as modes of a Being. The same absurdity is then used by Mr. Gillespie to prove that the Being in the two cases is identical. Thus the two remaining Beings are knocked into one. Let us examine the *reductio ad absurdum* itself, which acts as such a potent solvent. Mr. Gillespie in effect says—If time and space exist as independent entities, then, since time is in space and space in time, space must be time and time space. Which conclusion is plainly absurd. So "it is proved that the supposition itself is absurd." Now, it is quite true that we have a contradiction here, but it is one of Mr. Gillespie's own making. He was the father of it, and he it is who must pay for its rearing: it is an exceedingly illegitimate offspring. The contradiction is not drawn out of the proposition, in which case it would certainly invalidate it, but gratuitously thrust into the process of reasoning—unwittingly, no doubt, for I do not think, or say, or wish to insinuate that Mr. Gillespie would consciously play the sophist. Who indeed would amuse himself on such a topic with the eristical defence of a thesis? Or, who would expose himself to Bacon's withering question—"Will ye offer to the Author of Truth the unclean sacrifice of a lie?" Mr. Gillespie is aware that in talking of space being in time and time in space, he is only speaking figuratively; but it escapes him that the figurative language does not convey the same real meaning in both cases. It is a very good figure to say

that space exists in time, every portion of space in every portion of time, and the whole of space in the whole of time. But it is by no means so happy a figure to talk of time existing in space. Indeed, I doubt whether the language be not absurd. But, at all events, if we do consent to speak in this way, we must remember that it is in two quite different senses that time and space (or, to give them their full titles, the Being of Infinity of Extension, and the Being of Infinity of Duration) stand to one another in the relations of containing and contained, and that by so speaking we involve ourselves in no contradiction, since each exists in the other in a different respect. In logic we say, quite harmlessly, that species exists in genus, and genus in species, because it is understood by every one that species exists in genus in respect of extension, and genus in species in respect of intension. And something very similar is the case with the *B. o. I. o.* Expansion and the *B. o. I. o.* Duration.

But there is another and perhaps still more remarkable feature in Mr. Gillespie's imaginary *reductio ad absurdum*. It is that, whether time and space exist as independent entities or not, the fact remains that in a certain metaphorical sense of the terms, different in each case, time is in space, and space in time. If this, therefore, be pronounced an absurdity, it will be fatal to any hypothesis whatever that can be framed with regard to the existence of time and space. Let it be assumed that there is a Being Infinite and Eternal, then if Infinity and Eternity must be one on account of their mutual inter-penetration, and it is yet absurd to consider them one, it will follow that the existence of such a Being is absurd.

On the whole of this subject I find that Mr. Gillespie has already had the error of his ways strongly pointed out to him by a writer in the *National Reformer*, signing himself R. H. B. How he could have failed to see and acknowledge the fallacy when his attention was directly called to it, is a thing hard to be understood. Yet it may

well be, reader, that if you or I had spun as subtle a web of argument, particularly if it seemed to establish a conclusion to which we clung as to life itself, we should be equally blind to its defects.

Perhaps it will not be amiss to remark here that on whichever side our feelings may be in the dispute between Theism and Atheism, and whatever we may consider to have been the skill in verbal fence displayed by the combatants on either side, the truth of argument lay with the so-called "Atheists." Mr. Bradlaugh, who was one of the disputants, may be the Devil—all I say is, "Give him his due." But why the so-called "Atheists?" For more reasons than one. Both because the man who tries to act up to the light within him, be his creed matter or spirit, eternal life or eternal death, has what gives value to "faith in God;" and also because the Atheist proper is now almost extinct. He stood on precisely the same dogmatic platform as the Theologian, only maintaining the contradictory of his opponent's propositions. Both of them

"Blind guides that feel for a path, where highway is none to be had."

The theologian still asserts as a truth admitting of no dispute that there is a certain Being, distinct from the Universe, that would exist unimpaired, not only if all matter, but if all mind also, as we know it, were destroyed; which Being he calls God; he asserts further that the material universe is finite and temporary. The Atheist used to maintain, with equal pertinacity, that there could be no being distinct from the material universe, and that matter was necessarily infinite and eternal.

But to return. If only the quibble we have been examining had been allowed to pass muster, we see what Mr. Gillespie would have gained. He would have seemed to demonstrate the absurdity of supposing that infinity of expansion may subsist by itself, which, as we have seen, is only another way of stating that the material universe, considered as a combination of matter and void, is

infinitely extended; and would have seemed to explode in like manner the hypothesis of the self-existence of infinity of duration. Consequently he would have proved that there is an immaterial Being, distinct from space itself, filling all space, and enduring through all time. As no approach to this was contained in our premises, I must confess to having had all along a pretty shrewd suspicion, that it would not be squeezed out of them, being aware, as Whately puts it, that "The object of all reasoning is simply to expand and unfold the assertions wrapped up, as it were, and implied in those with which we set out."

The reader cannot fail to have observed that in the last proposition which we have considered, or shall need to consider, the outlines of Deity were already limned out in majestic proportions, and that all that remained was to fill in the details. As a matter of reasoning, we admit there may be such a Being, demurring only when Mr. Gillespie says "there must." "There must," because otherwise time would be space and space time. However much we may desire to reach God, surely this is not the way! Who knows but we may have to fall back after all upon the "cardiac impulse" of poor Mr. Gilfillan?

We have now seen how Mr. Gillespie has cleared away the hypothesis of the self-existence of space and time—an hypothesis fatal to all *à priori* proof of the being of a God. He has introduced a gratuitous absurdity, and pinned it to the coat-tails of the hypothesis in question—a most unfair and unkind attempt to bring a perfectly respectable proposition into ridicule. But the laugh, we may be sure, will not be taken up by an audience of good feeling. Mr. Gillespie, however, quite takes it for granted that he has brought the theory into universal discredit, and henceforward assumes the truth of its rival. We, on the contrary, who entertain no special spite against the unfortunate hypothesis that stands in Mr. Gillespie's way, will bear in mind that it

is still an open question whether infinity of expansion and infinity of duration are independent entities or not. But in Mr. Gillespie's eyes the question is now closed, and, accordingly, in the rest of the train of reasoning we quite leave behind us and lose sight of the only meaning of the word "Being," which our concessions entitle us to make use of, namely—for we cannot be too particular—that in which "Infinity of Extension and the Being of Infinity of Extension are not different, as standing to one another in the relation of mode and subject of the mode, but are identical."

One more glance before parting at the turning point of the whole demonstration. There must be an Infinite and Eternal Being, for otherwise, space would be time, and time space. Such is the sum and substance of "The Argument, *a priori*, for the Being and the Attributes of the Lord God, the Absolute One, and First Cause." And yet this is the argument to which Sir William Hamilton solemnly gave his approbation, while the mob have been flinging their hats into the air, and making the welkin ring with acclamation!

Yet I would not seem to take leave of Mr. Gillespie with a note of triumph on my lips. His task has been the hardest of the hard, because impossible; mine an easy and an obvious one. I have not had to climb to the moon on a beanstalk myself, but merely to come with a pair of scissors and snip Mr. Gillespie's beanstalk under him.

A word in closing.—I have not shrunk from exposing, according to the measure of my ability, the unsoundness of Mr. Gillespie's pretended demonstration; yet I admire greatly the constructive power he has exhibited, and think his book a great service to philosophy. We may rest from controversy on this subject now till a better case has been made out on the same side—and we shall rest in peace.

THEISM.

REVERENCE and devotion cling round the past, and not one step can be made in advance without a wrench to every fibre of our moral nature. The history of human thought may be represented as a progress of the head and the heart, in which the head is always outstripping the heart, like Æneas flying from Troy with Creüsa lagging in the rear, or like Lot hurrying from Sodom, while his wife gazes backward with fond regret. Heaven grant that the intellect's tender spouse may never be lost in turmoil or frozen into bitterness!

When a belief has been well implanted in the mind it takes root downwards—in assured conviction, and bears fruit upwards—in the conduct of life; like the stout oak, rearing its arms on high, and sheltering the sons of men from the blackness of the heavens above. Meanwhile the tendrils of the heart twine round it like the clinging ivy, and at first derive their support wholly from its unshaken strength. But the oak is doomed in the fulness of its days to perish. Then, amid rottenness and decay, the ivy, now itself a tree, becomes in turn the supporter. Long after the intellectual basis of a belief is gone, gnawed away by the canker-worm of thought, the belief itself will flourish, strong in the vitality of enduring sentiment. Hence the extreme difficulty that attends every change in the most important convictions of mankind; hence the obloquy that is the inevitable lot of the reformer; hence the anguish, the heartburning, the outlawed life, the malefactor's death. It is well that it should be so. It is well

that it should need a stout heart and steady hand to apply the knife to diseased humanity, and that every quack should not be set at large to ply his nostrum with impunity. But when at length a change of belief has been effected sentiment adapts itself to the new mental attitude, and a tardy justice is done to the well-meaning physician. Then the same process repeats itself, and woe to the next reformer!

Those two cant names "Radicalism" and "Conservatism" go deep into the heart of things. They are not merely symptomatic of a phase of English politics, but denote tendencies wide as human nature itself. The dead-weight of opposition to change arising from unreasoning sentiment is the drag-chain which hinders the social car from hurrying to swift destruction. Here might theologians have found cogent arguments for an overruling Providence ordering the affairs of men. When the social organism is examined it may be exclaimed of it with no less emphasis than of the physical, "Surely it is fearfully and wonderfully made!" Setting aside those mighty revolutions of the human mind, in which reform seems to be due not so much to the action of the intellect as to some wave of spiritual influx that rolls in upon the heart of man he knows not whence, we are presented with this curious fact, that the most beneficial and needful changes in religious thought generally originate with men whose spiritual nature is regarded, and not entirely without justice, as less strongly developed than that of their fellows. It is that much-maligned class of men, the free-thinkers, the infidels, the atheists of the day, who effect the purification of the religion they renounce. Their ideas are accepted more or less avowedly by enlightened professors of the current religion, and penetrate in time even to the people, for no stir can be made in the waters of speculation that shall not affect the very clods upon the bank. The explanation of this fact has been so well put by Arthur Hallam (the Marcellus of

modern literature) that I shall give it in his own words. He says :—

“Truth is a jealous as well as a lovely mistress, and she will never brook in her adorers a divided attention. On the other hand, such is the awful solemnity that invests the shrine of virtue, that we cannot wonder if they who perceived the signatures of divinity upon it, were reluctant to examine its structure, and determine its proportions. From these premises, I think, we should be led to expect a more rigorous prosecution of the metaphysic of Ethic among those sects of philosophy who have least claim on our moral approbation and reverence.”

What is said here of ethical speculation holds still more with regard to the kindred subject of religion. It is not those who are most deeply penetrated with religious feeling who are most likely to advance religious thought. This is one of the many paradoxes of human nature which may be deplored, but must be admitted. A full and harmonious balance of the faculties is to be found in few. We must be content if by means of a disproportionate development here and there we can advance to a common level of perfection. The very fact of a man's being destitute to a greater or less extent of religious awe renders his intellectual eye keener to penetrate those mists which to others assume the form of a dazzling nimbus. If we inquire who were the real authors of that advance in religious conceptions which has led to the increasing aversion within the pale of the Church itself to the Athanasian creed we shall find that they were the Voltaires, the Humes, the Tom Paines, the Godwins of the preceding age. These were the men who with daring hand plucked the drapery from the shrouded head of the prophet, and discovered the features of a fiend grinning in malice beneath. But Truth and Reverence, though they travel with unequal steps, though for a time they part company, still rest together at the halting-places, and sleep in each other's arms. They were made

for one another, and it is only the necessities of the journey that disunite them.

If the foregoing remarks be admitted to be just, we ought to be very careful about pouring out the vials of righteous indignation on any earnest inquirer, no matter how much our moral nature may revolt against his conclusions. They may be true—as true, that is, as it is possible for any such conclusions to be in the existing state of knowledge, and if so, sentiment will sooner or later accommodate itself to them.

It is the purpose of the present paper to examine into the doctrines of Theism, the acceptance of which is commonly held to be the very minimum that can entitle a man to be called religious.

Theism, or Monotheism, is the belief in a single personal agent as the sole cause of all things. As refined and spiritualized by Christ it is a belief in the Father-God. It is under the latter aspect that it presents itself to the emotions. To the philosophical intellect it is Pantheism and something more. Let one of the chief modern exponents of the doctrine set its meaning before us from this point of view:—

“If God be infinite, then he must be immanent, perfectly and totally present in Nature and in Spirit. Thus there is no point of space, no atom of matter but God is there. And yet finite matter and finite spirit do not exhaust God. He transcends the world of matter and spirit; and in virtue of that transcendence continually makes the world of matter fairer, and the world of spirit wiser. So there is really a progress in the manifestation of God, not a progress in God the manifesting.”

Such, then, is the food for the heart, and such the theory of the universe, presented by this great religious conception. This is the creed in which the most advanced theologians who do not reject the name of Christian, and some also who do, have found rest for their souls. It was the belief of a Theodore Parker in America, and is that of a Vance Smith in England. It might

seem, indeed, as if the dream of that thoughtful Hindoo, Chunder Sen, were about to be realized, and all forms of religious belief were destined to converge in the two simple doctrines of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. Yet, despite all this, I believe there are unmistakeable signs on the horizon of thought that this doctrine will not constitute an essential tenet in the Church Catholic of the coming age. Mr. Vance Smith, to whom allusion has already been made, one of the most single-minded of its supporters at the present day, expresses at once his belief and misgiving in some remarkable words which it will be worth while to quote. He says, speaking of the cause of all things :—

“The Bible would lead us to believe that in the last resort it is the Living God, or the intelligent conscious Will of one Almighty Creator. And this proposition we venture to say is neither opposed to reason, nor condemned in any way by our moral sense. On the contrary, the rational and spiritual part of our nature will gladly, in most cases, respond to that proposition; and in it, therefore, the devout man may well be contented to rest, until the day comes, if that is ever to be, when scientific research is able to give us something better—a day, we must add, which we do not expect, and can hardly desire, to live to see.”

In that last sentence there is the cry of an animal at bay, half defiance and half fear. And yet science does not even pretend to throw light upon the problem of a first cause. Nothing indeed can be more alien from the true spirit of science than to imagine that “man can by searching find out God.” Nevertheless I fully believe that it was not without grave cause the defender of Theism let fall that expression of apprehension, and that the doctrine he holds so dear is seriously threatened from the side of science, though not by any direct assault.

Holding that science is opposed to Theism, if we considered Theism essential to Religion, it would follow that

science was opposed to religion. In that case truth and reverence would be at war, and we should have to decide which we could follow. But between religion and science rightly understood, there can be no opposition. Knowledge of truth is not a hindrance to noble feeling and right action. Religion, however, has never confined itself to its true and legitimate sphere of elevating the emotions and controlling the conduct; it has always been stepping into the chair of the teacher and professing to enlighten the understanding. Perhaps it is impossible that this should be avoided. For the head and the heart, after all, are not two things, but the same thing performing different functions and viewed in different relations. "God," it has been said, "made man one, but man made himself a bundle of faculties." The distinction between the lawful and the usurped domain of religion is marked by the different signification of the word when used as an abstract and as a common term. We might demolish one, or even all religions, and yet leave religion unassailed and unassailable within its proper sphere. But as was remarked above, Religion has never entrenched itself within the safe position of the purely emotional side of human nature. Calling in the imagination to its aid it has rioted over the whole region of thought, and contested every inch of ground with the rightful owner, Science.

Every religion is an attempt to solve the mystery of things, to furnish an explanation, not only of the physical world about us, but also of that moral world which reveals itself to the introverted gaze. The religion of the savage has few or no moral elements in it, because his own moral nature has scarcely as yet glimmered upon his consciousness. But as a race advances, it begins to crave for a solution of other questions than those connected with outward things, and its religion deepens in tone. Thenceforward we find religions serving the double purpose of a physical theory of the universe and an explanation of moral problems. It is under these two

aspects we must consider Theism. And first as a physical theory of the universe.

The proposition that God made the world is usually rested in by the mind with a quiet assurance that inquiry may there terminate. Some indeed have amused themselves with speculating, "*Quid Deus faciebat antequam mundum faceret?*" But such inquiries are commonly disregarded as superfluous. Many who set them aside, however, do so without perceiving that they are the last persons who have a right to cavil at them. The theory of a creative mind itself lies open to two grave objections. To begin with, we have no reason to suppose that there was a First Cause at all. Secondly, if there was a First Cause, we have no reason to suppose that it was mind rather than matter. It is quite as conceivable that matter existed first and developed into mind as that mind existed first and created matter. The one is as conceivable as the other, for the simple reason that neither the one nor the other is conceivable at all. The limits of our power of conception are determined by experience; and of an absolute beginning we have had no experience. Strauss indeed argues that if everything in the universe has been caused by something else, what we reach at last is not the conception of a First Cause, but of a self-centred kosmos, a substance of which the various kosmical phenomena are but the accidents. But it is not clear that we reach even this, or ever get beyond the fact of the existence of a chain of causation, so far as we know or can conjecture. If we choose to call this chain a "substance," of which the links are "accidents," we gain nothing but obscurity; while the notion that this chain is attached at one end to a post which supports itself, is a purely arbitrary assumption. Thus we see that Theism attempts to account for the existence of things apparent by the existence of something not apparent, thereby introducing one of those hypotheses which explain nothing, inasmuch as they only serve to remove the difficulty one step further back.

Turning now from the physical to the moral world we shall find that other difficulties attend the doctrine of Theism, which at first sight appeared so simple.

The world is very evil—that all admit. We may call evil “merely imperfection,” if we will, but we do not thereby mend matters. The elder Mill used to wonder that no one at the present day revived the system of Manichæism, which he regarded as far more consonant with a high morality than a theory which ascribes the formation of a world containing so much evil to God, and then bids us fall down and worship Him as “of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.” The Theist will of course say that evil is appointed in the good providence of God for some wise end. But if all is to come right in the end, one hardly sees why it should have gone wrong in the beginning; and wrong it certainly must have gone, for who can look forth upon creation now and pronounce it “very good?” The Theist will reply that evil is only apparent, not real, and that all is even now perfect. This is, indeed, the only thing he can say; for, granting the existence of an all-wise, all-powerful, benevolent Creator and Sustainer of the universe, we are bound to believe with Theodore Parker that this world in which we now live was created and is sustained “for a perfect end, by perfect means, with a perfect purpose, and on a perfect plan.” Thus Theism is necessarily unflinchingly optimistic. Now it is of course impossible to pronounce this world perfect except with reference to some end beyond itself. Impossible, that is, without paradox. But if any one find himself able, notwithstanding appearances, to declare and believe that the world, as we have it, in and for itself, is not only the best possible, but the best that could conceivably have been devised by a Being of perfect love and wisdom, backed by almighty power, every shaft of argument that has been discharged in this paper will fall ineffectually upon his shield of faith. Every sober mind, however, will admit that the present state of

things may be the best or only means of attaining some desirable end. But, then, since no Theist will abandon the benevolence, it becomes necessary to abandon the omnipotence of the Creator. This course is actually pursued by one of the most powerful minds of the day professing the creed. Miss Cobbe speaks of "the arrogant dogmatism which has caused us first to give to the Divine might the name of 'Omnipotence,' because, forsooth, we know nothing of its bounds or conditions; and then, secondly, to argue back from this purely arbitrary metaphysical term that He could do this or that if it so pleased Him, since He is omnipotent." Miss Cobbe then argues from the existence of what are called "mathematical impossibilities" to the existence in the moral world of difficulties equally insuperable. "When," she says, "we have thoroughly taken in the idea that God could not make twice two five, nor the three angles of a triangle more than two right angles, then we may begin to ask ourselves, may not contradictions equally great for all we know lie in the way of every removal of evil which we would fain demand at the hands of the Lord?" Miss Cobbe is as dogmatic in philosophy as she is undogmatic in theology. We may reply to her reasoning that when we have thoroughly taken in the idea that "organized experiences produce forms of thought," we may begin to ask ourselves whether our inability to conceive a thing should be taken as a pledge of its impossibility. The fact that the laws of arithmetic hold invariably within our experience, may be some slight reason for presuming that they hold also beyond it, but cannot justify us in limiting the power of a Creator. Given the notion of a Creator, and the doctrine of the formation of forms of thought by experience, and we shall find no reason for denying that two and two may make five in worlds to us unknown. We shall neither put this beyond the power of God, nor yet the making of stones into children of Abraham, nor yet the feeding

of five thousand with five barley loaves and a few small fishes ; and shall utterly reject the opinion of Milton—

“The past who can recall, or done undo?
Not God Omnipotent or Fate.”

The analogy Miss Cobbe has chosen fails to support the desired conclusion. But even if we grant the conclusion it will be suicidal for a Theist to accept it. If God be limited, he cannot be the first and absolute cause of all things. If he be limited, who limited him? What is this new fate that looms thus darkly behind the throne of Jove? Miss Cobbe's God is not the “Almighty Creator” of the Theists, but the Deity of Aristotle over again, struggling with an intractable material—in fact, making the best of a bad job. We are back in Dualism. Miss Cobbe's view corresponds with that of a writer in the *National Review* for October, 1860 (quoted by Mr. Herbert Spencer), who says—“The primary qualities of bodies belong eternally to the material datum objective to God,” and control his acts; while the secondary ones are “products of pure Inventive Reasoning and Determining Will”—constitute “the realm of Divine Originality.” This writer imagines a Deity whose action in the physical world is hemmed in by the nature of things, and Miss Cobbe extends this conception to the moral world. But to do so, as we have seen, gives no real solution of the difficulty. We are still involved in the inextricable dilemma—If God's power be limited, he is not sole first cause, and if it be unlimited, he is not benevolent; but it must be either limited or unlimited: therefore, either God is not sole first cause or he is not benevolent. Either horn is fatal to Theism.

Such are the difficulties—insuperable we are surely justified in pronouncing them—which attend the doctrine of Theism considered as a philosophical theory; such the Nemesis that awaits us for venturing beyond the bounds of our experience and the powers of our reason. It is in

vain for the theologian to shake his head, talk of the pride of intellect, and tell us that the light of reason is faint. However faint the light of reason may be, it is the only light we have, and we are bound to walk by it. There is no presumption in confessing that our weak reason does not enable us to see how the acceptance of Theism tends to solve the mystery of this incomprehensible world. If the charge of presumption lies against any one it is against those who, admitting the weakness of reason, and insisting upon it whenever it tells against their adversaries, proceed nevertheless to set up their own theory.* There is indeed only one way in which they can escape such a charge, and that is by taking refuge in authority. Natural Theology, as it is called, is gone as hopelessly as the Christian religion, if once men venture to give up revelation. If persons who abandon the name of Christian still find themselves able to maintain Theism, it is because their former beliefs retain a stronger hold over them than they are themselves aware of. Men do not come with fresh minds to the contemplation of things around them: it is only by a vigorous effort that they can fling off the shackles of old creeds, and learn to form conclusions for themselves. The warfare of the infidel

* The plan of arguing by first assuming a theory and then telling your adversary he is so ignorant that he ought to be ashamed not to accept it, seems to be a weakness incidental to all minds just in so far as they have not cast off inherited doctrines. I quote an example from a book called "Career of Religious Ideas," by Hudson Tuttle, an American. "Evil is imperfection. We are not to inquire why an all-wise Omnipotent Creator did not create perfectly in the beginning; we must accept the fact." Now Hudson Tuttle is a man who asserts, with a degree of emphasis hardly called for at this time of day, the full right of private judgment as against tradition; and yet here we find him planting a tree of knowledge, of the leaves whereof we are forbidden to eat. "We are not to inquire!" Is Saul also among the prophets? Let us see what is the "fact" we are called upon to accept. That the world was created imperfect by a perfect Creator. This is no fact, but as rank a dogma as any of those against which Hudson Tuttle screams denunciation. The existence of evil, or imperfection, or whatever we choose to call it, may be termed, in courtesy, a fact; but the existence of an "all-wise Omnipotent Creator" is as pure an assumption as was ever made.

against the theologian has never been a pitched battle; it has been one long siege laid to the fortress of authority, the defenders of which have had merely to hurl missiles from behind its walls against their foe. Some there are, indeed, who say, "We have no need of battlements: let us go down and fight the foe upon a fair field." But these are soon either slain or taken captive, and serve as a warning to the rest. Not without a true instinct did the followers of Luther carefully re-weave the web of authority which his rude touch had broken, substituting for an infallible Pope an infallible Bible with as many infallible Popes as there were persons to read it; and not without a true instinct is the English Church at the present day waving aloft once more the ægis of authority, which will, indeed, prove itself of heavenly temper if it avail to save it.

We have now examined Theism as a theory of the universe, and have found it faulty, whether as applied to the physical or the moral world. In the one case it invents a self-existent Being to account for the existence of things as we know them, whereas it is simpler to accept the latter; in the other it complicates the question of evil by throwing its creation upon a personal agent. We have not, it will be noticed, proved the doctrine false, for though we have found it to involve an inconceivability, we are ready to admit that inconceivabilities are not necessarily impossibilities. Nevertheless we have looked in vain for any reason to believe it true, and have come to the conclusion that the doctrine is not credible, except on the authority of revelation. Now revelation, though far from being the mere imposture that its enemies would make it out, never offers absolute truth, but only such an adumbration of truth as is adapted to the capacity of the recipient. It cannot therefore be of permanent authority.

Theism, accordingly, being a baseless theory, not serving to explain the facts of the universe, and, to our reason, incompatible with them, must surely fall before

the progress of thought. Not that it will ever be positively disproved. Modern science, at least in the hands of those who know what they are about, does not pretend to solve the ultimate problem of the universe. But apart from any definite result of science, the spirit of science is antagonistic to Theism. The conditions of belief in matters on which science has not actually laid its hands are being rapidly affected by the method it employs within its present field. We are learning to regard with aversion any hypothesis which, instead of reconciling several difficulties, simply adds one more to the number—and such an hypothesis is Theism.

This would no doubt be enough, if this were all, to insure the ultimate downfall of the doctrine we are investigating. But this is not all. A closer, though still a side, attack is being made upon Theism by the advanced outposts of science. Men, having rummaged external nature, have of late begun to look more closely into themselves. The positive method has been applied to man. The result has been the discovery that he is not the exceptional creature he had supposed himself; that while he presents a far more complicated problem, he is only a higher term in the one great series of Nature; that he too is subject to laws—laws more elastic, it is true, but not less really imperative than those which bind the lower kingdom. His acts, his thoughts, and his very fancies and fables are being compared and classified, and there is found a method in his wildest madness. Upon his religion, too, which is not all fancy and fable and no fact, as some would have us believe, Science is now laying her all-daring hand, though her grasp is uncertain, because her eyes are shut. Still, from what has been already done in the direction of the comparative study of religions we may derive some valuable lessons. We may learn, in the first place, that religions differ in degree only, not in kind, and that there is one continuous stream of evolution through them all;

we may learn also that religion has no finalities, but takes shape according to circumstances and the state of development at which a people has arrived. Further, we may learn that religion is capable of surviving changes which at first sight seem to threaten it with total extinction. All which makes it seem unlikely that we have reached the end of our tether in Theism. But this presumption is enormously increased when we examine at greater detail into the results of the science of religion. For if it becomes apparent that the purest Theism may be traced back to its origin in a gross Fetishism, the hold of the former over the mind must be seriously weakened unless it can be reinforced by external and independent testimony; and we have seen that it cannot be so reinforced. Now, waiving altogether the question whether God made man in his own image, it is quite clear that man made God in his. Man casts his shadow into space and calls it "God," and trembles before his own magnified likeness. As man changes, his Deity changes with him; the whole history of religion has consisted in a gradual refinement of the idea of God. And what is the "idea of God?" It is the effort, conscious or unconscious, of the part to understand the whole—the effort of man to understand what he knows to be greater than he. He reasons from the known to the unknown, from himself to what is outside of him. At first the savage invests every moving thing with his own attributes: he sees his own personality reflected everywhere, in every wind that blows, in every tree that rocks, in every stream that murmurs. There are gods many and lords many. Then the outward face of Nature dies into mechanism, but still there are personal agents behind the screen: we rise to tutelary and presiding deities and to the personification of powers of Nature. Still there are gods many and lords many. Another step, and it is perceived that amid infinite variety there is still an essential unity in Nature; the many give

place to the one. Such at least is the account commonly given of the matter; and no doubt it is true, so far as it goes, but it tempts us to regard the problem of religion as far simpler than it really is. Consider, for instance, the God who reigns to-day. What is his name? Jehovah would sound strange in the ears of those Christian philosophers who are wont to speculate on the Infinite and the Absolute, and whose talk is not of God but of Deity. And no wonder; for our God is not merely the Hebrew Jehovah, but the Hebrew Jehovah plus *τὸ ὄν*, with all the abstractions that gather round those mystic syllables. The Jews contributed the personality and the unity; Christianity corrupted the unity, but admitted the most abstract philosophical conceptions under cover of which it might be restored. But whence came the One God of the Hebrews? The theory requires that he should have been developed from a prior polytheistic system. And so, it would appear, he was—as the early use of the plural form Elohim in the Hebrew scriptures seems to show—not, however, without the assistance of revelation. How it was that revelation among the Jews was of so much higher a type than among the Greeks, who so far surpassed them intellectually, is a question that cannot here be discussed. Suffice it to notice in passing that the Hebrew revelation was not, as is so perpetually taken for granted, instantaneous, and stereotyped. With the rise of moral ideas inspiration among the Jews assumed a loftier tone; the Jehovah of the prophets was a great improvement on the Jehovah of Moses. To the Jews their religion was everything; they had no philosophy. Among the Greeks, on the other hand, religion, and with it revelation, stood on a lower plane than philosophy—for as to the inspiration of Socrates, that would seem to have had reference only to his conduct: he never claimed to be inspired in his utterances. Such important and interesting questions as these show that the subject of religion is not exhausted

by a reference to Comte's three stages. But whatever obscurities may envelope the subject, one fact stands out clearly enough—namely, that men's conception of God is always derived from themselves and coloured by their own notions. Aristotle, whose beatific vision was one of speculation, lost in universal knowledge, cleared away all the dross of the emotions, and left Deity to shiver in the chillness of pure intellect. He meant it reverently, though his countrymen thought him impious. We have altered the positions of the heart and head in the hierarchy of the human faculties. No one would now think of making his Deity consist of pure νοῦς. We mean our God to have all the highest moral attributes of humanity multiplied to infinity; but as he is a legacy from less advanced ages, we find it very difficult to superinduce these upon him. The purport of this paper, however, does not call for any attack upon the popular theology. Let us suppose the evolution of Deity everywhere fully carried through from its origin in Fetishism to its culmination in the purest and most sublime Monotheism—we have seen that at its best the conception fails as a theory of the universe. So must every theory fail which is begun from the wrong end. The foundations of the Temple of Knowledge must first be laid firmly in the soil of experience, and then, but not till then, may its pinnacles strive to penetrate the clouds of Heaven.

Let us now ask ourselves where our reasonings have brought us. We have examined Theism as a theory of the universe, and have found it inadequate and unsupported. Further, we have satisfied ourselves that the origin of the delusive theory may be clearly traced out. This would be enough for the destruction of any common theory. Why then does not Theism vanish into the limbo of exploded hypotheses? The cause has been already indicated. It appeals for its evidence not to the head, but to the heart; its defence by logic is a mere feint; again and again it has been defeated, and it stands

unshaken still. If the defenders of Theism would only show themselves in their true colours, if they would content themselves with saying, "I believe because I wish," or because "I know on a higher authority than my own," there would be no ground for quarrelling with them. We might sigh indeed or smile, but it would be useless to argue, and unfair and unfeeling to upbraid. There is no room, therefore, for further discussion as to the claims of Theism. Nor do we write for men who, if they have gone with us so far, will consider further discussion necessary on the ground that Theism ought perhaps be let pass for true, not because it can be supported by argument, but because it satisfies the needs of the heart. We write for men who as a matter of belief prefer a sombre reality to the brightest dream or fiction; for men who hold truth too sacred to sport with hypotheses; for men who would rather know the worst at once and face it, than lull apprehension to sleep with the narcotics of a fond imagination. Men of this stamp will accept the facts of existence as they find them, and from them extract such comfort as they can. It is after all only the women who will not venture across the deserts of life unless the gods be stowed safely in the packs of the camels. With the consolatoriness of the doctrine we have absolutely nothing to do. Its effects upon conduct, however, are of more importance. And therefore, without wishing to question the beneficial results of Theism, in spite even of adulterations which render it false to the heart as well as to the head, it will behove us to consider whether we cannot retain the moral benefits of the doctrine while discarding the intellectual error. The physician of souls should ascertain, not what food the heart will devour most greedily, but what is most wholesome for it. And shall we pronounce truth an unhealthy diet? It is undeniable certainly that false doctrines have been of inestimable service to mankind; but it was when they were relatively true; and the recognition of

their falsehood is a sign that the day of their utility is past. Precisely at that point, however, namely, when it begins to dawn upon the intellect that a long venerated doctrine is false, there comes one of those cruel wrenches of the moral nature which were alluded to at starting. Just such a crisis, it would seem, has set in for the most advanced portion of the human race. Such jars might indeed be avoided if religion could be confined to the regulation of the emotions. That is its proper sphere; its intrusion into the region of the intellect is an invasion, its dominion there a usurpation. If such a limitation could be effected, all would be well. The head would be free to search for truth while the heart dictated conduct. We should then hear no more of the irreligiousness of science or of the dogmatism of religion. Unfortunately, this complete division of labour is impossible. The emotions cannot be cultivated apart from the intellect. As the vine must be trained up a trellis, so the emotions require some proposition to cling to, if instead of straggling along the ground, they are to rise into the sunlight and bring forth the ripe fruit of beautiful actions. But when the trellis-work is found rotten, it is wise to replace it with a sound one; and when what once passed for truth is acknowledged as such no longer, it is wise to have recourse to propositions whose truth is undisputed, so that the emotions, those tender creepers, may have whereon to stay themselves, instead of being forced to support what would inevitably fall without their aid. But to meddle with the most sacred feelings of the heart is, it must be confessed, no task of vulgar skill, and must in the main be left to the all-gentle hand of Time. However clearly the intellect may perceive that there is nothing in the facts of our narrow experience to justify us in inferring the existence of an almighty and loving Father of Life; however thoroughly every step by which that conception was arrived at may be traced out and perceived to lead in a wrong direction, still the heart will

not abandon without a struggle its time-hallowed consolation. It must be freely admitted that the prospect before us, when this doctrine is taken away, will at first seem a dreary one to minds trained in the tender nursery of an anthropomorphic faith, and that the substitute we *are* warranted in offering the emotions will appear cold and cheerless till use has taught them to find their home in it. Not at once can the change be effected; in hours of dejection and sickness the strongest spirit will crave its old support, and even if in the daylight we are content with truth, still in the night-season the heart may reach out after God, after some power more present to help and to save than "the righteous and salutary law of natural selection," till in its loneliness and despondency it is ready to join in the woman's querulous cry, "They have taken away the Lord, and we know not where they have laid him!" All this may well be admitted by those who do not pretend that they are more than men; but it must at the same time be admitted that such apprehensions may arise merely from want of a just and well-grounded faith. Abandoning therefore preliminaries, it is time that we should address ourselves to the task of investigating what is the food for the heart that can be extracted from truth, imagination being discarded; high time also that we should desert the barren and misty heights of speculation for the safe valleys of experience, and inquire what hints we have there afforded us for the construction of a theory of things. Few words will be necessary, as we have only to summarize results.

The highest generality that is the outcome of our present knowledge is a belief in the Reign of Law; and in thus using the word "Law," we would not be understood as referring merely to the physical laws of the material universe, but also, and more especially, to the spiritual laws of the moral world. This is the conception to which the emotions must accommodate themselves. Were we to confine our attention to the physical world, we

should find but little to cheer us. We see there that the tendency of Law is towards good, but we see also that it works forwards to this end with ruthless, with inexorable rigour. Nature is a very Spartan mother, pitilessly exposing her weaklings to their doom. There is much in her mode of action to admire—prodigal expenditure, marvellous ingenuity, matchless might; but from a moral point of view there is nothing to praise. Every one of her favoured offspring that now revels in the light of day owes his existence to an untold massacre of his fellows. Where then is the “benevolence” of the great Creator? It is true we may point to the mighty kings that have been slain for our sakes, and then praise the mercy that endures for ever; but what would Og, and what would Sihon say, if they could rise from their bloody graves to speak? Whatever amount of truth, therefore, we may be able still to recognize in the doctrine that “God is Love,” comes not from this quarter: for there—

“Nature, red in tooth and claw
With ravin, shrieks against the creed.”

Let us turn, then, from the physical to the moral world, and be content to find ourselves in the promised land without inquiring too curiously by what means we gained possession. But the reign of peace does not at once set in. As long as morality is partial in its operation, as long as its duties are recognized only within the limits of the family, the tribe, the nation, the race, so long, although productive of immense blessings within its peculiar sphere, it is the deadliest weapon with which men can arm themselves against other families, other tribes, other nations, and other races. Teaching to combine, it enables more effectually to destroy. But a time is no doubt coming when the universality of moral duties will be completely recognized, and when the force of morality will be turned wholly to the alleviation, and not in part to the better execution of Nature's cruel mandates. While therefore it is absurd

to say that love is the law of things, we do seem justified in declaring that love is the goal to which Nature wades through blood. There is not a God yet, but there is one coming. The idea of a Supremely Benevolent Creator is thus discovered, like the ideas of the Garden of Eden and the Golden Age, to be a reflection back into the past of an anticipated perfection in the order of things. There is no need to repent facing the truth. We do not by casting aside the metaphorical and anthropomorphic conception of the universe which ascribes its formation to a Personal God lose any of the really valuable elements of religion. What can a belief in a Benevolent Creator mean, when put to the test, except a conviction of the ultimate triumph of good? This conviction is faith—a faith not unfounded, and full of consolation. We can endure the darkness of the day, knowing that in the world's late evening there shall be light.

But it may be thought that in abandoning Theism we must at least lose all the beneficial effects that flow from inculcating the holiness and justice of God. Yet is it so? Morality clearly and unmistakably impresses upon us the superiority of good to evil, and the retributive nature of moral actions. And what is this but the very same doctrine divested of the veil of allegory? It has already been observed by implication that we are not here contending against those who require the comfortable doctrine of hell-fire. Sins against conscience avenge themselves, and where there is no conscience there can be no sin; or, if the conscience exist, but be numbed, what deeper damnation than to have become thus degraded? If such a man is to be restored to the dignity of his nature it can only be by the purifying fires of penitence.

Lastly, it is often urged, and with more show of justice, that to take away belief in a Personal God is to destroy prayer, with all its attendant spiritual advantages. Prayer to "Law," it is said, is impossible, but why more impossible than to One "in whom is no variableness, neither

shadow of turning?" And of such a kind is the Deity of the enlightened Theist. Prayer, when effectual, must in some manner work its own fulfilment; it, too, is within the sphere of law. But the really valuable element in prayer is the aspiration of the heart after higher things, and this is no prerogative of a Theist. Nevertheless, it is quite true that while the intellect can grapple with the abstract the emotions linger lovingly around the concrete, and can with difficulty be weaned away from it. At a certain stage of religious development the emotions cannot be called forth except by the actual presentation to the senses of some symbolical object. At the stage we have now reached the concrete presentation can be dispensed with, but it would seem that a mental image has still to be retained. Our real belief is in progress, in development, in the tendency of the human soul, with all things else, upwards, in a triumph slow but sure over moral and physical evil; but in many cases, at all events, the emotions are not satisfied without picturing to themselves this stream of tendency under the image of a conscious Being who hears their utterance. Thus it is plain that prayer to God is a developed form of idolatry. Not that this is meant in condemnation of it. In the case of the grosser as of the more refined idolatry the emotional conception becomes harmful only when it is imposed upon the intellect as truth. The great difficulty is to keep it from being so imposed, since all feel and few reason. But the recognition of the true character of prayer need not involve abandoning its use. Men did not find it necessary to stop the action of the heart when they learnt that its function was to circulate the blood. To be fresh and genuine prayer must be spontaneous; and as in moments of deep emotion the feelings find an outlet, not in connected speech, not in the words which reason has taught us, but in the inarticulate sounds of instinct, in a recurrence to the language of earlier days, so when

the heart is pouring itself out either in repentance for sin or in gratitude for unexpected blessings, or in a yearning desire for a higher and more spiritual condition, it finds utterance, not in the deliberate conviction of advanced thought, but in the more emotional conception, which, viewed in the light of pure reason, we discard. Instead, therefore, of being ashamed, with Strauss, of being caught in the attitude of prayer, we ought surely to remember that men are not all intellect, and that it is little to be wished they should ever become so. Because we reject the anthropomorphic God it by no means follows that there is nothing higher in the universe than we. Let us listen to the voice of nature; let us give over endeavouring to screw our mental features into a mould. The most graceful characters are those which are gained by repressing instincts only when the conscience admonishes that they are such as should be repressed. Even, then, as we frown when we are angry, smile when we are pleased, laugh when we are merry, and sigh when we are sad, so let us pray when the heart dictates.

We have now seen that the conception which the severest thought enables us to substitute for that of a Personal Ruler of the universe does not involve the loss of a single component idea of real value in the latter, but only the translation of those ideas into language that accords with the facts of experience. Furthermore, the conception of the Reign of Law harmonizes with the mental fabric of the age, whereas that which it supplants does not. We have ceased to embody the conception of the State in a person, and it is time that we should cease similarly to embody the conception of the universe. Loyalty to a personal ruler is an anachronism in the nineteenth century, but the sentiment which inspired it may find ample satisfaction in disinterested devotion to the welfare of the community. In like manner loyalty to a Divine Person will some day become extinct as a manifestation of the feeling which ought to sway us in

our relations to that whole whereof we form so insignificant a part, but its place will be taken by a conscious and cheerful accordance with the laws which make for the well-being of the universe. We shall transfer to the commonwealth of things that loving allegiance which we were wont to render to the Great King.

It will, perhaps, have been noticed that not a word has been said with regard to a future life. That does not form a necessary part of the doctrine of Theism, which it has been the object of this paper to examine. We have been speaking throughout of Theism pure and simple, not of Theism as it appears in Christianity, Mohammedanism, or any religion professing a divine revelation. Our arguments have been directed wholly against those who, apart from authority, profess to find in the doctrine of a Personal God, as Sole First Cause, the best explanation of the facts of existence. No doubt the belief in a Personal God and the belief in human immortality generally go together, but there may be a future life if there is not a Personal Deity, and there may not be one if there is. The Jews before the Captivity held the latter view. So far as argument is concerned the belief in a future has always been an open question. The Materialist has no more right to assume the negative than the Theist to assume the affirmative. From our present point of view the question is immaterial. If the belief were established it would not serve to clear away any of the difficulties which we have found to embarrass Theism. Evil is not less evil if it only endure for a moment; while if the Theist declares that evil, physical and moral, is but the necessary means to the lasting good that is to come, then he acknowledges that the power of his Deity is limited—in other words, that he is not Sole First Cause, and so we come back, as was said before, to Dualism, to a Deity like that of Aristotle, hampered at every turn by the unmalleable nature of the matter to which it is his task to give form.

Instead, therefore, of involving ourselves any longer in needless and endless perplexities by reducing the Supreme Power, whose effects alone we know, to our own level, clothing it in the limitations of our natures, and by so doing rendering it amenable to the human standard of right and wrong—a standard which forces us to condemn what we know of its proceedings—let us commit ourselves with confidence to a creed which retains all the ennobling elements of the old one, and which, harmonizing with the highest results of thought, will terminate the distressing dissension so common at present between heart and head. If the emotions quail at the prospect of the step now, they will rejoice to have taken it hereafter. The fault of the creed, if a fault there be, is not really that it is too low, but that it is too high for poor selfish human nature; for even if we believe in the holiness of right, in the loveliness of virtue, in the progress and ultimate triumph of man, and in a heaven on earth in the ages yet to come, our hearts may ask the further question, “How is it with men? Can the individual be born, doomed to wretchedness of mind and body—and we know that he is so born at times—merely for the welfare of his race?” If we look not beyond the world of sense we must reply that this tragedy has been enacted again and again, and that many and many a soul has been crushed under the Juggernaut of human progress. The idea has been calmly faced by thinkers of our own day; it is not, therefore, intolerable. But if we fear it there is a way of escape, a door of experience, or of pseudo-experience, opened, just when the door of authority has been shut, and whether we seek it or not, it seems we are destined to have thrust upon us the belief in a world where the crushed flowers may bloom again.

For let none imagine that by such speculations as the foregoing he is building up the religion of the future, or that Comte and Strauss will be the prophets of the coming age. Religions are not made, they grow. Their

progress is not from the enlightened to the vulgar, but from the vulgar to the enlightened. They are not mere products of the intellect, but manifest themselves as physical forces too. The religion of the future is in our midst already, working like potent yeast in the mind of the people. It is in our midst to-day, with signs and wonders, uprising like a swollen tide, and scorning the barriers of Nature's laws. Yet however irresistible its effects, they are not declared on the surface. It comes veiling its destined splendours beneath an exterior that invites contempt. Hidden from the prudent, its truths are revealed to babes. Once more the weak will confound the mighty, the foolish the wise, and base things and things despised, it may be even things that are not, bring to nought the things that are ; for it seems certain that, whether truly or whether falsely, Spiritualism will re-establish, on what professes to be ground of positive evidence, the fading belief in a future life—not such a future as is clear to the reigning theology, but a future developed from the present, a continuation under improved conditions of the scheme of things around us. Further than this it is impossible to predict the precise development which Spiritualism may take in the future, just as it would have been impossible at the birth of Christianity to have predicted its actual subsequent development ; but from the unexampled power possessed by this new religious force of fusing with other creeds, it seems likely in the end to bring about a greater uniformity of belief than has ever yet been known.

Meanwhile it is the absence of oneness of feeling that really needs to be regretted. We have seen that all the essentials of religion can be retained by the so-called atheist. Might it not be expected that professors of orthodoxy, persons whose religion is their boast, when they find in such a man a love for his fellows no less disinterested, an effort after advancement no less earnest than their own, would rejoice to join with Theodore

Parker and every truly enlightened Theist in claiming him as really at one with them, despite intellectual differences? But no; they stand at the ford of Jordan, and if the passer-by cannot frame his lips to pronounce their shibboleth they slay him, though all the time he was an Israelite and a brother. And yet the war with evil demands that the forces which make for good should be united, nor is there any element wanting to human unity except the recognition of it. We are all of one kindred—children of mystery; all of one language—the voice of Nature; all of one creed—the creed of ignorance, that mighty Catholic Church to whose tender bosom every thought-weary wanderer is folded at the last.

A NEW RELIGION.

"A NEW religion !" some people will exclaim, "the day of new religions is gone by." So it has ever been said ; so it has ever been thought. But every new religion is an impossibility until it has established itself ; and when we know what religion is, it will be time to pronounce that this or that form of it is final. There are others who look forward to a good time coming when war and religion alike shall be no more. These confound sentiments inseparable from humanity with the outward garment in which they clothe themselves, which, when outworn, remains only as a clog to the movements of the spirit. Forms of religion, indeed, have their day and perish ; but the spirit which gave them birth sleeps only to re-awake to more vigorous life. The forms may fade into one another like the cloud-glories of the setting sun ; shape and outline may vary ; but one Divine light behind illumines all, and, unlike the sunset, the glory continues ever.

There is in all religions an element to which man's ignorance gives the name of the Divine or supernatural. In speaking thus, far be it from me to pretend to penetrate behind the screen of phenomena, or to profess an acquaintance with the working of the world's machinery. What I mean is, that there is in all religions an element transcending ordinary experience : an element which baffles science, and which science therefore chooses to ignore. It may be that the formation of religions is due,

as the founders of them always assert and their followers believe, to the direct action of an intelligence higher than human ; or it may be that the human spirit itself, in over-leaping the barriers of tradition that have long confined it, finds force to sweep away also the landmarks of Nature's laws. However it may be accounted for, the fact remains, that the miraculous side of religion is a reality, and no mere dream of a heated imagination. This Spiritualism abundantly proves. The miracles of the present make it absurd to deny the miracles of the past. Chapters of history which modern criticism has mythicized, are restored by Spiritualism to the simplicity of a genuine record.

A view often taken of Spiritualism, though on any near acquaintance an entirely untenable one, is that which regards it as a mere phase of thought, a breaking out in fresh force of that current of mysticism which has always run like a faint silver streak side by side with the full river of orthodox thought. Equally erroneous would it be to rank Spiritualism with Neo-Catholicism, as merely a reaction of the mind seeking a refuge from the oppressive glare of science in the twilight of superstition. Spiritualism, in the first place, offers facts, though doubtless many fancies are built thereupon. The Spiritualist does not differ from other people in the character of his mind, but in that of his experience. He is a person who has encountered certain facts, and who puts upon them the interpretation which seems to him the most natural one. He may be mistaken, but if he is, his mistake is not one which argues any extraordinary gullibility, as those who have examined the facts well know. The supporters of Spiritualism whose names are most familiar to Englishmen, are not men whose achievements in other directions suggest the idea of the religious devotee or crazy enthusiast. And among the lower orders it is not the church or chapel-goer who makes the readiest convert to Spiritualism. It is the secularist or positivist. Others have

the outlet of admitting the facts and attributing them to the devil, but the secularist has deprived himself of this convenient dust-hole for stray and awkward occurrences, and so whatever facts come within his experience must be considered part of the order of Nature. It is not chiefly, we must remember, in the character of a religion that Spiritualism comes before the world. It has its side of stubborn fact, its scientific side, or rather its side which is the despair of science, its tables and chairs, which, after observing a respectful inertia of so many centuries' duration, have now taken it into their heads (or to speak more correctly, legs) to set up life on their own account. But we shall be very much mistaken if our sole idea of the abnormal action of Spiritualism is a grotesque one. "Spiritualism" (I quote from a sermon preached against it in Liverpool) "comes also under the guise of benevolence, and human suffering and malady excite the compassion of the spirits. . . . Yet," continues its reverend opponent, "for all this semblance of religion and benevolence, there is within it the elements of the blackest apostasy." Whatever may be thought on the latter head, the physical working of Spiritualism is varied and instructive, and promises to throw a flood of light upon the problem of the rise of religions in general. There is not a miracle of the early Christians—journeys through the air, the healing of persons by handkerchiefs taken from the body of another, the appearance of a spirit in material form, performing material actions—that has not its alleged parallel at the present day. For marvels that put the Arabian Nights to the blush we have testimony which, in any other case, would be considered unimpeachable. The question of miracles, in fact, has totally shifted ground. The point at issue is no longer whether such and such occurrences took place in a distant country in a distant age, but whether they take place now in our midst. For, if these latter-day miracles are false, despite the number and credit of the witnesses who attest them, then obviously

we have no ground for asserting that the old-world miracles are true; there is nothing to prevent our believing that they could be most circumstantially related by honest persons without their possessing the slightest foundation of reality. Take Strauss, Rénan, Colenso, Greg; add as many more as you please, and you will not have an attack upon the *exclusive* claims of Christianity as formidable as that aimed from the side of Spiritualism. And why? Because Christianity can brave scorn and denial. Firm in the fortress of fact it can laugh at the efforts of a destructive criticism, but its autocracy crumbles away before the breath of impartial justice. "*Aut Cæsar aut nullus*," has been from the beginning its cry. What Professor Tyndall threw out as a mere *ad hominem* argument against Professor Mozley, that he had no warrant for asserting the miracles of the New Testament to be impossible to man, that Christ may have only "antedated the humanity of the future, as a mighty tidal wave leaves high upon the beach a mark which by-and-by becomes the general level of the ocean," is what we shall all be saying seriously before long.

Turning now from the physical to the moral and intellectual aspect of this new religion of Spiritualism, let us inquire what is its position with regard to its predecessors. It assumes an attitude, not of hostility, but of comprehension. Though new in form, it purports to have been ever in the world. Christianity it represents, not as a finality, but as one—the greatest, indeed, as yet—of those many waves of Spiritual influx which have ever been beating in upon the shores of Time from the dim expanse of the eternal. Christianity has spent its force, and now another revelation has succeeded it—a revelation suited to the needs of the time. The triumph of the philosophy of experience has taught man that his expectations and anticipations are not the measure of the reality of things—he has come to crave positive evidence, and to believe only in facts. Facts are now

given him. The mysterious veil which has hitherto separated the material from the spiritual world is drawn up in many places, and man is allowed to peer inside. Many things appear there other than what he had been led to expect. There is no eternal torment, no heaven of ecstatic bliss. What Spiritualism does bring to light is the prospect of a progressive future for human beings—no sudden break, no violent transformation—death but the birth into another sphere of existence, a sphere in which every human being is exactly that which himself and society have made him, and where his worth is measured solely by what he can bring with him beyond the tomb. There, as here, are all grades and varieties of being, and it is the work of the higher to lead up the lower; there, as here, God is incomprehensible, the something that transcends all knowledge, but underlies all existence. The mystery of things is not made apparent to disembodied spirits any more than to men; but the obedience of those more advanced to the law of love and light is far more perfect than ours.

Such are in brief the claims put forth by Spiritualism on its own behalf. Such is everywhere the utterance of the "inspirational speaker." And in every case this utterance purports to come, not from the speaker himself, but from a controlling intelligence other than his own.

We have then miracles and a revelation. I know not how we can avoid recognizing in Spiritualism the advent of a new religion. One remark, however, is obvious. Formerly such powers as those of working miracles and speaking under inspiration seem generally to have been the accompaniments of a superior moral elevation. I see no reason for asserting the same now. It would seem as if the democratic movement had laid its hands even on religion, as if in this case quantity were substituted for quality, as if the spirit of the age, or rather the spirit evoked by reaction against the age, instead of finding as of yore some select interpreter, were pouring itself out

indiscriminately through myriad mouths. Another point to be noted is that, if this be a revelation, it is a revelation that disclaims authority. We are warned that the utterances of mediums are to be no substitute for the individual judgment and conscience. We need not the warning; their discrepancies *are* sufficient to set us on our guard, though it must in fairness be confessed that amid the discrepancies there is a substantial agreement. Looking for a moment at the general question of revelation, it is easy to see that in the nature of things no revelation can be verbally authoritative. Our thoughts are the product of our experience—our language the reflection of our thoughts. Things of the spiritual world, therefore—a world transcending experience—can only be expressed in terms of experience. If so, only in metaphors, and metaphors will vary. Hence it is that the highest inspiration has always been to the heart of man—a something inexplicable, yet very real, to be felt and not formulated, vanishing in the attempt to translate it into words—a something, like the idea of time, intelligible enough until we attempt to define it.

There is another remark which may be made upon the character of this new religion. It lays more stress upon the second of the two great commandments than upon the first, and is concerned with man more than with his Maker. It does not bid us believe that Jehovah or Christ or Allah is God, or that Moses or Buddha, or Zoroaster or Mohammed, or whoever it may be, is His prophet. We are not in an age of great empires now, but in an age of republicanism, an age alive to progress. The new religion had its birth in the very hotbed of democracy. And social ideas find a reflection in the religion of an age, as the things of earth are mirrored by the mirage in heaven.

The message with which Spiritualism purports to be charged is simply this—"The dead are still alive." Thus it addresses itself to the social affections. And, turning

to the self-regarding element in human nature, it says—
"As you make yourself so shall you be, here and hereafter. There is no magic of water, or faith, or another's righteousness to save you from the effects of your own conduct."

"The mind, which is immortal, makes itself
Requital for its good or evil thoughts."

The belief in a future life Spiritualism professes to establish by the only method which can carry conviction, namely, by offering positive evidence. For what is the real creed of the age? Is it not this? "I believe in what mine eyes have seen and mine hands have handled of the word of truth—in that, and all fair inferences therefrom." In other words, we believe in experience and in such deductions from experience as conform to the rules of logic. Now these, it is commonly supposed, furnish no ground for accepting the, perhaps, fanciful, at all events unaccredited, notion of immortality; and hence through sheer force of intellectual honesty the belief is rapidly dying out. In this age more than any other the survival of the departed cannot be matter of certainty unless it is matter of experience. Mere assertion, however authoritative, can never check the frequent sigh, or stop the fast-falling tear. It is only when sight is substituted for faith that the desponding grief or yearning anxiety of human hearts can give place to full assurance. Spiritualism professes to prove man's future existence by facts. Those whose sole idea of Spiritualism is as a competitor of the performance of Maskelyne and Cooke, rather outdone than otherwise by its rival, will involuntarily reject this claim with scorn; but, for all that, not to the ignorant alone, but to numberless persons of high culture and intelligence, Spiritualism is the great consoler of hearts. In the sacred privacy of the family circle people, whose opinions we should respect on other matters, meet together, believing themselves to hold converse with the spirits of their loved ones who are

gone. Very little information they seem ever to get out of them: but that is another matter. It is with the existence of the belief only that we are at present concerned. That Spiritualism has been able by dint of miracle to establish a belief touching man's destiny, is enough to entitle it to be called a religion.

Let us now glance for a moment at the character of the future which, according to Spiritualism, is in store for us. For the idea of an arbitrary award of unmerited happiness and equally unmerited suffering Spiritualism would substitute the continuance of the same scheme of development which we see in operation around us, only under more favourable conditions. It is in fact the apotheosis of evolution. Now, if we *must* form to ourselves an idea of the future, and are not content to do our duty and find our happiness in the present, this is really the only picture which we can ask our minds to accept. The popular ideas on the subject, it is obvious, will not stand examination. Let us suppose, for instance, that Mrs. Brown is dead. What becomes of her soul? Here below she was an honest old creature enough. She had her faults, of course, and was horridly vulgar, and, withal, intensely unspiritual. Is she to effloresce at once into a spotless angel? It is the only supposition our feelings will admit.

It is the partly repulsive, partly ridiculous notions of a future life contained in the popular religion that have driven some of the most truly spiritual minds of the age to seek refuge in the idea of extinction. All the days of their appointed time, indeed, they will wait; they will do their duty by humanity in the term of life allotted them: but then—"After life's fitful fever he sleeps well" is what they would fain have said of them.

"And what if no trumpet ever be sounded
To rouse thee up from this rest of thine?
If the grave be dark, and never around it
The rays of eternal morning shine?"

"For the rest He giveth, give God the praise,
 Ye know how often, ye hearts that ache,
 In the restless nights of the listless days
 Ye have longed to slumber nor wished to wake."

Beautiful, certainly!—as resignation always is. But it is one thing to accept annihilation, another to desire it. In the latter there is surely something unwholesome, something unmanly. A longing for death is but the morbid utterance of depression. It is not till a man is stricken full sore that he will "dig for death as for hid treasure." When the soul is in a sound and healthy state, she loves life for life's sake, and pursues her way rejoicing in her strength—

"She asks no isles of the blest, no quiet seats of the just,
 To rest in a golden grove or to bask in a summer sky—
 Give her the glory of going on, and not to die."

Spiritualism, while banishing boggy, would at the same time sweep away with remorseless hand the idea of Heaven as a haven of rest, and with it the current religious conception of life. The end of life, it declares, is not trial and probation and vexation, not duty which expects reward, but happiness which is its own reward and its own all-sufficient justification—a happiness which lies in the love of others: for all spirits on earth and in Heaven are so bound together by magnetic bonds of sympathy, that when one suffers the rest must needs suffer with it—men are not units, but parts of one great whole; the communion of saints and the life everlasting are one. We are not set here to roll a stone up a hill with meaningless labour during life, that in death we may reap the reward of a rapturous inanition; but we are encouraged to climb ourselves, that we may enjoy the exhilaration of the mountain air, that we may drink in inspiration from the expanding prospect, that we may clear ourselves from the dense depressing atmosphere of earth. Such is the teaching of Spiritualism—and the comment I anticipate is,

"There needs no ghost come from the grave to tell us that."

True: but neither did Seneca need a revelation to convey to him the precepts of the gospel. What religion affects is not the intellectual apprehension of moral truths, but the desire for their practical realization. The work that Spiritualism is doing is good. The question whether this work really proceeds from the spirits of the dead does not affect the title of Spiritualism to be called a religion. We are not yet agreed as to the validity of the claims put forward by other religions. This much is certain, that Spiritualism stands out as a most uncompromising fact, not to be scowled or laughed out of countenance. It has allied itself with certain advanced opinions and with a high conception of human life. Perchance it will succeed in establishing these on a popular basis, the perturbation of natural laws by those powers which it has fostered into abnormal activity being destined then to cease. Or perchance these powers, now that they have been so largely called into play, will not again be remitted, but become henceforward the heritage of our race. Perchance again the lamp is already lit which is to guide the feet of humanity through a dark era yet to come. What will be the issue of the triumph of this new movement—and its triumph seems assured—we know not. Meanwhile we occupy no enviable position. The earnestness of our age is frittered away for want of a belief which, by being universal, may kindle enthusiasm. The old religion is dead; the new, not indeed unborn, but as yet only puling in the cradle, too fresh from the womb of mystery to endure the light with unblenched gaze.

THE BEARINGS OF SPIRITUALISM.

SOME time ago a remark was made by *The Spectator* as to the philosophical importance of the phenomena of Spiritualism, whether the practice of necromancy were to be approved of or not. Let it serve as a text for the following discourse. Upon a subject so vast I must be brief even to baldness. It will be enough to indicate a few lines of thought. "Phenomena" means in plain English "facts;" for facts we have to deal with, whatever theory we may choose to account for them. And what are the facts of Spiritualism? There is no room here to answer this question in detail. But let the reader recall some of the stories of the supernatural that have sounded to his ears most grotesquely incredible, fit only to raise a passing smile, or tickle the fancy by the quaintness of their conception—these are the kind of facts that have to be admitted. This may sound uncompromising, a pill without gilding; but plain dealing prospers best in the long run. Spiritualists, as a rule, believe overmuch; they multiply the real marvels; but they cannot out-miracle them. The facts of Spiritualism are obstinately objective; they refuse to be quenched either by laughter or scorn; they force themselves with increasing persistency upon the attention of thoughtful minds. View them historically, scientifically, metaphysically, theologically, it is impossible in any aspect to overrate or overstate their importance. To make good this assertion, I shall set down a few bare heads of

thought, dry bones which I look to see vivified by some prophet's touch. And first—

THE LOGICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE FACTS OF SPIRITUALISM.

By this I mean their effect upon the theory of belief. They give a final triumph to the philosophy of experience, so loudly professed in theory, so deeply disdained in practice. Persons who have encountered the facts of Spiritualism have had a dose likely to purge them for ever of prejudice. They will never again reject assertions that admit of verification on the mere ground of intrinsic incredibility. Incredibility is a totally different thing from impossibility. Incredibility has relation only to the mind, impossibility to the course of Nature. To deny what violates, or seems to violate, analogy, where investigation is impracticable, is wise; where practicable, silly. We must remember that probability is a fit guide only in the enforced absence of experience. Our minds have no power to impose laws upon Nature; there is no archetype within to which the universe without must conform. It is true order reigns everywhere, but not of our making. Nature pays no heed to our notions of precision and consistency. She will not make the earth the centre of things, nor cause the planets to move in perfect circles; neither will she limit their number to seven, nor make the course of the Nile exactly correspond to that of the Danube. Men have foregone their pet fancies in the past, and been rewarded with glimpses of a grander harmony. Are there no pet fancies to be renounced now? no limits which Nature is forbidden to transgress? We are children sitting at the great mother's knees, painfully spelling out the lessons of life; and when we are advanced into words of two syllables, we array our tiny experience to prove that no word had ever more than one. Our minds are a fair index of what

Nature has done within the compass of our observation, but no measure at all of what she can do. We depend on her teaching for all our knowledge, deriving our mental nourishment from the sights and sounds about us, and from experience of the feelings that pass within. Shall we then put out the eye of our soul, and, having reached a certain point of enlightenment, refuse further credit to the experience of ourselves or our neighbours? Such is the course that we actually do pursue; such is the attitude of mind which is belauded and called scientific. Rest content within an allotted compass of inquiry, and suppress everything beyond it with the potent logic of a sneer; that is what constitutes you a scientific man, that is scientific method. The lesson which the facts of Spiritualism convey to us in this direction is an old one, but one which, unfortunately, still needs enforcement. It was well put long ago by Dr. Chalmers, when he said, "It is a very obvious principle, although often forgotten in the pride of prejudice and controversy, that what has been seen by one pair of human eyes is of force to countervail all that has been reasoned or guessed at by a thousand human understandings."

But if the Philosophy of Experience condemns incredulity, it condones it too, as the unavoidable result of the weakness of the human intellect, a weakness which it mistakes for strength. It is not that the world will not believe what runs counter to its experience, though vouched for by men of unimpeachable veracity and intelligence, but that it cannot believe it. Belief is a feeling generated in the mind by association; and it is not possible to divest ourselves of it by a mere act of the will without the aid of fresh experience of an opposite kind. It is the office of reason to teach us that since even the limits of our conceptive faculties are no measure of the possibilities of nature, much less should our beliefs be accepted as such. But it is rare indeed to find a mind that has learnt this lesson in its full application,

and to which "secondary evidence" is more than a grain of dust in the balance when weighed against a prior belief. Students of physical science exhibit in an eminent degree this incapacity of escaping from a groove of thought. They have grown so accustomed to one uniform flow of natural phenomena that they cannot comprehend any perturbation by unusual causes, and avenge the mental disquietude that testimony causes them by angry denunciations of the witness. It is a curious and instructive sight to watch the sanguine condescension with which each new observer extends his patronage to the facts of Spiritualism—he knows that he is unprejudiced, and thinks he surely will be believed—only to find himself consigned by the world at large, and scientific men in particular, to the same limbo of folly as his predecessors. From the logical importance of the facts under consideration we must pass on next to

THE METAPHYSICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE FACTS OF SPIRITUALISM.

It were idle to point out how deeply they must affect all subsequent speculations on the nature of matter and mind, and other fundamental problems of being. The doctrine current among Spiritualists as to the nature of man is precisely that of St. Paul—"There is a soul-body (*i.e.*, the body proper) and a spirit-body (*i.e.*, the soul)." As the outer is to the inner in this present life, so is the inner to a yet more interior principle in the life beyond. Clairvoyants and mediums, as with one mouth, declare that, permeating every fibre of our physical body there is a spiritual substance, incognisable to sense, which at death issues from its corporeal integument, and re-forms in precisely similar shape, constituting the resurrection-body. Numberless disquisitions on this topic may be found by those who have a desire to pursue it. The language may be metaphorical, and express only superficial appearances. It is not plain whether we are born naked into the next

world as into this, or where the spirit gets its clothes from. Neither has it, to my knowledge, been determined whether this spiritual body is matter, however refined or subtilized, or, if not, what else it can be. But, leaving the beaten track, let us glance at the correlation of Berkeleyism, and the phenomena of the supernatural. Common sense says there is an external reality which is the cause of our sensations. "Yes," says Bishop Berkeley, "and this external reality is God." So, in the view of this philosopher, what we call the universe, with its ever-changing phenomena, is but a series of parables—the wisdom of the Omniscient's mouth. According to the measure of knowledge already gained by the soul do these parables speak much or little, reveal deep truths or sound as cold platitudes. The peculiarity of Berkeley's theory is that he allows nothing intermediate between the soul and its Maker. There is nothing anywhere but the voice of God speaking to the spirit of man. Our minds are mere instruments touched by the fingers of the Almighty:—

"A spirit came out from the Lord,
To play on the spirit of man,
That thrilled like a wind-shaken chord
When the hymn of the ages began."

According to Bishop Berkeley we are in a spirit-world already. Death cannot make us more so. We may indeed lose the series of impressions which indicate to us the existence of others. But why suppose that because *we* have lost one set of impressions, *they* have lost all? Or why assume our loss to be irrevocable? For Berkeley does not deny the existence of a plurality of individual spirits besides the Infinite Spirit. Now, suppose these finite spirits endowed to some extent with the divine attribute of impressing ideas by a mere act of the will upon others (which the facts of mesmerism strongly point to), and many things connected with the supernatural, that have hitherto proved great stumbling blocks, at once become plain. What, for instance, can be more natural on this

supposition than the ghost of a cocked hat or of a pair of breeches? A spirit wishing to impress the thought of himself upon a mortal raises in the latter the ideas which were wont to be associated with the thought of his identity in the mind of that mortal himself or others. The wonder would be if the cocked hat and breeches were not there, and if the spirit presented himself under the unusual condition of nudity. From the metaphysical aspect of the facts of Spiritualism we pass naturally to

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE FACTS OF SPIRITUALISM.

We have had the Columbus of the world of mind in Swedenborg. It remains to explore and subdue the country. The facts of Mesmerism, Clairvoyance, Spiritualism, reveal a universe of unsuspected laws regulating the interaction of mind on mind. They reveal the indelibility and recoverability of impressions on the memory. Every thought, word, and deed of our lives is there; the Books of Judgment are there. They show that there is a self within, latent to consciousness, of an apt apprehension, that needs no repetition to fortify its remembrance. There is a vast mass of evidence tending to show that what are mistaken for the utterances of spirits, because no author is forthcoming to claim them, are but the hidden contents of our own minds; but there is another mass, equally vast, equally irrefragable, which seems to force us to the inference of external intelligence, of what kind soever, but acting through the human mind, and modified by the nature of its medium. Hence we are presented by Spiritualism with the only consistent theory of revelation—that which gives it authority and withholds infallibility, which accounts for its progressive character without denying its external origin; which recognizes its services in the past and its promises for the future, but will not ascribe to the Fount of Holiness sentiments unworthy of

civilized men. But we are already trenching upon the next point that has to be considered. I mean

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FACTS OF SPIRITUALISM IN
THE SCIENCE OF RELIGION.

It is by their aid alone that such a science becomes possible. Thinkers on this subject who fail to recognize them are hopelessly groping in the dark. They choose to dissect the dry bones of dead religions, while a living one is growing up under their eyes and courting their observation. Every religion is founded upon spirit-manifestation; and without such displays of a power to command matter, none would ever take root among the vulgar. The long mooted question of miracles is at length decisively settled by Spiritualism. Miracles do actually occur. Of that keen and sceptical minds have been amply satisfied by observation; and any reader of this paper may satisfy himself too if he take the proper pains. It is not true that scepticism interferes with spiritual manifestations, though, as they depend upon psychical conditions, it is quite feasible for a strong antagonistic will to hinder them, just as a mesmerist on the platform may find himself defeated by a person in the crowd resolutely setting his will in opposition. And since it is certain that miracles occur in the present, what more reasonable than to believe well-authenticated accounts of them in the past? The controversy on miracles is now obsolete; and for this boon we are indebted to the facts of Spiritualism. But mark the consequence. Miracles are the monopoly of no religion; neither do they invariably accompany moral superiority. If St. Paul cured diseases by handkerchiefs taken from his body, so does Mr. Ashman—a worthy man, but no saint; if Philip was levitated, so was Mrs. Guppy; if Christ healed the blind by the touch of his spittle, so did Vespasian. No claim to authority can be grounded on miracles. If we were to pin our faith to

the greatest miracle-monger, we would have some queer prophets. There is, however, a natural connection between miracles and religion. Religions are the products of spiritual forces; their origin is behind the veil of our world; and these spiritual forces at the outset of every new religion override and master the laws of matter. There is no interruption in this of the course of Nature; only we must learn to extend that term.

The facts of Spiritualism, again, throw light on the question of prayer, and offer the only rational explanation of what are called Special Providences, many instances of which rest on too solid a basis of evidence for a blunt denial. It is not uncommon at a *séance* to have an internal request complied with. Extend this conception, no matter what theory you adopt to account for the fact, and you have physical answers to prayer, which it is absurd and blasphemous in the highest degree to ascribe to Him "in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Mr. W. R. Greg, in an admirable passage on prayer, argues that for "prayer to be a *bonâ fide* effective agent in obtaining any boon" (he is not here talking of spiritual blessings), "it must operate on an impressible and *mutable* will; therefore, if there be superior intermediate beings, showing human sympathies and imperfections, but possessing more than human powers and knowledge, prayer may secure their aid, but not that of a supreme God." And Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace, in his striking papers in the *Fortnightly*, has come forward to assure us that such is precisely the theory of prayer which his own mind, long trained in scientific habits of thought, finds itself forced by experience to accept.

The different heads under which I am endeavouring to exhibit the philosophical bearings of the facts of Spiritualism unavoidably run into one another, and we have already touched on

THE HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE FACTS OF
SPIRITUALISM.

Still the subject is wider than the field of religious history, and will bear a few words of further comment. Nature, it has been said, was discovered yesterday; but history is certainly the invention of to-day. It is only quite recently we have gained that infallible criterion of truth, which enables the historian to accept one set of statements from a valued author, while others, on the same page, it may be, and resting on equally valid evidence, are to be set aside as on the bare face of them incredible. The facts of Spiritualism are of overwhelming importance to the historical student. Page after page of history, which modern criticism has mythicised, are by them restored to the simplicity of a genuine record. Can it, for instance, for one moment be believed that the Delphic oracle, which exerted so important an influence on the fortunes of the Greek race, which Plato recognized, and to which Socrates appealed as the standing proof of the existence of the Gods, and their care for men, was nothing but a gigantic swindle, imposed for ages on the most sharp-witted of nations by Pagan priests, a tribe ignorant and corrupt beyond the ordinary measure of popular priestcraft. No; it was a genuine source of inspiration and clairvoyance, whence men could obtain real information as to distant and future events; it was tested in a thousand ingenious ways and passed unscathed through the ordeal; though, when power was deficient, it eked out its resources by vagueness and ambiguity, as medial utterances do now. The same remarks hold true, more or less, of oracles of minor note. Volumes might be written displaying the homogeneity of spiritual phenomena in all ages and all countries. To take but a single example. Any one who has witnessed an "inspirational speaker," of a certain type, passing under "influence," has had a vivid realization of Virgil's powerful picture of the

Cumæan Sibyl succumbing to the mastery of Phœbus. That picture is true to nature, and could have been penned by none but an eye-witness of the kind of scene portrayed:—

“Nor yet subdued the Sibyl, phrensy-struck,
Ranges her cavern’s length in awful strife
To drive the deity from out her breast:
So much the more her frantic mouth he tires,
Tames the wild heart and moulds her to his will.”

The connection of Spiritualism with ancient oracles is but one of numerous historical applications. Our fathers were not absolute fools, though we are apt to flatter ourselves that “we are the men,” and that if wisdom will not die with us, it was at all events born when we saw the light. The lamentable history of witchcraft presents itself in a new and startling aspect to the inquirer into Spiritualism. The same may be said of the art of magic. It is incredible that men should have spent laborious days and nights in the study of—nothing. Tricks of legerdemain might have imposed upon outsiders, but could hardly have bamboozled the performers themselves; yet we have only to dip into the treatises of writers on magic to see that they were thoroughly in earnest. Surely anything which throws even the gleam of a farthing rushlight into so obscure a corner of the mental history of man must be worth our most curious study!

But enough, I hope, has been said to show the deep-lying, wide-reaching importance of facts, to which we must either give credence, or reject all testimony, and reduce the individual within the narrow sphere of his own observation. It will doubtless be observed that, though their value in the comparative study of religion has been insisted on, no word has been said with regard to their moral and religious significance. That does not flow from the mere existence of the facts, but from the acceptance of the only theory by which some at least of them seem capable of explanation. If we ascribe the

phenomena with Dr. Carpenter wholly to unconscious cerebration, or with Sergeant Cox to psychic force, or with Mr. Charles Bray to an omnipresent thought-atmosphere, we deprive them of their chief moral value. One point, however, we may dwell upon without begging the question in favour of any theory. Whatever view we may adopt of inspiration, and with it of revelation; whether we ascribe its source to superhuman intelligence, or only to the working of the mind of the age; whether the fire be kindled in heaven or on earth, it is certain that it has been a most important instrument in the education of the human race. The utterances of Hebrew seers, the professed spirit-teachings of St. Paul, the pages of the Koran, how they have moulded the thoughts of millions! And to each age has been given according to its capacity; on each such motives have been brought to bear as were most appropriate to enforce obedience. We have now reached that point in the education of humanity when the fear of the rod may be finally dispensed with. Accordingly, we hear nothing in modern revelations about judgment, nothing about damnation, no word of a hell save such as the sinner may make for himself in this world as in the next. We have grown up to mature rationality, and our reason is appealed to. Threats which were salutary in the past would now create contumacy and not compliance, or produce servility in the man, though the simpler nature of childhood might escape the taint.

But it is time that this paper should draw to a close. If it has awaked attention, it has not failed of its object. We have seen how the facts of Spiritualism intertwine themselves with almost every branch of human inquiry. They strikingly illustrate the difficulties of truth in winning its way to acceptance; suggest a reconsideration of the most fundamental problems of being; reveal innumerable hidden laws of mind; throw light on the deep mystery of the rise of religions; and connect themselves

with the history of every age. Fresh from their study, we feel inclined to exclaim, with Seneca—"Nullo nobis seculo interdictum est: in omnia admittimur." They are fraught with significance to all who care to speculate on their present condition, their possible future, or the past history of their race. But, further, they are silently and steadily taking hold of the popular mind, not as facts to be reasoned on, but as a religion to be lived. And here I would recall one striking observation of Hume's. "In the infancy of new religions, the wise and learned commonly esteem the matter too inconsiderable to deserve their attention or regard. And when afterwards they would willingly detect the cheat, in order to undeceive the deluded multitude, the season is now past, and the records and witnesses which might clear up the matter have perished beyond recovery." Let us not in our wisdom and learning repeat this error of the past, nor in allowing another "cheat" to grow to the full dimensions of a scheme of faith, bequeath a legacy of endless controversy to a new age of criticism. By following, consciously or unconsciously, the rules of inductive logic, we have rid ourselves already of many groundless prejudices. But is the sun of truth yet at meridian-height? or more than peering above the morning clouds? The day may come when the facts of Spiritualism shall be clearly understood, and the shadow distinguished from the substance; but never so long as we refuse to apply to these facts the established principles of induction. Let us, as the *Daily Telegraph* once put it, "be Baconian, even to our ghosts." Of course, it is very disagreeable to be brought face to face with a number of facts one cannot account for; it is too provoking to have chairs and tables taking it into their legs to set up life on their own account; to have miracles and omens and visions and inspirations going on under the nose of the British Association, and just, too, as science was reaching the end of her synthesis, and discussing the condensation of the

primal nebula ! It is very disagreeable ; but, then, how is to be avoided ? Hiding our heads is but a sorry expedient. Let us prefer to face the facts, undismayed by the anathemas of those who have not looked into them. That is not true science which pronounces before examining ; which, so far from venturing out into strange waters, is determined to keep well within the shelter of a bold, solid bluff of popular prejudice. The science which would elucidate the deeper mysteries of Nature must be a science which will investigate instead of denying ; a science which is ready to learn as well as eager to teach—a science which will shirk no facts, because the conclusions they point to are distasteful.

A "TEST" FROM THE DELPHIC ORACLE.

OUR modern methods of thought are, perhaps, not quite so perfect as we are inclined to think them; and if there is one direction in which we are more hopelessly on a false track than another, it is in the region of what is called "historical criticism." The historical critic is a self-complacent personage, with a sovereign contempt for the understanding of all who came into the world before himself. He takes his own limited experience as the universal type of world-order; and if ever history, in the wake of Nature, departs from the humdrum course of daily life, the critic accounts for the aberration by a patronising allusion to "the ideas current at the time." If Nature was only discovered yesterday, history, it seems, is the invention of to-day. It is only of late that intuitive perception of historical truth has been acquired, which enables the critic to decide at a glance that one statement of an author is to be accepted as genuine, while another, perhaps on the very same page, and resting on equally valid evidence, is to be explained away as mere mythology, or the product of the religious sentiment working upon the peculiar beliefs and ideas of the day. Historical criticism has achieved many triumphs, but none more brilliant than the total extirpation of the miraculous element from Christianity. It is interesting to observe the change that has come over the spirit of religious thought in the present century as compared with preceding ones, in the delight with which the removal of this incubus upon faith is hailed by Rationalists and

Theists and advanced theologians generally. They can respect a Deity who behaves with decorum—

"A par le Roi, défense à Dieu
De faire miracle dans ce lieu."

And yet the so-called "miracles" are not such terrible bugbears after all, and will ultimately be recognized in their true light, as intrinsically of equal credibility with other parts of the gospel narrative, and as constituting no greater claim to an authority calculated to ride rough-shod over advanced moral sensibilities. For what is it that has given, as is commonly supposed, the death-blow to belief in the Christian miracles? Evidently the comparative study of history. It has been found that the accounts in question do not stand isolated, but have their parallels in the history of every nation under the sun. And so what is commonly admitted to lend credibility to a narrative is in this instance assumed to abolish it! So confident is Matthew Arnold in the strength of this strange inversion of reason, that he considers all discussion as to the evidence of Christian miracles superfluous, when he has the pages of Herodotus to which to refer his orthodox opponents. Now it is a well-known fact, and one which no sane Spiritualist will be anxious to deny, that the love of the marvellous is one of the most prolific faculties of the human mind, and that miracles breed like rabbits in a warren; but after all deductions have been made, we need not doubt but that much in Herodotus and other ancient authors, which has hitherto been regarded as grotesque fable, will regain its place as sober history. The records of the past will, in fact, have to be studied afresh in the light thrown upon them by the phenomena of modern Spiritualism. Nowhere is this more evident than with regard to the oracles which played so important a part in the political and social life of the Greeks. The prestige which these institutions had acquired in the earliest dawn of history, they maintained amid the full blaze of Hellenic civiliza-

tion. They were believed in by Plato, heterodox in all else; and by Socrates, with a plenitude of conviction for which he accounts by an appeal to the daily experience of himself and others of their veracity. That real powers of clairvoyance were possessed by the Pythia, or priestess of the Delphic god, might be made abundantly evident by quotations from trustworthy historians. We need not, therefore, throw ourselves into the usual attitude of incredulity in reading the following account, given us by Herodotus, of the test imposed by Cræsus, King of Lydia, upon the oracle at Delphi, previous to consulting it as to the success of his proposed attack upon the rising power of Persia. I translate quite literally from the pages of the father of history:—

"Having formed this design, he at once proceeded to test the oracles, those in Greece and the one in Libya, despatching messengers in different directions, some to go to Delphi, some to Abæ in Phocia, and some to Dodona; while others were sent off to the temples of Amphiaraus and Trophonius, and others to the Branchidæ in the Milesian territory. These were the Grecian oracles which Cræsus sent to consult. And in Libya he sent other persons to inquire of the oracle of Hammon. Now, he sent thus to sound the oracles, in order that, if he found them truthful, he might afterwards ask them if he should undertake an expedition against the Persians. So he despatched his Lydians to test the oracles, instructing them to take count of the time from the day they left Sardis, and on the hundredth day consult the oracles, asking what the king of the Lydians, Cræsus, son of Halyattes, was doing at that moment: the answers they were to take down in writing, and bring back to himself. Now, it is nowhere recorded what declarations were made by the rest of the oracles; but at Delphi the moment the Lydians entered the sanctuary and proceeded to put the desired question, the Pythia gave the following reply in hexameters:—

'The number of the sands I know, and the measure of the sea,
The dumb have voice and language, and the speechless speech to me.
A steaming odour strikes my sense, from scaly tortoise sent,
With seethed lambkin's tender flesh in blazing cauldron blent,
'Mid brass above and brass below, the twain together pent.'

This declaration of the Pythia the Lydians took down in writing, and then went off to Sardis. And when the other messengers who had been despatched abroad arrived with their oracles, Cræsus unfolded each in turn, and looked over their contents. With the rest he was not struck, but as soon as he heard the one from Delphi, he broke into prayer, and hailed it, thinking there was no oracle but that at Delphi, since it had discovered what he was doing. For after he had despatched his messengers to the seats of divination, he watched for the appointed day, and set himself to do what he considered on reflection was the most unlikely thing to be discovered or conjectured. He chopped up a tortoise and a lamb, and began to boil them together with his own hands in a brass cauldron, on which he had put a brass lid."

That the oracle, having thus established its reputation with Cræsus, afterwards misled him to his ruin, may be borne in mind with advantage by consulters of spirits at the present day.

MATERIALISM AND MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

THE possession of truth, whether in fact or fancy, ought to make men tender towards those whom they believe to lack the same blessing. Intolerance is irrational as well as injurious. For in truth ignorance is too much of a misfortune ever to be treated as a fault. This principle at the present day gains much intellectual, but little emotional acceptance. The old leaven still works secretly in the loudest advocates of toleration. For "knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers." Human nature does not change in a day; it is only by slow degrees that we grow from bad to better:—

"*Plurima felix*

*Paullatim vitia atque errores exiit omnes,
Prima docet rectum Sapientia."*

Need we therefore wonder if Spiritualists, as well as other people, are prone to intolerance? It is against the materialist that the vials of rhetorical indignation are most often outpoured by the Spiritualistic declaimer. Now, in the course of the following brief remarks, I hope two points will become plain: *first*, that materialism does not deserve reprehension, and, *secondly*, that if it did, the adherent of modern Spiritualism would be the very last person who would have a right to administer it.

We need not commit ourselves to the position that no one is responsible for his opinions. If men are responsible for their conduct, they are also responsible for their

opinions, in so far as they flow from habits of mind induced by action. I hold as firmly as any preacher could desire, that there are certain truths which a man cannot understand and appreciate, unless his heart be in a fit state to receive them; that "spiritual things," in fact, "are spiritually discerned." But then I hold that it is only spiritual things which are so discerned. Now it is often argued that belief in a future life is just one of those truths which ought to be grasped by the heart, even where the head fails to find due ground for its acceptance. But plausible as this position may at first sight appear, it will hardly stand examination. Whether there is or is not a future life is a question of fact; and granting that there is, man's existence in another state of being is a part of natural history, no less than his existence here. Now it is absurd to maintain that the heart should inform us as to matters of fact and scientific truth. Not to know, but to feel, is the office of the heart; love, reverence, purity, are the fruits we expect from it. The faith which is rightly reckoned a virtue is not of the head, but of the heart; devotion to duty, obedience to the voice of God within. Love of man, and love of God, which is love of goodness, are possible to all, even to those who believe they will return to dust for ever, and who cannot formulate their conception of the universal soul under the human attributes of personality. Spiritual graces cannot be killed by any intellectual system, though they may not develope equally well under all. There is no merit in the belief in a future life, though there is much expediency. The lesson of existence is that we should live for something beyond ourselves, whatever the term of our life may be. Whoso learns it now, will need but to practise it hereafter. To him, therefore, who, without the consoling hope of a future, devotes himself to the welfare of others, and the cause of goodness, these words would seem in their truest sense applicable:—"Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed." This is indeed

the last great trial to which human faithfulness can be subjected, that with the "wages of dust" for virtue, one should live the life of an immortal. It is because average human nature is unable to bear this strain that Sadduceism is to be deprecated, not denounced.

It will be seen that I have taken materialism at its best, as of course we are bound to do—as a philosophical persuasion, the result of that intellectual passion for truth which will not accept any proposition without evidence adequate to establish it. Of that materialism which is "of the earth, earthy," which shuns the idea of a future because it fears it, it is not necessary here to speak. But there are persons of a peculiar organization, with abundant conscientiousness and deficient hope, who, while striving to do right to the utmost of their capacity here, would rather not be called upon to encounter the same struggle again, and seem actually to dislike the idea of a future life. This is a painful fact, yet I do not know that it is a very surprising one. The cup of life is not of such unmixed sweetness that all would seek to taste it twice. To this we must add that the perverse and unnatural notions so long current with regard to the future have made the subject altogether distasteful to many minds, so that they turn with impatience from the very mention of it. Let the materialist once fully realize that it is no repulsive supernatural future, with arbitrary assignments of bliss and woe, which is declared to be in store, but a prolongation, on a higher plane, of the present life, with its human aims and interests, and he will embrace the idea with that eagerness which man's inborn love of existence makes natural. He will be anxious to believe in immortality, if only he can find grounds not illusory for so doing. Some bigots perhaps there will remain so wedded to the conceit of their own opinions, that they would rather have themselves and their fellows annihilated than awake to the consciousness of life-long error, like Jonah, who would have doomed Nineveh to destruction to

escape the reproach of false prophecy, and like his Christian antitypes in the present day, who would be disappointed to find hell a fable. These, however, are aberrations, and we must judge of every doctrine by its best adherents.

But if materialism were ever so much to blame, the Spiritualist disclaimer might at least remember that on him of all men denunciation sits most ungracefully. When he can appeal to reason, why have recourse to rhetoric? *His* conviction is no mere product of the heart, that needs to be defended by the preacher's weapons of persuasion and rebuke. It is not in the quality of his mind, but only in the accident of his experience, that he differs from the very opponent he denounces. For it is hardly too much to say that the majority of intelligent Spiritualists would at this moment be wholly devoid of any belief in a future, if it were not for the happy enlargement of their experience, which has enabled them to embrace that belief, while preserving precisely the same sceptical habit of mind which leads others into materialism.

But leaving the ethical side of the discussion, we must next proceed to examine as a speculative question the exact relationship in which materialism and modern Spiritualism stand to one another. Enthusiastic supporters extol modern Spiritualism as the antithesis of materialism, and exult in the death-blow it has dealt its rival; acrimonious opponents abuse it as no Spiritualism at all, but itself the grossest materialism. Even prior to investigation the cautious thinker will suspect the truth to lie somewhere between these two extremes.

Materialism consists, not in confounding mind with matter, which no one in his senses ever does, but in asserting that mind does not and cannot exist apart from matter. According to the materialist, mind is a mere result of structure. It is not a substance, but an attribute—not a thing, but a quality of a thing. As an

instrument constructed by human skill quivers into melody under the artist's touch, so the human organism gives forth the music—harsh or sweet—of consciousness, when played upon by the cosmic forces ; and as

“ When the lute is broken
Sweet tones are remembered not,”

so, when man's body can no longer perform its work, consciousness is necessarily at an end, or survives only by its echo in another's mind. A subjective immortality is all that is possible to us. Thus the materialist is landed in belief in annihilation, not directly and by choice, but indirectly, as the inevitable result of his theory. And for this view of the relation of mind to matter, the materialist thinks that he has ample ground in experience. His conviction is “ that there is not a single fact on record from which we can infer that there is, or can be, anywhere such a thing as a disembodied spirit.”* To this the ready reply of the Spiritualist is that “ we have changed all that.” But our object now is not to combat but to examine materialism.

Mind, as we have just said, is not identified by the materialist with matter. The lute is one thing, and its music another. What, then, is mind as viewed apart from the substance in which it coheres, or the instrument through which it is manifested ? “ Feeling ” is the obvious answer ; “ a series of states of consciousness.” This is the form under which our own minds are known to us. Now, to hold that the mind survives the body would, on the materialist's view, be tantamount to saying that attribute can exist apart from substance—an absurdity which condemns itself. His opponent, therefore, is driven to maintain that there is no necessary and inalienable connection between mind and the human body ; that the latter is in fact a mere accidental accompaniment of the former, and not the thing on which it depends. The

* The quotation is from Mr. Charles Bray, of Coventry, a writer whose views on psychology are well worth the attention of Spiritualists.

bodily structure is on this view a mere instrument for the use of mind; and though the tune dies with the instrument, the performer only ceases to be heard.

Before going further it may be well to make clear the sense in which the word "feeling" is here used. It is to be understood in the wide sense impressed upon it by John Stuart Mill, as embracing all the phenomena of consciousness. There are only two ways in which we become acquainted with existence—from without and from within. Without, all is matter; within, all is feeling. It is only through the medium of matter that man's existence, known to himself from within, can become manifest to others.

But is it indeed possible to conceive of feeling, that is to say, of a series of impressions, or states of consciousness, as existing in and by themselves? The very words cry out against the notion. A feeling implies something that feels, an impression must have something to receive it, there must be something that is in a state of consciousness. These, after all, are only names of attributes—words used to denote modifications of some underlying reality. It seems, therefore, that we must so far agree with the materialist, and pronounce mind or feeling to be an attribute of some substance. Of what nature then is this substance? Either it must be like other things or not. Now, the other substances we are acquainted with are material. Just at this point, however, modern Spiritualism steps in, and points us to a new substance, not exactly matter, but analogous to matter, a something more subtle, more attenuated, but still susceptible of organization like ordinary matter. But to take up the position that the soul, being a refined organism, survives after death, and thinks, loves, worships as heretofore, is to occupy the very same ground that the materialist at present does. All the difficulties of how organization is adequate to account for thought and so on, remain unsolved. This view, then, of the after life can scarcely

be pronounced antagonistic to materialism: it is merely an extension of its doctrine. If, therefore, it should be proved that there is in man a more subtle form of matter, the recipient of impressions, which survives the decay of the body, what need for the materialist to be overwhelmed with confusion? He will merely be surprised to find that his doctrine leads to belief in a future. Nor let him be considered completely in the wrong for having imagined that it was the outer and grosser form of matter which is the true recipient of impressions, and not rather the inner and more refined. It may be that they differ only in degree, and that the one is evolved out of the other, as the kernel out of the nut. If so, there must have been some period of existence when they were one; and then the view of the materialist would have needed no correction.

The dispute between materialists and their antagonists would not be in the least decided by the triumph of modern Spiritualism. The real question at issue between the two parties, is whether organization is or is not sufficient to account for sensation, thought, emotion, and will. Granting the complete establishment of modern Spiritualism, the old dispute would be liable to re-arise. I have seen it stated somewhere that there are all sects in the spirit-world except materialists. But the exception is quite unnecessary. There is room for materialists too. For, admitting the existence of a spirit-body, composed of a finer form of matter which escapes our present senses, it will have to be settled whether this body is itself the thinking substance, or only the outward expression of some inner and hidden reality. Those who take the former view will be materialists, and those who take the latter, Spiritualists, in the strictly philosophical sense of the term. And be it observed, that if the substance in which feeling inheres is really an aggregate of particles, no matter how minute, it is a compound body, and may therefore be disintegrated, so that it can enjoy at best

only a fortuitous immortality, and is not, by right of its own nature, eternal. Hence we may well conceive spirits maintaining that the disintegration of their spirit-bodies would result in annihilation.

But if materialism be untenable both in this world and the next, then we must adopt the other alternative, namely, that the thinking substance is unlike everything else with which we are acquainted, being neither matter, nor analogous to matter. We must regard the thing within us, which feels, loves, thinks, and wills, the true self, as something wholly *sui generis*. This is what the common sense of mankind has done, more or less consciously, all the world over. To this substratum of consciousness, this inner, unknowable essence, it would be well to appropriate the term "spirit." Spirit then is no rarefied or etherealized form of matter, but something totally distinct in kind. The unphilosophic mind, at all events, is never troubled with difficulties as to how spirit can think, love, worship, and will. And the reason is obvious. Finding mental phenomena to exist, we invent a name for the agent which exhibits them, and for that only. Hence we are not perplexed with instances of the same agent unpossessed of the attributes in question, which is the difficulty that meets us when we ascribe consciousness to matter. On this supposition, spirit is really the antithesis, and not merely the analogue of matter. We must place it in one side in our thoughts, and on the other the successive garments, whether material or psychical, in which it clothes itself. There will still be left an inner and an outer when the weight of flesh has been cast aside.

We are now in a position to estimate the charge brought against modern Spiritualism of being simply rank materialism. It is true that, admitting the doctrine of a spirit-body, we have something like the old state of things over again, with the mere replacement of a coarse instrument by a fine one. We are not translated into

the world of spirit at death (if by spirit be meant the inner shrine of consciousness), but merely into a kind of rarefied physical world. Spirits are still concealed within the mysterious recesses of their own identity. They are not known to one another in themselves, but through the medium of an external organism. Nevertheless, the charge of materialism is futile, since modern Spiritualism neither asserts nor denies anything with regard to the true nature of being, but leaves it unknowable as it found it. What it does effect is the substitution of a possible for an impossible conception of the after life. We have seen that in our present state man's existence is manifested only in two ways—to himself, within, as feeling; to others, without, as matter. If, therefore, we hold that when the physical body is cast aside at death, no new organism is assumed in its place, only the interior mode of manifestation is left, and man reduced to a mere train of feelings. Each individual soul must thus exist in isolation from the rest—

"Eternal, boundless, undecayed,
A thought unseen, yet seeing all."

All, that is, which retains externality; for its own compeers, which share its nature, must be alike invisible. From this vague universality, or vague nothingness, the hypothesis of modern Spiritualism rescues us. If it had not been forced upon us, we should have had to seek it; for if we are to conceive of our future existence at all, it must be under the limitations of an organism.

I have said advisedly, "if we are to conceive;" for there is nothing to hinder one from believing in the existence of a purely mental world in which spirit may be cognizable to spirit immediately, and through no external medium whatever. Such a world, it is true, is utterly unimaginable: but we have no right to say it cannot exist. That is rash reasoning which confounds inconceivability with impossibility. What is inconceivable and absurd to us may seem natural and inevitable to a being

endowed with different faculties. We cannot be sure that the constitution of our minds is a reflection of absolute truth. Indeed, there is much to suggest the contrary. But though we may believe in a future state, without accepting the doctrine of a spirit body, it is no slight benefit to be able to superadd conception to belief. To accept as an article of faith what our faculties do not enable us to grasp, is but to string words together with no mental picture to give them meaning.

This doctrine of a spirit-body—of a quasi-material envelope underlying the physical organism, and serving as the vehicle or garb of the spirit on decay of its old covering, is the great contribution of modern Spiritualism to philosophy. It has been taught before by individual thinkers, but has never till now been thoroughly grasped, realized, insisted upon. In particular it was inculcated by St. Paul, though not quite in the same shape in which it is propounded by modern revelation. For he imagined an interval to exist after the decay of the natural body, before the spirit donned its new garb. It was not till "the trumpet should sound" that the dead were to be raised incorruptible. As the seed had to lie germinating in the ground before it could spring into the sunlight beautiful and metamorphosed, so there was to be an interval between death and resurrection, except in the case of those who were alive at Christ's coming, an event which he looked for before his own generation had passed away. But the support of reason which this doctrine enjoys is far more important than that of authority. For what could be more violently opposed to all the analogy of Nature's workings than to suppose that we shall overleap at one bound the vast chasm that separates matter from pure spirit, even supposing the latter to be capable of existing at all apart from the former?

It may well be that even the spirit-body itself may at some period be disintegrated, another death undergone, and a still more etherealized organism developed out of

the old one. In our present state it is only by the intervention of a physical organism that we become aware of the existence of any spirit except our own. Spirit speaks to spirit through the medium of matter. Would we communicate our thoughts, we set the air in motion, or inscribe marks upon paper. How far the mode of communication may be altered in the next state, it would be hazardous to seek to determine. But there seems no significance in the doctrine of a spirit-body, unless it is to be used for somewhat the same purposes as the material. The interchange of ideas will no doubt be more expeditious, but not independent of all external signs, and the knowledge by spirits of each other still only mediate, so that poor Charles Lamb's disquietude may have been in vain. "Shall I enjoy friendships there, wanting the smiling indications which point me to them here, the recognizable face, the sweet assurance of a look?" We may remark in passing that Spiritualists would do well to define the word intuition, which they make use of so freely. Intuition on their premises is perception through the spiritual senses, not perception without any senses at all.

Such, then, is the doctrine of modern Spiritualism—a life to come, the analogue of the life that now is—a spirit-body, having substance and shape equally with the physical, but a substance so refined as to be impalpable to our present senses. It would lead us into deeper waters than we can now sail on to inquire how far these views would be modified by the adoption of Berkeley's theory of existence, to which recent psychological discoveries seem to lend such startling support. We must here, therefore, conclude by summarising the results of this paper. On the one hand it is evident that modern Spiritualism is not materialistic, since it does not attack or degrade the nature of spirit considered in itself, but leaves it precisely as it found it, having, in fact, no light to throw upon that question. On the other hand it is

equally evident that materialism (or the theory that existence is the product of organization) so far from being crushed out by the new doctrine, is only given new worlds to range in. As there will always be an outer and an inner, the one revealed and the other hidden, so it will always be possible to maintain that the outer is the only reality, and the supposed existence of the inner a mere delusion. The materialist in our present world looks without him, and denies the existence of what others find within; and precisely the same dispute may arise on every successive plane of existence, since the real question at issue is not merely between matter, as we now understand that term, and spirit, but between the outer and the inner, between the mere external organism, whether physical or psychical, and a something unorganized, inaccessible, unknowable, the spark of Deity within us, the breath of the most High God.

WHAT IS REALITY?

WHAT constitutes reality is a question very difficult of answer, as most questions are which lie at the threshold of knowledge. Let us begin by saying what does not? The evidence of the senses, even when each corroborates the other, does not constitute reality. But here we must at the outset distinguish. In one sense of the term every sense-impression is an unquestionable reality. Of what am I certain if not of the impressions that break in upon me through the senses, of the sights and sounds that affect my eye and ear, of the savours and odours that delight or disgust me? These are primary facts. They may often be what we call hallucinations, but that does not affect the certainty of my knowledge of them, nor, consequently, in one sense, their reality. To say that a certain impression on the senses is an hallucination, is to say that it occurs without those marks of external reality which it is the object of the present article to investigate. There are other things of which I am as certain as of my sensations, namely, the thoughts which pass through my mind, the passions which agitate my soul, the determinations of my will—and these, unlike sensations, are never declared to be hallucinations, because there is no external reality of which they are the recognized indications. In one sense of the word then, all states of mind, all that may be summed up under the head of consciousness, is real, but mere consciousness gives us only subjective and not objective reality; and it is the latter kind of which we are in search; the former is mentioned in order to be excluded.

The philosophy of hallucination offers a vast field of inquiry which has yet to be patiently cultivated. To say that a thing is a delusion is a very easy way of shelving psycholocial anomalies. But delusion must have its laws no less stringent than those of real perception. Sometimes, no doubt, the cause of what we call a delusion lies in a diseased state of the organs of the percipient. But it would be rash to lay down that this is always the case. Some delusions have an external cause, though not the same kind of cause that operates when we are cognizant of a reality. Delusions differ in degree in many ways, more particularly in the number of senses that combine to impose upon us. There are hallucinations of one, two, or three dimensions, according as one sense only, or two, or even all three are called into operation. I say "all three," for taste and smell, as modifications of touch, may be roughly classed under the same head with it. You may hear a voice address you in the daytime, and though you were certain that the sound was real, you may still consent to call the experience an hallucination, if the testimony of sight fails to corroborate that of hearing. Or you may at the same time see a figure from which the voice issues, life-like, imobile, distinct in the light of day; but if your hand passes through this figure when you thrust it out, you will not resent the dictum of the doctor who pronounces you the victim of hallucination; and this, notwithstanding that each sensation was in itself perfectly real. But if the figure resists the touch, then we seem to have all the certainty of external reality that it is possible for the isolated judgment of the individual to obtain. Under such circumstances a man would practically believe in the reality of his experience, and by most people it would be theoretically admitted that he is right. It is true he may be the victim of an hallucination of three dimensions, but he must run the chance of that. I am speaking of course of a case in which verification by means of the senses of other witnesses is impracticable. If we will

not believe "that which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled," then is our scepticism incurable, and we are shut out for ever from all hope of knowledge. But then, where possible, it must in a strict sense be "our eyes" which see, and "our hands" which handle. For the possibility of an hallucination of three dimensions is proved, if it need the proof, from mesmerism. A "subject" under the control of the operator will not only see and hear, but feel to order, and will deride the idea of his being under a delusion. The subjective reality is complete, though we know that he is deluded. It is plain, therefore, that the sense-impressions of the individual are not in all cases a safe criterion of reality. If Swedenborg walk arm-in-arm with St. Paul through the streets of London, it may be a full reality to him, but we must pronounce his state a delusion, so long as the passers-by see only Swedenborg.

But what if, under certain unascertained conditions of brain or nerve, hallucination be contagious? I have had personally a slight experience pointing in this direction, which I trust I may be pardoned for relating. Once, when an undergraduate at college, I was walking, towards dark, with a friend in the quadrangle. A passing impression occurred to me that I saw a man named H. leaning with his back against the common-room window. The impression was a momentary and very slight one, and I would never have thought twice of it only for what followed. My friend gave a start, and made an exclamation, and when I asked what was the matter, was silent. My curiosity being roused, I pressed him to tell me the reason of his exclamation, and he then said, "Oh, I thought I saw H. standing with his back against the common-room window." Now, this certainly took place, and to ascribe it to mere coincidence would, I think, be meaningless. Either the impression passed from one mind into another, probably from mine to his, as it seems to have occurred to me first, or else the same cause

produced both impressions. Shall we then say, with the believers in a "double," that the psychical, astral, or fluidic body of H. was at that moment "on the loose," and veritably presented itself to the minds of both of us? Or shall we adopt a less ponderous hypothesis, and say that some temporary effect of light or shadow being sufficient to raise the idea of H. in one mind might without great wonder be sufficient also to raise it in the other? This is perhaps the common-sense view of the case. But, however that may be, the following story, if true—and I had it on good authority—would establish the possibility of simultaneous hallucination. I may not perhaps give the details of the story with perfect accuracy, but the following was the substance of it. An Indian juggler was exhibiting his powers under the shade of a tall palm-tree, amid whose leaves an English officer had previously ensconced himself. The juggler took a baby, hacked it to pieces with a sword, and handed the portions round to the company. He then collected them, and restored the baby whole as before. The company had the corroborated testimony of their several senses to the facts of the existence, dismemberment, and reconstitution of the baby; but the officer up in the tree, unaffected, we may presume, by the psychological influence of the juggler (not on account of distance, but because unperceived) saw that the fancied baby was only a pumpkin! Now, if this story be true, every one will allow, that was the reality which was seen by the one, and that the hallucination which was seen by the many. How is this? Why should we prefer one witness to a multitude? Because a vast amount of experience, which is prior sense-testimony, is in favour of the one and against the many.

We have left out of count one element in St. John's criterion of certainty. "That which was from the beginning." (This is my own meaning of the words, I daresay, but in preferring my own meaning to the author's, I am only following the example of respectable

commentators.) But it is necessary to distinguish carefully between the reality of a thing and our belief in its reality. A thing is either real or it is not. No amount of analogies can make the real more real, or add being to that which is; as no amount of counter evidence can make the real less real, or take its being from that which is. The degree of belief we entertain of the reality of a thing is what constitutes its "probability." We are obliged to judge by means of probability; it is the "guide of life" and a safe guide in the main, though necessarily misleading in particular cases, from being calculated only for averages. In the above story we unhesitatingly pronounce that the reality lay with the perception of the one, because the probability is all on his side. We have seen that that is not necessarily real which is vouched for by the united testimony of the several senses of an individual; nor even that which has in its favour the united sense-testimony of a number of witnesses. Neither will it do to say that those impressions are real, which have a cause external to ourselves; and those hallucinations, whose cause is internal. For the will of the mesmerist is a cause external, in a certain sense, to the patient; and for aught we know the reality of the world around us may lie in the powerful will of some superior being. We may all be subjects of the Divine Mesmerist, as Berkeley declares we are. In order then to be safe from objections we must say that a reality, be it object or event, is what would affect with like impressions all witnesses who have the ordinary complement of senses in good working order. This may, perhaps, be let pass as a definition of mundane reality. We have unfolded (to use logical phraseology) the intention of the term. As to its extension, namely, what objects and events are to be considered real, that is quite a different question, which resolves itself into an estimate of the value of evidence. It has formed no part of the scope of this paper to discuss the canons of credibility.

BERKELEY AND POSITIVISM.

IT is a very prevalent idea that Berkeley's speculations, though ingenious and fanciful, are so immediately felt to be false by the common-sense understanding as to need no serious refutation. Lord Byron may be taken as the exponent of popular feeling in this direction. His often-quoted words occur at the beginning of the eleventh canto of Don Juan :—

“When Bishop Berkeley said ‘there was no matter,’
And proved it—’twas no matter what he said;
They say his system ’tis in vain to batter,
Too subtle for the airiest human head;
And yet who can believe it?”

Who, indeed, can believe, as he walks along the crowded streets of London and mingles in the busy life of the world, that the true statement of this case is this—that his spirit, which is neither here nor there, but exists out of relation to space, is being operated upon by the Divine Spirit, and that the world, as he knows it, is the result of the operation—that a series of dissolving views, as it were, is being passed before him, but views, if the confusion of expression be allowed, addressed not merely to the sense of sight, but to all the senses? Yet this is the sum and substance of what Bishop Berkeley calls upon us to accept. It is hard of credence undoubtedly; the difficulty, however, is one not peculiar to this system, but common to metaphysic in general. Not Berkeley alone, but all metaphysicians give a shock to ordinary notions. The moment we begin to penetrate beneath the surface,

we find out that "things are not what they seem." This is an offence to the ordinary mind, which is content to take things as it finds them. Yet the antagonism between metaphysical and positive thought arises out of a mere misunderstanding. The metaphysician attempts to explain appearances, and he is credited with an attempt to explain them away. The fact seems to be, that there are two planes of thought entirely distinct from one another—the common-sense and the metaphysical. We may move safely and freely on either of these planes, so long as we confine ourselves to it; but the moment the two are allowed to intersect, confusion is sure to be the result. We may accept our perceptions and reason about them, investigating their relations of sequence and co-existence; and so long as we do this, we are moving on the plane of common sense, which is also the plane of physical science. Or, coveting a deeper kind of knowledge, in which certainty appears unattainable, we may dive under the surface of the things perceived, and inquire into the cause of our own perceptions and the nature of the percipient. This brings us to a different plane of thought—the plane of metaphysic—wherein things assume a fresh aspect and require a new language. Strangely different, indeed, are the two views of things—the interior or metaphysical, and the exterior common-sense view. It would be idle to maintain that there is nothing in Berkeleyism which it is difficult for one's work-a-day thoughts to grasp. But as Berkeley moves wholly in the plane of metaphysic, his conclusions for that very reason admit more easily of adaptation to the facts of perception than the views of other metaphysicians, who, like Locke, are not wholly weaned from common sense, or, like Reid and his followers, consciously seek to conciliate it. Berkeley has never allowed the metaphysical plane of thought to intersect that of common sense, and therefore his results in the one plane may be taken up and applied to facts in the other with less

difficulty than in the case of semi-idealist systems. The facts of experience, indeed, viewed metaphysically, may seem strangely distorted, as a familiar thought will sound strange when expressed in a foreign language. But when we have learnt the language we recognize the thought. All metaphysic is disquieting to our easy acquiescence in appearances and the slumber of common notions. But if we make up our minds to be metaphysical at all, we shall find it more expedient, I think, to go the whole length with Berkeley than to put up at the half-way house provided for our entertainment by other metaphysicians.

The good understanding which now exists between Idealism and Scepticism only became possible by the very points in Berkeley's doctrine on which he himself laid most stress being controverted or left out of sight. No sooner had the new philosophy, which was to serve for the eternal discomfiture of the Atheist and the Sceptic, been propounded, than it was taken up by those very foes, who have since regarded Berkeley as their patron-saint. Hume, with ironical gratitude, refers to his works as the armoury of Scepticism. Whether this compliment was at all deserved will appear in the sequel of our inquiry. As a starting-point, let us take the following passage from Berkeley's own writings, which contains a compendious statement of the doctrine of Immateriality. It occurs in the third dialogue between Hylas and Philonous.

"That there is no substance wherein ideas can exist beside spirit, is to me evident. And that the objects immediately perceived are ideas, is on all hands agreed. And that sensible qualities are objects immediately perceived, no one can deny. It is therefore evident that there can be no substratum of these qualities but spirit, in which they exist, not by way of mode or property, but as a thing perceived in that which perceives it. I deny therefore that there is any unthinking substratum of the objects of sense, and, in that acceptation, that there is any material substance. But if by material substance is meant only

sensible body, that which is seen and felt (and the unphilosophical part of the world I dare say mean no more), then I am more certain of matter's existence than you, or any other philosopher, pretend to be. If there be anything which makes the generality of mankind averse from the notions I espouse, it is a misapprehension that I deny the reality of sensible things; but as it is you who are guilty of that, and not I, it follows that in truth their aversion is against your notions, and not mine. I do therefore assert that I am as certain as of my own being, that there are bodies or corporeal substances (meaning the things I perceive by my senses), and that granting this, the bulk of mankind will take no thought about, nor think themselves at all concerned in the fate of those unknown natures and philosophical quiddities which some men are so fond of."

The initial assumption which meets us here, "that the objects immediately perceived are ideas," calls for some comment. Berkeley, we see, takes it for granted as a thing past all dispute. Nevertheless, it was vigorously denied by Reid, by whom all the paradoxes of Scepticism were traced to this assumption as their fountain-head. Undoubtedly Berkeley builds his system on this foundation. It behoves us therefore to inquire whether this primary position is secure. First, however, we must endeavour to clear away the cobwebs which the ambiguity of language has gathered round the question.

When Berkeley resolved the external world into ideas, people thought he was making of it an airy nothing, a phantom of the mind, whereas the kind of ideas he meant, namely, sense-impressions,* instead of being mere thoughts, are the grossest realities we know. If you see a fist flourishing before your eyes, and presently feel the pain of a blow, you have there two ideas in the sense in which Berkeley used the term. Clearly this is a very different

* The term "sense-impressions" will be used throughout this paper convertibly with "perceptions" for the cognitions of the mind through the senses. The question of how much is given in the actual sense-presentation and how much is added by the intellect was not raised by Berkeley, and will not be touched here.

sense from that which it commonly bears. When people in general talk of ideas, what they mean is thoughts, which are not sense-impressions, but the reproductions of such impressions. It is a pity that the word "idea" should ever have been used to cover actual perceptions; for this looseness of phraseology has contributed more perhaps than anything else to the misapprehension of Idealism. Why, then, should any man of common sense lay himself open to such obvious risk of misinterpretation? Philosophers, it must be confessed, are too much inclined to the use of esoteric language. So long as they are understood by their fellow-hierophants, they think little of the profane crowd. Berkeley simply continued to use the word "idea" in the sense in which it had been employed before him by Locke. And Locke extended the term from thoughts, or the reproductions of sense-impressions, to the sense-impressions themselves, because he wanted to signalize the fact that the mind is equally concerned in both. For what, for instance, are the sight of a fist and the pain of a blow? Are they not sense-impressions, that is to say, affections of the mind? Locke saw and insisted upon the undeniable truth, that we cannot know things except as they appear to our minds—in other words, that we know with our minds and not without them. Consequently, whatever things may be in themselves, they must be translated into mental language before we can become cognizant of them. Hence he introduced the word "idea" to mark the relation which all knowledge must necessarily bear to the mind. But in this procedure no account was taken of the broad distinction between the presentative and the representative faculties—between perception and thought—though the word "idea" was then, and is now, understood to stand for a mere thought as opposed to an actual perception. So anxious was Locke to emphasize the part played by the mind in knowledge, that he compassed this end even by an abuse of language. Berkeley then could plead philosophical

precedent for his use of the word "idea." But he had a very good reason beyond this for retaining it in the teeth of objections. For it served as the flag and symbol of the insurrection he headed against the existing order of thought, marking, as it did, that Matter was deposed and that Mind reigned in its stead. While Locke had said that we know Matter only through the medium of Mind, Berkeley said much more, namely, that we know Mind only. Locke left some independent existence to Matter. Berkeley none. It was therefore very tempting for the revolutionary Bishop to retain a word already in use, which suited his own purpose better than that of its first employer. Nevertheless, the harvest of misuse has been reaped in misconstruction. If Berkeley had been content to speak explicitly of the dependence of things on the mind, instead of implying the same by his use of the word "idea," which was irrevocably devoted to a different purpose, his doctrine might now require less careful elucidation. Hume, while accepting Berkeley's Idealism, recalled the word "idea" to its original and proper meaning. The cognitions of the senses he called "impressions" and their reproductions in the mind "ideas." Perhaps Berkeley could not resist the temptation of giving sober folks a start. However that may be, we have now, I hope, disentangled his meaning. By "ideas" he means sometimes sense-impressions, at other times simply thoughts.

The lack of a general term to cover both perceptions and thoughts, which Locke and Berkeley sought to supply by an illicit extension of the term "idea," has since led to the introduction of the word "consciousness." "Our own consciousness is all that is known to us, and all else is only more or less probable inference,"* is now the watchword of a considerable section of metaphysicians. But this limitation of the sphere of knowledge would have met with no countenance from Berkeley. When that philosopher declared that "the objects immediately

* Charles Bray, "*Manual of Anthropology*," p. 155.

perceived are ideas," he never dreamt of confining the knowledge of the individual to himself. Only he would have said that what we know beyond our own ideas, or states of mind, is known to us, not immediately, but by reason. "The deducing," he tells us, "of causes or occasions from effects or appearances, which alone are perceived by sense, entirely relates to reason." Above all things, Berkeley would have denied that there is nothing knowable beyond our consciousness; for in his view God lay beyond it. But that point we have not yet come to. It still remains for us to examine the truth of Berkeley's primary assumption, "that the objects immediately perceived are ideas."

"Surely," the objector may exclaim, "we know things as immediately as thoughts!" Even so: but things as well as thoughts are consciousness. Consciousness, Berkeley would have said, is not something which intervenes between us and an outer world: the outer world is itself a part of our consciousness. The mind does not commerce with things through means of ideas, as Locke erroneously imagined. Ideas as apart from things have no existence, nor things as apart from ideas. Setting the Deity out of sight, there are only two factors in cognition—a mind, on the one hand, and, on the other, things or ideas. That this is a true representation of Berkeley's view may be judged from the words of Philonous: "I am not for changing things into ideas, but rather ideas into things, since those immediate objects of perception which, according to you, are only appearances of things, I take to be the real things themselves." It might then be maintained with just as much truth that Berkeley denied the existence of perceptions as that he denied the existence of external things, since what he did was to identify the two. But this identification of things with perceptions is just what common sense revolts against. "What is perceivable," says Berkeley, "but an idea?" To this we are all ready to answer "Things." "Oh! things of

course," replies the Bishop; "but then ideas are things, and things are ideas." Our wrath rises. For have we not an ineradicable conviction that there is a difference between perceptions and things? We do more than perceive our own perceptions: we *have* perceptions of things. We refuse, therefore, instinctively, to accept the identification of things with perceptions. But perhaps part of the difficulty lies, as usual, with language. Does Berkeley indeed mean the same as we do when he talks of "things?" If not, we must grope again among the ambiguities of speech in order to bring to light the real question at issue.

"The immediate objects of perception," Berkeley has just told us "are the real things themselves." What, then, are the immediate objects of perception? Let us refer back to the quotation which we made from our author at starting. There we find him saying—"That sensible qualities are objects immediately perceived, no one can deny." Now we know what Berkeley means by "things." He means what are ordinarily called the qualities of things. The size of an object, its shape, its weight, its colour, its degree of heat, and so on, are all so many separate things in Berkeley's way of talking. This is not the meaning which the word "thing" suggests to the ordinary mind. Yet here we can scarcely tax Berkeley with a perverse misuse of language. The word "thing" means properly whatever we can think about. Now we can think of qualities as well as of concrete things or substances (using the term in its vulgar sense). Berkeley, in his psychological analysis, found that the original things, that is say, the first elements of thought, were not substances or concrete things, but qualities. Accordingly, while using the term "thing" to signify substances, which were to his mind merely "combinations of sensible qualities," he likewise uses it just as frequently to signify the separate qualities which make up the concrete wholes. In common language, on the

other hand, "thing" is used, for the most part, interchangeably with "substance," for a material body. But these things or substances, which appear to the unreflecting mind as so many simple units, far from being the immediate objects of perception, are in reality highly complicated results of thought.

The world, as it first bursts upon the nascent human being, can be no more than a confused medley of sensations. It is not till order has been introduced into this chaos that the mind learns to recognize what we call material things or substances. Let us take some concrete thing, and see what our immediate knowledge of it amounts to; and, as we are not ambitious of novelty, let us content ourselves with the well-worn instance of an apple. What do we know directly of an apple, what can we know of it, except through the senses? It appeals to our sense of sight, our sense of touch, our sense of smell, and our sense of taste. It affects us with certain perceptions of shape, colour, size, hardness, weight, sweetness or sourness, and a more or less agreeable odour. Experience has taught us that these diverse perceptions, actual or potential, have a certain connection, and we call the complex whole an "apple." We even needed experience to inform us that the tactual and visual impressions of shape and of size were uniformly co-existent, and might, therefore, be ranked together under the same names. Not till an elaborate process of experience and reflection had been gone through, could we recognize the apple as an individual object. Concrete things, then, simple as they seem to us now, are far from being the immediate objects of perception. It is with the qualities of things that we first become acquainted through the inlet of the senses. Colours, shapes, magnitudes, weights, motions, tastes, smells, sounds—all sensible qualities, in fact—these are the alphabet of our knowledge, and of these all things consist, so far, at least, as we have means of knowing them. But what are all

these save so many perceptions? And to perceptions Berkeley gives the name of "ideas." His primary assumption, then, "that the objects immediately perceived are ideas," is substantially correct. It is undeniable that the rudiments of our knowledge are the individual perceptions we experience.

But it may occur to the reader that to identify "ideas" with sensible qualities, and then to lay down that "the objects immediately perceived are ideas," advances us very little towards the goal of proof that "there can be no substratum of these qualities but spirit." It is felt to be unsatisfactory to say that we merely perceive our own perceptions. For have we not perceptions of things or objects? And that, not in Berkeley's sense of the words, in which every individual perception is a separate thing or object, but in their every-day common sense acceptation, as applying to real concrete things, chairs and tables, cows, horses, &c. While, therefore, it will be granted to Berkeley that the immediate objects of perception are ideas, that is to say, our own perceptions, it will still be maintained that these ideas are consciously realized as ideas of things or objects, which we do, in consequence, immediately perceive. There exists, therefore, a whole world-full of things or objects which are independent of us and our consciousness. But let us look into this a little more closely. It is quite true that we know things or objects, and not merely our perceptions of their individual qualities. When we perceive a red apple, we are aware that we have not merely a sensation of red, but that we perceive the redness of an apple. But what does this mean? It means that the particular conception of colour in question is, or can be, accompanied by those various other perceptions which constitute for us the object "apple." We know that the impressions on our sight of colour, size and figure, are not all. We can put out our hand and touch the apple; we can put it to our nose and smell it; we can put it in our mouth and taste

it. Now the apple that we perceive is not any one of these perceptions taken singly, but it is the sum-total of them. For an object, as we know it, is a synthesis of perceptions, and the conviction we have that our perceptions are perceptions of concrete things, resolves itself, on analysis, into a conviction that the impressions of one sense do not stand alone, but can be corroborated by those of others. We have learnt by experience that our perceptions occur in certain groups; and these groups of perceptions we call "things" or "objects." What becomes then of our world-full of objects independent of consciousness? Concrete things, when analyzed, resolve themselves into perceptions; and each separate perception being part of our consciousness, their various combinations must be so too. In order to make this point clearer, let us have recourse once more to our illustration. The apple we perceive, it is maintained, is a synthesis of perceptions. If not, some one must show what is left of it when the perceptions are withdrawn. Let us suppose we have an apple complete in all its attributes, except that it is entirely devoid of odour. We should no doubt still give it the name of "apple," notwithstanding this defect. Now suppose all taste also withdrawn. It would still present to the eye all the appearance of an apple. Next we will suppose the visual perceptions of extension, shape and colour, to vanish together; for these three perceptions, though distinguishable in thought, are inseparable in fact. We are now left with those perceptions of touch which warrant a blind man in predicating the existence of an apple. We, however, not being blind, would declare ourselves no longer in contact with a real thing, but victims of hallucination. Withdraw, lastly, the tangible perceptions of extension, weight and impenetrability; and what is left us now? Why nothing; not even an hallucination. The apple we perceived, therefore, was that particular cluster of perceptions which we have imagined gradually withdrawn—and it was nothing more.

"Yes," the objector will answer, "things as perceived by us are of course made up of our various modes of perceiving them; but this only means that we know with our minds and not without them. The real things, however, are neither single perceptions nor groups of perceptions: they must have an independent existence of their own, since they are the source of perceptions to more than one person." Now what had Berkeley to say in reply to this? He said, in brief, "You mistake the meaning of Reality; there is no Reality but such as is relative to intelligence of one kind or another." His position, however, has again been obscured by the unfortunate ambiguity of language. For it will be noticed that the term "real things," as thus used, is applied to the causes of our perceptions; whereas Berkeley considered that he had common usage on his side in confining it to our actual perceptions of things. His metaphysic has been described by Professor Fraser as "an endeavour to convert the word 'real' from being the symbol of an unintelligible abstraction into that of the conscious experience of a mind." Berkeley did not deny that there were causes of our perceptions which existed independently of ourselves, though he held a different opinion from other people as to their nature.

Philosophers prior to Locke had to a large extent held the theory of a representative perception, that is to say, they believed that the senses furnish us merely with images or pictures, the originals of which are real objects. Thus to them there were these three factors in cognition—the mind itself, then images intermediate between the mind and real things, and, lastly, the archetypes or real things themselves, which are mirrored to us by the images. Locke did much to popularize a modification of this conception by showing that what are called the secondary qualities of bodies, such as colour, tastes, smells, could have no existence in the objects, but were merely affections of the mind perceiving them. Their causes

indeed existed in the objects, and were to be found in the shape, disposition, and motion of the ultimate particles of matter. Then Berkeley declared that the primary qualities of bodies are just as much affections of the percipient as the secondary. With him also there were three factors in cognition; but they were different from the former trio. There was, first, the mind itself, as before; then ideas, various groups of which were called "real things;" and, lastly, the cause of ideas, bearing no relation of resemblance to the effects. He denied that the senses had any representative function, and declared that their immediate presentations constituted what we call the real world. The only representative faculties on his theory are memory and imagination, which do furnish us with images or pictures of things, whereas our senses present us with the real things themselves.

We need not settle the sense of the term "real things," provided we discriminate between Berkeley's meaning of the term and the significance it bears to the majority of philosophers. Berkeley means the actual impressions on the senses in the various groups wherein nature or art has arranged them; others mean something inaccessible to sense that stands behind these impressions and gives them their unity; Berkeley means the phenomenal world, others the noumenal; Berkeley the world of effects, others the world of causes. A grave objection against Berkeley's use of the term is, that "real things" by being identified with perceptions are thus rendered transitory, being perpetually annihilated and re-created—a consequence which Berkeley boldly accepts;* whereas we all associate permanence with reality. On the other hand, Berkeley has this much truth on his side, that when we talk of "real things" we certainly have before our mind's eye things as they appear to us clothed in the concrete. In the ordinary unanalyzed notion of reality, two inconsistent elements seem to be intermingled. On the one hand we

* See "Principles of Human Knowledge," §§ 45, 46.

think of things as we know them, with all the sensible impressions they produce on us; on the other hand we think of them as self-existent, having a permanence and reality independent of our perceptions. We endeavour, in fact, to grasp at once both the relative and the absolute aspect of things. This is a weakness incidental to our minds, which can only be triumphed over by careful reflection. We are competent to discern the nature of things solely as they stand related to us; and since our imaginative powers are wholly controlled by our experience, we are apt to picture things in themselves as wearing the aspect under which we know them. Now Berkeley saw that the two inconsistent elements which we vaguely combine in our notion of reality must be separated the one from the other. Things, if sensible, are not independent of our minds nor are they permanent: if permanent and independent, they are not sensible. And in separating these conflicting attributes, Berkeley thought himself on the side of popular usage in confining the term "real" to things as we know them and as we inevitably picture them to our minds when we speak of them. But in thus conciliating the vulgar, he gave offence to the philosophers by excluding from reality just the two notions which are most prominent in a philosophic conception of it, namely, permanence and independence of the accidents of perception. But Berkeley, like every one else who is not a sheer sceptic, was quite ready to recognize that there must be a permanent and independent element, if not in "real things," at all events somewhere in the world of being. But this permanent element, independent of the percipient, he found not in any of the sensible qualities of things, which were all alike relative, but simply and solely in the causes of things.

It behoves us, then, to examine what Berkeley thought about the causes of things, which other philosophers prefer to designate as "the real things themselves." We shall

first consider what he says they are not, though we have been led to touch upon that already; and then proceed to consider what he says they are. In this manner we shall exhaust both the negative and the positive sides of our author's philosophy.

First, then, with regard to what the causes of sensible things are not. They are not things in any way resembling the sensible impressions they produce in us. The theory of *representative* perception was already half exploded before Berkeley wrote. Only the primary qualities were supposed to exist as we perceive them in bodies. These constituted the bare "forms," which the cunning of the mind arrayed in the gorgeous robes of perception. Berkeley maintained that the primary qualities, equally with the secondary, could have no existence in bodies except as mere powers, that is to say, only in their causes. Now a cause need not resemble its effect; and as the effects in question vary indefinitely under varying relations, the cause cannot possibly be maintained to resemble all of them, and may therefore be presumed to resemble none. Moreover, the effects or ideas are passive and inert, whereas their cause, being *ex hypothesi* active, as producing impressions, cannot be held to resemble a thing so different in nature from itself. Against the notion of Bacon and Locke that the primary qualities are the cause of the secondary, Berkeley replied that the primary qualities, being themselves ideas, or sense-impressions, are no less passive and inert than the others, and can therefore have no efficiency to produce them. The primary and secondary qualities, he declared, not unreasonably, must stand or fall together. Colour and extension are inseparable in thought: must they not, therefore, be inseparable in existence? Locke and others had severed the colour of an object from its extension and shape, pronouncing the colour to be a mere impression on the mind, while the extension and shape existed as we perceived them in the object. Against this, common-

sense exclaims, and Berkeley exclaimed also. "No," he said, "the colour is in the object just as much as the extension: only the proper inference is, that the object itself as we know it depends wholly upon perception." The unreflecting agree with the Bishop in his first position, and recoil with amazement from the second; because they leave out of account their own minds, the one invariable factor in all cognition. What Locke and others had done was roughly this: they reduced the presentations of the other senses to terms of sight and touch conjointly. Berkeley showed that the perceptions common to sight and touch were just as subjective as any other; or rather that the others were as objective as they. Are we then to say there is nothing gained by the many ingenious speculations of atomic philosophers, who endeavour to deduce the complex phenomena of Nature from a few simple qualities of matter? By no means; for "the more a man knows of the connection of ideas, the more he is said to know of the nature of things." Nature, according to Berkeley, is a kind of language, the interpretation of which is the business of Science. What we call the sequences of cause and effect are properly signs with the things signified. When Berkeley was left standing in the rain by Swift because, if his philosophy were true, he could enter as easily whether the door were shut or open, he had just cause of complaint against the Dean for crediting him with so erroneous an interpretation of Nature. The idea of a solid obstacle, rightly interpreted, is a sign of impeded motion; in other words, you can't go through a closed door. Ideas, then, may be signs of the presence or absence of other ideas; but no idea can be allowed to be the efficient cause of another. They can be causes only in the physical sense of invariable antecedents or concomitants. When we resolve the multiform properties of bodies into the few simple attributes that are supposed to belong to their ultimate particles, we are speculating on the impressions that

would be produced in us were our senses competent to the perception of atoms. Thereby we supply the missing lines in the manuscript of Deity, conjecturing from the knowledge we have gained of its contents what must be added to render it complete and consistent. But in no case in the study of Nature do we get beyond the co-ordination of our own perceptions. For even when we sweep with the telescope the abysses of the empyrean, we are only inferring potential from actual impressions.

We have now seen what in Berkeley's opinion the causes of our sense-perceptions, or "real things," are not. They are not things in any way resembling the actual impressions themselves. So much as this in our author's theory is merely negative and destructive. Had Berkeley stopped here, he would have been the father of Positivism, which is one remove from Scepticism. For the Positivist admits the existence of an efficient cause of phenomena, while declaring the nature of that cause inscrutable. He admits the validity of the inference from perceptions to a cause of perceptions, but denies that intuition or reason can convey to us any knowledge with regard to the nature of the cause. But to admit the existence of a cause at all is enough to extricate us from the fleeting phenomenalism which declares that things come and go with our perceptions of them. The unknown causes of perceptions are conveniently denominated "powers." Things as they appear to us are bundles of perceptions; as existing independently of us they are bundles of powers. The term "quality" is hopelessly ambiguous, being used now in a relative, now in an absolute sense, at one time for the impressions effected in us, at another for the external power which is assumed to cause them. Now it is argued fairly enough that the use of such expressions as "an extended, solid, coloured, &c., *thing*," involves the admission that there is something more in things than a collection of sense-impressions. This is quite true; for there is also the power to cause the like impressions in

other people and in ourselves at other times. But this power resides not in what Berkeley calls the "real things," but in the cause which lies behind them. Why, then, did Berkeley refuse the name "Matter" to the efficient cause of our sensations? If we know so little about it, it would seem of small moment by what name we call it. The answer to this question brings us to the constructive side of our author's philosophy. Having seen what the causes of sensible things in Berkeley's opinion are not, we have next to inquire what they are.

Not to abandon the form of commentary, let us take a parting glance at the first quotation we made from our author, and then proceed to the consideration of another passage, which developes more fully the positive side of his teaching. When we succeeded in attaching Berkeley's sense to Berkeley's terms, we found that his premises, at all events, were unassailable. The question then which now awaits us is, whether his conclusion be legitimately contained in them. "That the objects immediately perceived are ideas, is on all hands agreed." It is agreed, when once it has been understood, that immediate perception is confined to sense-perception, and that ideas are the same as sense-impressions. "And that sensible qualities are objects immediately perceived, no one can deny." It is undeniable: and the only question that can arise is about the propriety of extending the term "thing" or "object" to what are commonly distinguished as the qualities or attributes of things or objects. But a moment's reflection suffices to decide this question in Berkeley's favour. We require some term to express the *sumмум genus* of existence, and for this purpose none seems more appropriate than "object of thought" or "thing." So much for the premises. Now for the conclusion. "It is therefore evident that there can be no *substratum* of these qualities but spirit, in which they exist, not by way of mode or property, but

as a thing perceived in that which perceives it. I deny, therefore, that there is any unthinking substratum of the objects of sense, and, in that acceptation, that there is any material substance." Now the cogency of this conclusion depends entirely on the meaning assigned to the word "substratum." Berkeley will admit nothing in the objects of sense that is not perceived; and, in a literal sense, of course, it is absurd to say there is anything more. Now the objects of sense are composed of infinitely various combinations of perceptions, and perceptions are utterly heterogeneous; there is no common element in them except the fact of their being perceptions, that is, the fact of their dependence on mind. We may say, therefore, that mind is the substratum or substance wherein (not whereof) ideas consist. That was what Berkeley said about substance, the only substances in his view being spirits; that was the way he transferred substantiality from matter to mind. But if by the term "substratum" or "substance" be meant, not any common element in the very things we perceive, but simply the cause of our perceptions, then Berkeley has not proved that there can be no "unthinking substratum of the objects of sense." That he could not prove this is plain on the face of it to any one who accepts the positive principle that we can know for certain nothing more about the efficient cause of our perceptions than simply that it exists. The utmost that can be done by any thinker is to give presumption for our considering it of one nature rather than another. But instead of condemning Berkeley unheard, though that might safely be done, let us listen first to what he has to say:—

"*Philonous* : Now let me ask you two questions : First, whether it be agreeable to the usage either of philosophers or others, to give the name matter to an unextended active being? And, secondly, whether it be not ridiculously absurd to misapply names contrary to the common use of language?

"*Hylas*: Well, then, let it not be called matter, since you will have it so, but some third nature distinct from matter and spirit. For what reason is there why you should call it spirit? Does not the notion of spirit imply that it is thinking as well as active and unextended?

"*Philonous*: My reason is this: because I have a mind to have some notion of meaning in what I say; but I have no notion of any action distinct from volition, neither can I conceive volition to be anywhere but in a spirit; therefore when I speak of an active being I am obliged to mean a spirit. Beside, what can be plainer than that a thing which hath no ideas in itself cannot impart them to me; and if it hath ideas, surely it must be a spirit? To make you comprehend the point still more clearly, if it be possible: I assert, as well as you, that since we are affected from without, we must allow powers to be without in a being distinct from ourselves. So far we are agreed. But then we differ as to the kind of this powerful being. I will have it to be spirit, you matter, or I know not what (I may add, too, you know not what) third nature. Thus I prove it to be spirit. From the effects I see produced, I conclude there are actions; and because actions, volitions; and because there are volitions, there must be a will. Again, the things I perceive must have an existence, they or their archetypes, out of my mind: but being ideas, neither they nor their archetypes can exist otherwise than in an understanding: there is, therefore, an understanding. But will and understanding constitute in the strictest sense a mind or spirit. The powerful cause, therefore, of my ideas, is, in strict propriety of speech, a spirit."

Now we have before us the whole of Berkeley's argument for the exclusive substantiality of spirit. It leaves the world, we see, wholly mental, the creation of one mind in another, the communion of God with man. The argument occurs in various passages under various forms, but is nowhere put more cogently than in the one just quoted. Let us first criticize it in detail, and then proceed to more general reflections.

It is a ridiculous misapplication of names, we are told, to call "an unextended active being," matter; because

most people imagine matter to be extended and passive. But it is not misapplying names to alter our first hasty notion of a thing when further inquiry into its nature shows that notion to be incorrect. Let us grant to Berkeley—and many of course would not—that the cause of extension is itself unextended; still there is no very cogent reason why we should cease to call it matter. Moreover, the activity ascribed to it lies merely in the fact of its producing impressions, which is allowed on any hypothesis.

The objection of Hylas that the term “spirit” implies more than the absence of extension together with a sort of activity is very much to the point. Had Hylas lived in our day he would no doubt have applied the term Force to his supposed “third nature, distinct from matter and spirit.” It is in Berkeley’s reply to this objection, however, that the real pith of the argument lies, whereby the claim to having *demonstrated* the existence of “an infinite omnipresent Spirit” must be judged to stand or fall. “My reason is this: because I have a mind to have some notion of meaning in what I say; but I have no notion of any action distinct from volition.”

Now here we have first to determine what Berkeley means by “action.” It is clear he does not mean motion. Motion is not confined to man: Nature is full of it. The ocean is ever heaving in its bed, and perpetually advancing and receding; the streams never pause in gliding to their common goal; the trees of the forest wave their arms in the blast, and their leaves and fruits are carried earthward in the autumn—all things are full of motion. But only the savage finds himself compelled to ascribe these various movements to so many distinct acts of volition. We have all of us, in this age and country, a perfectly clear conception of motion apart altogether from volition. Nevertheless, the savage may be, in a certain sense, right; and Berkeley thought he was. But by action we are to understand, not motion itself, but the production of

motion; and by an agent is meant a cause or origin of motion. Not a cause, it must be noticed, in the physical sense of a mere antecedent; for, in that sense, we are acquainted with many causes of motion; but an efficient cause, having power to produce or to refrain from producing. Now it is maintained by Berkeley, and in fact acknowledged on all hands, that we cannot find any efficient cause amid all the external phenomena of Nature. Our search, then, to be successful, must be directed to ourselves. And, on looking within, we do appear to find an efficient cause in Will. The appearance indeed may be deceptive. Perhaps the majority of independent thinkers may believe that it is, and that in Will we have no more than one link in an endless chain of antecedents and consequents, some mental and some physical, a chain now buried beneath the surface in states of mind, and again emerging into view in physical phenomena. But without stopping to settle that question, this much may be conceded to Berkeley, that if we do know of any efficient cause of phenomena at all, that cause is the human will. Berkeley upheld the doctrine of Free-will. According to him, every human spirit is to a certain extent a separate efficient cause, and, under God, a joint creator of the phenomena of the universe. One short passage out of the *Dialogues* will suffice to indicate our author's views on this point:

"I have nowhere said that God is the only agent who produces all the motions in bodies. It is true, I have denied that there are any other agents besides spirits; but this is very consistent with allowing to thinking rational beings in the production of motions the use of limited powers, ultimately indeed derived from God, but immediately under the direction of their own wills."

Now granting, for the sake of argument, all that Berkeley here claims, still his grand conclusion does not follow, and God remains an object of faith, instead of His existence, as Berkeley would have us believe, being more

manifest even than that of our fellow-creatures. For allowing that we have known to us in Will one efficient cause of phenomena, it by no means follows that there can be no other. Because we are agents, must all agents be after our pattern? To say so is to generalize from a single instance, and an instance, too, which, from the nature of the case, is the only one accessible to us. Some phenomena, says Berkeley, are the production of Spirit, therefore all must be. This is not logical reasoning, but merely theological. When, therefore, we speak of an "active being," in the sense of an efficient cause of phenomena, we are not "obliged to mean a spirit." After Berkeley has said all that he has to say, we are still left in complete ignorance as to the true nature of the "powers without" which produce the affections in ourselves. They may be described, if we will, as so many attributes of some unknown substance; but we have no means of determining for certain whether that substance be thinking or unthinking, nor of what nature it may be. "But how," cries Berkeley, "can that which is unthinking be a cause of thought?" To which we have only to answer, "Why not? A cause has no necessary resemblance to its effect." Again, when Berkeley says, "The things I perceive must have an existence, they or their archetypes, out of my mind; but, being ideas, neither they nor their archetypes can exist otherwise than in an understanding,"—we have but to substitute the word "causes" for "archetypes," for all appearance of cogency to vanish at once. Ideas, it is true, can exist only in an understanding; but we have no warrant for pronouncing that they could not be raised in us by an unintelligent substance.

And yet the heart of the Bishop prided itself on the peculiar theological merit of his system, that, whereas other philosophers sought to prove the existence of a Deity by arguments drawn from final causes and evidences of design in Nature, on his own principles the mere fact of the existence of things at all was a standing proof of

the being of God. For where were real things when no man perceived them? They existed, according to Berkeley, in the Divine Mind, which was a kind of storehouse of impressions. But this will not stand investigation. The Deity was not imagined by Berkeley to possess senses like ourselves; consequently He cannot have our sense-impressions; but these sense-impressions are what we call real things, whence it follows that real things cannot exist to the Divine Mind. The causes of things, indeed, Berkeley is fairly entitled to say, exist in God, whether perceived or unperceived by His creatures; but then "real things" may be supposed to exist in their causes, when unperceived by finite minds, without the assistance of a Deity at all. "But," says Berkeley, "our ideas, though not sensibly apprehended by the Divine Mind, are still intellectually apprehended." But this at once constitutes a very marked difference between the things known to us and the things known to Deity. The latter cannot, therefore, be what we call real things, since these, as Berkeley is never tired of insisting, are the actual perceptions we experience. The permanence, therefore, of real things does not consist in their being perceived by God, but in the potentiality of the recurrence of similar perceptions in similar groups; and this—unless we deny causation altogether—is only another way of saying that the permanence of things is due to their causes. Berkeley's Deity, indeed, is a somewhat perplexing conception. He is not only the cause of perceptions, but Himself also a percipient; and it is in this latter character that Berkeley is obliged to regard Him as the sustainer of the sensible universe. This follows from the meaning Berkeley, in his scare at abstraction, has assigned to real things. Real things are our perceptions; their *esse* is *percipi*, not *posse percipi*. It is not, therefore, in the Will, but in the Understanding of God, that the physical universe must find its existence when unperceived by us. In the Will of God lie only the causes of things, which are inaccessible to sense. So

Berkeley endeavours to satisfy the craving for a permanence in real things by assigning to them a continuous existence in the perceptions of the Deity. But, as we have seen, the perceptions of the Deity cannot be exactly similar to ours; and, consequently, the same things that we know do not continue to exist when unperceived by us. For Berkeley would define "the same thing" to be a series of exactly similar impressions.

But, letting that pass, it is no easy matter to adjust the relations of things as perceived and of things as caused by the Deity. Things as perceived by us are acknowledged to be the effects of an extraneous power. Does the Deity then operate upon Himself, and are His volitions the causes of His perceptions? Or is it rather the other way? And are His perceptions, not being sensible impressions like ours, but intellectual apprehensions, to be considered as prior in their nature and as directing His volitions? Does God, in short, perceive as He wills, or will as He perceives? If the latter, then the intellectual ideas in the Divine Mind must occasion the volitions which create for us the physical universe.

Having now disposed of our author's claim to conclusiveness in his constructive reasonings, we shall be in a position to enter, in a subsequent paper, on the more gracious task of examining what presumption may be offered that his account of things, or something like it, is the true one. Men may welcome as a speculation what they resent as a proof.

The first remark we have to make is one which is obvious and trite enough, though its reiteration has been necessitated by a long course of the wildest misrepresentation. It is, that whatever use may have been made of Berkeley's principles by others, he is himself in no sense open to the imputation of scepticism. Whether that term be used in its religious or in its philosophical signification, it is equally inapplicable. Berkeley surrendered none of the spontaneous beliefs of mankind, except one,

and that every metaphysician alike surrenders. He did not question the existence of his own mind or spirit—that he acknowledged was given in consciousness; nor the existence of other minds like his own—that was an inference so simple and certain as to be equivalent, for all practical purposes, to an intuitive conviction; nor the existence of a world independent of our perceptions; least of all, the existence of the Supreme Spirit, the Creator and Sustainer both of finite spirits and of what we call the world without us. What he did was to exhibit all these in a new relation. Let us take each point in its order.

Whoever believes in his own existence and identity, whoever is persuaded that he himself is a mind or spirit, and not a mere waft of consciousness, a passing succession of sensations, thoughts, volitions, of hopes and fears, and joys and sorrows, and loves and hates, without any underlying unity to give them coherence—whoever, in short, believes in an Ego, believes in it on precisely the same evidence that satisfied Berkeley. He believes in it on the testimony of consciousness; for by consciousness it is known, or it is not known at all. *Cogito ergo sum* is the sole argument that was ever adduced for one's own existence. And the only question can be, whether the form of argument is not superfluous; and whether *I* am not known to myself as directly as are my states of mind.

Again, whoever believes in the existence of other minds like his own—and he is indeed a sceptic who does not—has no other data for his conviction than what satisfied Berkeley. We do not acquire the knowledge that minds other than our own exist by any "awkward experiment of intuition," as Charles Lamb so plaintively puts it, but by "the recognizable face, the sweet assurance of a look." We learn by experience that certain sense-impressions are indications of our own mental states, and where we find similar sense-impressions, apart

from the particular collections which constitute our bodies, we judge them to be accompanied by similar trains of consciousness.

Neither did Berkeley ever mean to assert that the world was imaginary, though his ambiguous use of the word "idea" has lent countenance to such a notion. Thoughts and perceptions, or ideas (in Hume's sense) and impressions, differ from one another by the whole distance between imagination and reality. What Berkeley undertook was to give an explanation of reality; and, discarding the philosophic conception of the absolute, he confined the term to what we practically have in our minds when we talk of "real things," namely, the appearances they present to us. The one spontaneous belief of mankind which Berkeley did attack was the unreflecting notion that things as they appear to us can continue to exist when withdrawn from that relation. Their causes indeed may exist, ready to affect other intelligences with impressions exactly similar to our own. But take away all finite intelligences, and though the causes remain, the phenomena they produce are gone. It is a mere contradiction in terms to say that things as we perceive them can exist apart from a percipient. The table I have before me is a collection of impressions on my mind. The same impressions, in the strict sense of identity, can of course exist in no other relation. But we are all ready to say that the same table exists when we are out of the room, because we believe that the same cause will produce similar effects in any people who happen to be present, provided their organs of perception be similar to our own. The great lesson, in fact, which Berkeley has to teach us is the relativity of knowledge—a principle which is now more or less a commonplace among philosophers, but which amid the bustle of life we are all apt to lose sight of. But the metaphysicians who fall short of Berkeley in the completeness with which they assert this principle, do not, for all that, harmonize with the

mistaken belief of the crowd, but rather make confusion worse confounded by admitting some appearances to be absolute, while declaring others, inseparable in thought from them, to be relative. The world that exists when we are gone, they would have to be a world of shapes and sizes and solids and motions and numbers, but rayless and hueless and soundless for ever. Against such a world as this Berkeley revolted in the name of common sense; but then common sense had to abandon her pet contradiction of the absolute existence of relative perceptions. On this latter point Berkeley was inexorable. However, as we have seen, he threw in a sop to Cerberus in the spurious permanence accorded to human perceptions by the existence of their counterparts in the mind of God.

The charge against Berkeley that the world on his principles was reduced to a thing of fancy, is commonly supported by saying that he rendered it purely subjective. For did he not resolve concrete things into perceptions? He did; but in so doing he did not confound subject and object. The distinction between subject and object is the distinction between the percipient and the thing perceived. This is a necessary distinction, of which our minds cannot rid themselves. Now the things perceived, according to Berkeley, were sense-impressions, or, more properly, certain orderly and recurrent combinations of them. These impressions may, on Berkeley's system as on any other, be hollow of reality (though not in his own sense of that term), as in hallucination; but they are none the less perceived, and therefore properly fall under the head of "object," not "subject." But if the term "object" be used, as it often is, not for the things veritably perceived, but for the causes of perception, then, on Berkeley's system as on any other, there are still the "powers without" distinct altogether from the subject. The world, on Berkeley's theory, is no unreal phantom, but firm as the fiat of the Almighty, and unalterable as His Will. So

long as beings exist endowed with similar perceptions to our own, so long our world will last. Remove all such beings, and it would still exist in the Will of God, ready to start into existence again on their re-appearance. And, dispensing with the idiosyncrasy of Berkeley's belief, it is plain that no other permanence can, without absurdity, be assigned to the phenomena of sense, than an existence in the inscrutable recesses of their cause.

Berkeley has himself lent plausibility to the charge we have been considering by his manner of repelling it. For, while claiming to believe in an external world like other people, he explains externality on his principles to mean that ideas of sense are not, like other ideas, dependent upon our wills, but impressed upon us by a power not our own. But this looks like an admission that externality to him is something different from what it is to other people; whereas the fact is, Berkeley believed in an external world in precisely the same sense in which every one else believes in it. He believed that there was a world external to his body. Externality is a relation which holds among phenomena, not between phenomena and the Ego. We can say that there is a world external to our bodies, but not, except by a violent metaphor, that there is a world external to our minds, unless, indeed, we conceive of mind as an extended substance. All that we can in propriety say is, that there is a world independent of our minds.*

Least of all did Berkeley deny the existence of the Supreme Spirit. This point need not detain us; for we have already seen to what length of bad logic he went to prove it.

* For this I am indebted to a letter of Dr. Collings Simon's, as quoted in the *Spiritualist* for May 19, 1876, by Mr. H. G. Atkinson. "What I hold is this Each group is external to the other, and all are external to the Ego as far as this word 'external' can apply to a nature which is unextended, and which has therefore neither an inside nor an outside. It is more correct to say 'independent of' than 'external to' in this place and sense."

But the novelty and originality of Berkeley lay in his conception of the relations between God and the world and man. The Trinity of existence or perception—for they were the same thing—consisted of patient, effect, and agent. There was, first, God, the cause of all things ; next, subordinate spirits emanating from Him ; and lastly, the whole phenomenal world, produced by God in finite minds, and so depending, though in a different respect, on both—for its cause on God, and for its being on the percipients whom His Will affected. The clumsy notion of a representative—or misrepresentative—perception, the carpenter-and-chair theory of creation, and creation itself to all intents and purposes, vanished under the magic touch of his thought. And though Berkeley, as we have seen, did not take the ground from under Materialism so completely as he imagined, he did succeed in showing it to be a mere hypothesis. This was in reality quite sufficient for the practical purpose he had in view. For once this point has been thoroughly understood, once the fallacious appearance of a basis of hard fact has been withdrawn from Materialism, the action of the anthropomorphic instinct, though incapable of logical justification, inevitably confers a preference on the rival theory of Spiritualism. Between these two stands Positivism, which abstains from all inquiry into causes, and soberly refuses to pronounce where we cannot know. But of all systems which go beyond the "how" into the "why," the Idealism of Berkeley, in its main idea, is not only the simplest, but has the strongest presumption in its favour. But here are one or two assertions thrown out which require to be vindicated in detail. And first, of the superior merits, as a speculation, of Spiritualism, or Idealism, over Materialism.

The question which Positivism relegates to the unknowable, but which Materialism and Spiritualism alike profess to solve, is—What is the efficient cause of phenomena ? "It is an unintelligent substance, which we call Matter," say the Materialists. "It is the Will of

an intelligent Power, whom I call God," said Berkeley. The sympathies of Comte, so far as they could be enlisted at all in such a question, were wholly in favour of the latter response. "If we insist," says that philosopher, "upon penetrating the unattainable mystery of the essential Cause that produces phenomena, there is no hypothesis more satisfactory than that they proceed from Wills dwelling in them or outside them." And though Comte here says "Wills," not "Will," the unity and consistency of Nature clearly gives the palm to the speculation of the Monotheist theologian over that of the Polytheist. But let us consider the two answers. The Matter of the Materialist is confessedly invisible and impalpable—"essentially mystical and transcendental"—in its nature. It is, therefore, what in loose, popular phraseology is styled "immaterial," quite as much as Spirit or the Will of God can be. The question, then, might seem narrowed down to the inquiry whether this invisible and impalpable somewhat, which causes our perceptions, be intelligent or not. On this point, again, Comte is wholly on the side of Berkeley. "The Order of Nature," he says, "is doubtless very imperfect in every respect; but its production is far more compatible with the hypothesis of an intelligent Will than with that of a blind mechanism." But this, it may justly be replied, is an unfair way of treating the question; for Matter, though invisible and impalpable to sense, is still possessed of extension and solidity, and some other of the properties of sensible bodies, and therefore belongs to a wholly different sphere of existence from Will, which has none of these things. The question then, fully stated, comes back to this—Is the efficient cause of phenomena an unintelligent substance composed of solid and extended particles inappreciable by sense? Or is there no more to be said than that our perceptions are willed by a superior being? Berkeley adopted the latter view, and his refutation of the counter hypothesis to his own is summed up in the question, "How can

that which is unthinking be a cause of thought?" More diffusely he states it as follows: "That a being endowed with knowledge and will should produce or exhibit ideas is easily understood. But that a being which is utterly destitute of these faculties should be able to produce ideas, or in any sort to affect an intelligence—this I can never understand." Now it is quite true that no one has ever been able to understand how Matter, or the supposed unintelligent substratum of sensible phenomena, should be able to affect Mind. If it seem intelligible at first sight, and a thing of daily experience, that is only because Matter, in its philosophical acceptation, is confused with material objects, or "real things" which have been found, as before shown, to resolve themselves into affections of Mind. But this incapacity of ours to understand proves nothing; for, in the absence of other experience of efficient causes, we cannot expect to understand the operation of a given one, since all explanation implies analogy. Berkeley's refutation, therefore, falls harmless on the head of his opponents. Their theory, however destitute of plausibility, is beyond the reach of contradiction, unless some analogy be forthcoming to teach us the nature of an Efficient. But how fares it with Berkeley's own answer to the question? Does that carry with it any presumption in its favour? We shall have to consider this matter separately, from the two stand-points of Necessity and Free-will.

It is one of the freaks of language that the doctrine of Necessity above all things asserts that there is no necessary connection between any cause and its effect. Every human action has its antecedent in the state of the emotions at the moment of its committal. But between an antecedent of this kind and its consequent there is no stronger tie discoverable than between the impact of one billiard-ball and the motion of another. It is experience alike in both cases that informs us of their conjunction. On this view of things it is of course

impossible to have any notion of an efficient cause at all. What our knowledge reveals to us is one mighty chain of sequences, some mental and some physical, stretching we know not whence or whither: beyond the few links irradiated by experience, all is dark. Judged from this standpoint, then, Berkeley's answer might seem as empty of plausibility as that of the Materialists.

The upholders of Free-will, on the other hand, maintain that there *is* a necessary connection, in the sense of a power of efficiency, between one cause, at least, namely, the human will, and its effects. They maintain that man's will is, within certain circumscribed limits, an actual source or origin of events—a king sitting in the midst of his courtiers, the passions, listening to their promptings, swayed to and fro by fear or favour, but still vested with a prerogative, sometimes exercised to overrule their counsels. Those, therefore, who accept Free-will have one analogy to go on determining the nature of an Efficient, and that analogy is wholly in Berkeley's favour. But we must be careful to estimate this analogy at its proper value. The most strenuous advocates of the freedom of the will have not as yet been heard to claim for it creative power. But to ask, What is the efficient cause of phenomena? is to ask, What is the power which creates, or calls into existence out of non-existence, those collections of perceptions which we term material things? Now the will of man is regarded as impotent to create. All that is claimed for it, in its relation to the external world, is a free power to transmute the qualities and alter the relations of things. Given certain perceptions, it can substitute others for them within the bounds prescribed by the conditions of co-existence and succession in Nature. It is an efficient cause of change. But if the will of man can effect a change of perceptions, it seems no very great leap to suppose that a power akin to it, but indefinitely higher, is what starts perception in us, or creates the world of matter.

The above seems on close consideration to be all that Berkeley had to urge in support of his opinion that the material world is the product of Will. But is it all that can be urged? It is evident that Berkeley's argument appeals only to those who, like himself, believe the will of man to be in some sort an efficient cause. If the will, though an antecedent of change, be itself determined by pre-existent causes, it has no longer any title to be singled out as the type of efficiency. But this is just one of the things a Materialist at the present day would maintain most strongly, so that Berkeley's argument, based as it is on the assumption of Free-will, would have no weight with him. What presumption, then, can be alleged which it is open to a Positivist or Necessitarian to accept, that Will and not Matter underlies the world without us? I will endeavour in a fresh paragraph to indicate some answer to this question.

The reason why Positivism includes both Spiritualism and Materialism under the same ban, as mere guessing in the dark, is because the material universe is regarded as "a singular effect." The creation of matter, it is held, or the production in us of perceptions, is a thing which we find, once for all, to be; and we must be content to accept the fact. There being no analogy to guide us, to search for its cause is a hopeless task. But if creation, or the production of matter where no matter was, were to become a thing of common experience, the Positivist, without abandoning the method or spirit of his philosophy, would extend the horizon of his inquiries. He would not seek now, any more than before, for the efficient cause of phenomena, being persuaded that succession and co-existence are the only relations which the human mind is competent to discover between any one fact of existence and another. But, given any instance of creation, however confined or transitory, he would bend every effort of his mind to ascertain the antecedent of a fact so startling. And if he found that there was one antecedent, and

one only, to be discovered in the various instances of partial or temporary creation which came under his notice, he would consider himself to have gained a fair presumption for believing the same antecedent to be present in all creation whatever. If he found that antecedent to be Will, he would henceforth register it among the sequences of Nature that creation was preceded by Will; and, unless checked by contrary evidence, would apply the analogy boldly to cases transcending his powers of observation. In a word, if this supposed case were a real one, we might be led by strict inductive logic to coincide with Berkeley's theory of things. And is it not a real one? Has not modern psychological experience given us a peep into the *modus operandi* in the production of perceptions? I refer to the phenomena of Mesmerism. There we see transacted on a small scale what Berkeley supposes to take place on a large one. The "subject" under control is thrown into a world of the mesmerist's creation; every one of his senses is supplied with its object; he can bring none of them to detect the fallacy of the others. But the mesmerist's effort of will is temporary and confined in its action, and so we call the subject's state a delusion; the Divine Will is continuous and universal, and we call the world around us a reality.

If Berkeley were alive now, or had given his metaphysical views to the world a little later than he did, we might have imagined that his theory had been suggested by the very facts we have spoken of. The father of Idealism would have hailed with delight the advent of Mesmerism. In every itinerant professor of that mysterious art he would have seen a practical exhibitor of the truth of his theory, bringing it down out of the clouds of speculation by applying the crucial experiment which was needed to show Will to be a *vera causa* in the production of perceptions. As the case stands, however, Berkeley's theory was in nowise suggested by new facts, but was struck out by sheer force of inward meditation. Given

the facts which had been staring the world in the face for ages, the solitary genius of the Irish Bishop put an interpretation upon them which, to those who accept it, has turned the world upside down, or rather inside out, more completely than the substitution of the Copernican for the Ptolemaic system in physical science. It may be that we have as yet seen only the beginning of the revolution in thought which Berkeley inaugurated, and that Idealism, under one form or another, has a career before it far more important than the half-acceptance which it has hitherto met with from the philosophic fraction of the world. What if Idealism should yet become popular! Time has brought round revenges as strange as that. While our perceptions, of course, remain precisely what they are, we might come to accept the appearances of things in general with as widespread a mental reservation as when we see the sun *manifestly* springing above or sinking below the horizon. We might come, I mean, to have metaphysical, no less than physical, science ever ready as a corrective of our spontaneous notions—and that, too, without altering the received modes of speech. All that is necessary is to avoid confusion between ourselves regarded as physical organisms, and ourselves regarded as so much mind, spirit, or consciousness. There is a material world external to, and independent of, our bodies: there is not, and cannot be, such a world independent of our minds. All that exists independently of our minds is the cause of Matter. And if we inquire into the nature of that cause, we find some presumption for believing it to be Will, and no presumption at all for believing it to be anything else.

The reader will observe that in what is here urged in Berkeley's favour, Will is spoken of as possibly a creative, but not as an ultimate cause. The object of the foregoing remarks has been to show that we have some ground for believing Will to be the phenomenal antecedent of the presentation to our faculties of an objective world, in

which case we may push the chain of cause and effect one step further back than it is usually carried, without venturing to assert that we thereby reach the ultimate cause. The writer himself shares the opinion that we know nothing of "cause" except as a term in a series.

One word now as to the simplicity of Berkeley's theory. Hitherto we have contrasted it only with that sheer Materialism which would ascribe efficiency to unintelligent atoms. That theory is simple enough, yet Berkeley's is simpler still. For the former postulates a world without us, resembling, to some extent, the world we are conscious of, and forces us to distinguish between objective and subjective qualities of matter, whereas Berkeley abolishes this artificial distinction, declaring all our perceptions alike to be directly produced in us by an external cause no way resembling them. But what figures in Berkeley's writings under the title of Materialism is not this simple, though groundless, hypothesis, but that theory of perception which, while ascribing the origin of all things to God, regards His Will as operating upon us, not directly, but through the intervention of a created substance called Matter. Our philosopher sapped the foundations of this conception, still dominant in theology, by taking the properties of Matter, one by one, and showing them to be affections of Mind. What, then, he could ask, did God create beyond our perceptions? "Force-centres," say certain thinkers at the present day; and the answer no doubt deserves serious consideration, though the present writer can find in it—at least when combined with belief in a Deity—nothing but an attempt to localize volitions, which sounds like a contradiction in terms. It is, in truth, hard to understand why any one who agrees with Berkeley in accepting the existence of a Deity as an unquestionable fact, should persist in running up a partition-wall between Him and His creatures. When Berkeley has said all that he has to say, it is still

quite open to us to believe in the existence of Noumena, or things in themselves; but if we also believe in a Deity who made them, it is certainly simpler and more reasonable to cut out the unnecessary link. Here, if anywhere, we may apply the famous principle of William of Occam: "*Entia non sunt multiplicanda præter necessitatem; frustra fit per plura quod fieri potest per pauciora.*"

All that now remains is to glance at the deep religious significance of Berkeley's conception of the universe. So long as Matter was regarded as an independent entity, there was danger of its usurping the place of Deity, a danger to which Berkeley was keenly alive. If our perceptions could be aroused in us by a lifeless substance, what need to seek further for the living God? But in our author's scheme of things, Matter was relegated to an essentially relative and subordinate position. It was but the impress of God's spirit on man's—a strain drawn from the human soul by the touch of the Divine Musician, as expressed by one who thought not of Berkeley when he wrote—

"A spirit went forth from the Lord,
To play on the spirit of man,
That thrilled like a wind-shaken chord
When the hymn of the ages began."

Thus Matter was doubly dependent, existing by reason of the Will of God, and in, though not by reason of, the mind of man.

Again, a sense of nearness and intimate communion with the Divine Being has been characteristic of the religious mind in all ages. Men have retired into the wilderness to feel alone with God. But, on Berkeley's view of things, retirement is needless, for even amid the din and stir of life men are alone with God. All the thronging perceptions that constitute the outer life of man proceed as truly and immediately from God as the

"still, small voice" of the inner spiritual consciousness.* All Nature everywhere is but the language of the Almighty Father, whereby He imparts His thoughts to His children—thoughts couched under sensible symbols, as all instruction to children must be. The more we learn of science—the more unerringly we detect the connexion of the sign with the thing signified—the more we come to know of the thought of God, unfolded gradually in the sublime panorama of the universe. It is not too much to say that of all philosophies which have ever been given to the world, Berkeley's is the best adapted to conciliate piety with strong common sense. Based wholly upon experience, it thrills and glows with religious fervour. Yet this was the philosophy which Beattie and the chorus of the orthodox denounced as "atheistical," while magnanimously acquitting its authors of ill intention—a philosophy which could tinge with deeper meaning even the devout declaration of the Psalmist—"By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth."

* This applies in the fulness of its meaning rather to the junction of Hume with Berkeley—the fusion of Positivism and Spiritualism—which is proposed in this paper. For Berkeley did not consider God to be the only agent, though we look in vain in his writings for any clear demarcation of the limits and relations of Divine and human action.

ILLUSION AND DELUSION : THE WRITINGS OF CHARLES BRAY.

THE works of Mr. Charles Bray, of Coventry, have been long before the world without attracting a degree of attention at all adequate to their deserts. But how, indeed, can the average Briton, with that "bloodthirsty clinging to life" which Mr. Matthew Arnold ascribes to him, be expected to sympathise with a system in which the vanity of things in general and the eternal death that awaits the individual are two of the cardinal doctrines? The gospel of pure Nihilism is a name which has been not inaptly bestowed on the writings of this truculent philosopher. But let the reader form his own judgment as to their tendency from an abstract with which we here present him, culled from the works of our author, and given, to a great extent, in his own words.

We imagine, indeed, that outside of and around us there is a real world, with an actual sun in the heavens above and the veritable verdure of earth beneath, a world wherein we and our friends—friends with real faces—live and move, love and hate, raise seed after our kind, and disappear; but all this is an illusion and delusion, a jugglery of the senses, which conspire with the intellect to impose upon us. The constitution of our faculties, it is true, forces us to believe in such a world; but still this world is no more a reality than our dreams, which we believe in while they last. Each creature, as we call it, is itself a creator; it makes its own world and

carries it about with it; and no two creatures have the same world, since no two creatures are constructed alike. We believe that each separate object we see has a unity of its own; but this is a mistake. The unity is imposed thereupon by the faculty of individuality, and is a mere fiction of the mind. An object in itself is an aggregate of separate and distinct forces, which are called the properties of matter. Matter itself we believe to be solid and impenetrable, and to consist of ultimate particles; but these ultimate particles are "creatures of the imagination, and as pure assumptions as the spirits of the spiritualists." Material atoms are the centres from which forces act, the whereabouts of push and pull. Gross matter, therefore, is quite as ethereal and insubstantial—in fact, as immaterial as spirit itself can be. But centres of force imply locality, and locality space. Space, therefore, must have an existence of its own. If all created things be an illusion, at least the antecedent void is a reality. Not so, however. Space also is a pure creation of the mind. The same holds true of time.

But if the material world thus crumbles into nothingness, at least we touch solid realities in the world of mind. Good and evil surely are real; and in the mandates of the moral law we come face to face with the eternal verities. With the world of mind, however, it fares little, if at all, better. The moral world is plainly as much our own creation as the physical. Men imagine, indeed, that they are masters of themselves, having power to refuse the evil and choose the good; but this is a great illusion and delusion. Men have no such power. Nothing could possibly have been otherwise than it is. Repentance and remorse are foolish regrets over what could not, under the circumstances, have happened differently. All actions, therefore, and all motives are, in their own nature, indifferent; it is only in their consequences that any distinction can be observed between them. Such as minister to man's pleasure he calls "good;" such as give him pain

he calls "evil." There is no good but pleasure, and no evil but pain. Hence the distinction between moral and physical evil cannot be maintained. Morality is a kind of chemistry of the mind, the likes and dislikes of the individual corresponding to the attractions and repulsions of atoms. Men, we know, imagine that morality finds its sanction in the existence of a being whom they call God, a person something like themselves, who has a preference for holiness, purity, justice, love, and so on, and takes vigorous measures to secure their practice by his creatures; but this is another of those illusions and delusions to which people are so liable. To attribute moral attributes to the Deity is much the same as to suppose Him to wear clothes.

But if the world of matter and the freedom of the will and moral distinctions and a personal God are all so many mental impostures, at least we who frame these fictions have a real existence of our own. Far from it. We ourselves are the greatest illusion and delusion of all. The same faculty of individuality which manufactures "bodies" out of the separate forces which go under the name of the properties of matter, gives unity also to certain separate ideas and feelings, and thus creates what we are pleased to call our minds. A mind is the aggregate of a stream of consciousness. Each idea or feeling or state of consciousness is a distinct entity. There is nothing in which impressions and ideas inhere, nothing through which they pass. When we say "I think," we deceive ourselves. What we ought to say is "Thinking is."

Here, then, we reach firm ground at last. We have got being and not mere seeming now. For, whatever else may deceive us, consciousness, at all events, cannot. The "self" and the "not-self," indeed, may be alike illusory. We may deny the external cause of our states of consciousness—matter, or the internal cause of the same states—mind; but the existence of "thinking" stands

above dispute, for to doubt is still a thought. Our own consciousness, then, is all that is known to us, and all that we can by any possibility know. Beyond this we have only more or less probable inference. But the question is what inferences are the most probable. So we turn now to the constructive side of our philosophy.

Consciousness tells us that we have a body, and this body has a brain, and pressure on the brain puts a stop, to all appearance, to consciousness; we are, therefore, driven to the conclusion that there is a direct and immediate connection between consciousness and the brain. Moreover, whatever affects our brain affects our consciousness; between the two there exists an invariable relation, so that, given the state of the one, we might ascertain that of the other. It is evident, then, that it is to the brain we must first look in laying the foundations of our system. Phrenology lies at the base of psychology; and it is only from the inductive study of mind that we can expect any progress in mental science. Metaphysic is mere guesswork until brought into connection with cerebral organization. Now, the brain is not a single organ but a collection of parts, each the seat of a separate mental faculty, and the strength of each faculty is in proportion to the health, quality, and size of that part of the brain wherewith it is connected. The shape of the head is a fair index of the size of any organ. These mental faculties, arrived at by the inductive study of craniology, create the world of individual consciousness. The physical world with its myriad marvels, the moral world also with its righteousness and its wickedness, are wholly elaborated by the subtle chemistry of the brain. Whatever, therefore, may, or may not, exist outside of us, the only world of which we can know anything is that which is revealed in our consciousness. Matter, no doubt, exists; but we are absolutely in the dark as to its essential nature. How, then, can we say that it differs from spirit? Nay, if we attend to the point, we shall find reason to

believe that the two are in the last resort identical. For matter is known to us only by its properties, and those properties resolve themselves into the various modes of motion which we call the forces of Nature. Heat, light, electricity, galvanism, chemical affinity, attraction, and repulsion, are the names we give to these various forces; and it is the glory of our age to have shown that they are readily convertible into one another. Physical force, therefore, under whatever form, is one and the same. Now, force in itself is a mere abstraction, and as inseparable from the agent which causes it as motion is from the thing moving. There is, therefore, but one agent or cause of all natural phenomena.

But the round of disguises which this protean agent is capable of assuming is not exhausted by the modes of motion just spoken of. The physical force contained in food is converted in an organism into vital energy, and the molecular action of the brain is transformed into mind or consciousness. Life and mind, therefore, are correlates of physical force; they are the form assumed by physical force when subjected to organic conditions. Thus all phenomena, of what kind soever, are the production of one and the same agent. In this agent is comprised more than mere force; it contains the intelligent direction of the force. It is not motion, but the cause of motion. It is a great mistake to suppose that matter itself is this agent. Matter in no case generates force, but only conditions it. Force, like matter, is indestructible, and neither comes into existence nor goes out of it, but only changes its form.

But how can mere physical force ever be converted into mind or consciousness? It never is. There is no such thing as mere physical force. Every atom of matter acts intelligently, and has so acted always. But, just as in our own case, an act which was performed at first with conscious intelligence comes by dint of repetition to be performed automatically, so the conscious

intelligence which once pervaded the world has subsided in the ages into automatic action, constituting what we call "Natural Law." Thus God does not become conscious of Himself in humanity, as Hegel says, but rather resumes His consciousness. For this one universal agent, the cause of all motion and emotion, is none other than God, "in whom we live and move and have our being."

What, then, of matter? All consciousness, we see, and all physical force, are but "the varied God." There is no agent but mind, conscious or unconscious. What place can matter have in such a scheme as this? Is it a substance distinct from God, but coeval with Him, reluctantly moulded into shape by intelligence? No; God is everything or nothing. He is the clay as well as the potter. God is not in Nature: He is Nature. Matter, so to speak, is mind solidified. It is that mode or form of force which we are constituted to perceive through our senses. Matter is the body of God as force is the soul; and as in man so in Nature, body and soul are one and indivisible. The function of matter is to determine the mode of manifestation which force shall assume. The same force, submitted to different organic conditions, becomes Shakspeare or a sheep. But if matter directs force, it is only because force has so constituted matter as to render this possible. Mind has first to build up organism, before organism can control the manifestation of mind. Practice begets habit, habit begets structure, and structure begets instinct, or unconscious intelligence, alike in the individual and in the world at large. But practice was itself begotten of will. There is therefore a living will, conscious or automatic, in all objects; and primeval fetishism was right. We began with the worship of Nature, and in the worship of Nature we must end. God must be looked for here, in this world, and not in an imaginary scheme of things based on the implied imperfection of this. "Religion itself is the expression of simple reverence and trust, accompanied by

awe and wonder, as we stand in the presence of constant and unvarying and irresistible power." We mortals imagine that there must be something very rotten in the state of the universe if it does not tend to our individual happiness. But that is because we still believe the sun to go round the earth in the world of morals. Nature, however, pays no heed to individuals. Her object is to keep life at high pressure, that all may exert their energies to the utmost, and thus increase the sum of general happiness. The final cause of things, indeed, is the production of pleasurable consciousness; but one man's consciousness is as good as another's—not to say better, as the world gets on.

Such are, in very brief outline, the doctrines which Mr. Charles Bray, the philosopher of Coventry, has spent a lifetime in expounding. Mr. Bray first appeared before the world in 1838 as the author of a little book called "*The Education of the Feelings*." This is a captivating volume, inspired throughout by a high tone of feeling, full of home truths, and exhibiting an intimate acquaintance with the highways and by-ways of the heart of man. Whatever judgment may be formed of Mr. Bray's philosophical powers, we make acquaintance with him here as a good man; for no one can read this little book and fail to esteem the author. With regard to matters of speculation this treatise occupies neutral ground. All can read it with pleasure and approbation, whatever their philosophical or religious opinions. The principles subsequently developed do, indeed, peep out in occasional passages, but they are nowhere aggressively thrust forward. The same practical lessons which Mr. Bray inculcates are constantly deduced by other teachers from quite different premises. Thus the very possibility of morality at all is commonly assumed to rest on the theological, but after all irreligious, doctrine of the freedom of the will: whereas Mr. Bray takes as the indispensable foundation of morality the antagonistic principle of necessity. Like

St. Paul, he is willing to say, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," only on the full understanding that it is God which worketh in all "both to will and to do of His good pleasure."

Mr. Bray's next work, the "Philosophy of Necessity," first published in 1841, is a philosophical vindication of the principles tacitly assumed in the earlier and more popular treatise. Its declared object is to show that "mind is equally the subject of fixed law with matter"—a principle far more widely recognized at the present day than it was when this treatise first appeared. Nowhere is the argument for the Reign of Law in the moral world better or more forcibly put than in the first chapter of this volume. The author shows how our consciousness of freedom in our actions and our instinctive feelings about responsibility, praise and blame, reward and punishment, virtue and vice, find their true explanation in the theory which postulates uniformity of succession in the moral world in place of an exceptional contingency.

The second chapter of this work is devoted to an inquiry into the "Origin, Objects, and Advantages of Evil." As this is one of those questions which have been banned as insoluble, let us spend a moment in considering how far it comes within the limits of profitable discussion.

Why is it that we hear so much about the "mystery of the existence of evil?" And why is no mystery ever made out of the existence of good? Plainly because people insist on starting from their conclusion instead of from the premises. Postulate a Benevolent and Omnipotent Being as the cause of all things, and evil is then, indeed, a mystery, or rather a contradiction. All must be very good. No philosophy but optimism is open to the Theist who scruples to limit the power of the Creator. The problem, however, is not, Given such and such a cause, to find how its effect can be the state of things we know, but, Given the actual state of things, to ascertain

its cause. Now our knowledge of the cause is clearly limited to what we find in the effect. The question for us, therefore, is to understand truly the effect, that is to say, to interpret the universe aright. That what we call evil exists in this world of ours is a fact which must be accepted, and which it is futile to discuss. This evil, indeed, may be purely partial and relative; the harmony of the universe may be made up of discords; but the evil is not less evil, nor the discord less harsh on that account. It may well be that those conditions and occurrences which shock the sensitive mind are, under the given constitution of things, the only means possible for the production of good. But why the constitution of things should be such as to require this, is a problem on which no man can throw a glimmer of light. Whether the Devil is really as black as he is painted is a perfectly fair inquiry. But why there should be a Devil is a question which it is waste of time to consider. And Mr. Bray, though professing to handle the latter question, has not really touched it. Except in one passage (p. 44), which is obviously fallacious, he has wisely abstained from asking why the constitution of things should be such that pain and suffering, and, what is worse, moral misery and degradation, should be the indispensable condition of progress, and has confined himself to showing that, under the actual scheme of things, evil is not so gratuitous as it looks at first sight.

The publication of "*Force and its Mental Correlates*" in 1866 was followed, in 1871, by a "*Manual of Anthropology*," in which our author's views assume a systematic shape, as the titles of the successive chapters are sufficient to show:—1. In the Beginning; 2. Man; 3. Morality; 4. Physics and Metaphysics; 5. Religion; 6. Sociology; 7. Summary and Conclusion. Thus within less than 350 pages we travel from the original "fiery mist" through the study of man as a material, mental, moral, and social being, on to the ultimate conclusion, which

constitutes the new religion, that "The One and All requires the resignation of the individual and personal—of all that is selfish—to the Infinite Whole."

These larger works were followed by a number of pamphlets in elucidation of various aspects of the system, one of which has supplied the title of this paper. It is, however, chiefly to the "*Manual of Anthropology*," as containing the most systematic expression of Mr. Bray's views, that the reader's attention will now be invited. And, passing over the first two chapters, which are chiefly a compilation, let us glance for a moment at the ethical portion, after which we will go on to the metaphysical views of our author. We have seen that from the first Mr. Bray has aimed at a thorough reorganization of moral philosophy on the basis of causation, or, as it has been inaptly termed, necessity. Spinoza's definition of freedom is the only one he will accept:—"Human liberty, of which all boast, consists solely in this, that man is conscious of his will, and unconscious of the causes by which it is determined." And thus, as Mr. Bray adds, "a thing is said to be free when it is determined to action by itself alone; but that self, whatever it may be, acts necessarily in accordance with the laws of its own nature." This is the foundation-stone of his whole superstructure, and any one who thinks there is something more in human freedom than this had better leave Mr. Bray's ethic alone, for he will find there no compromise.

"Good and evil are purely subjective;" how is this consistent with our author's speaking of "the external standard of utility?" Because that external standard, or the tendency of actions to produce happiness or misery, resolves itself back into an internal one, since happiness must always be an affair of feeling. To say that there is an external standard of duty is to say that it is not the mind of one individual only that can determine right and wrong.

Mr. Bray is a declared adherent of the school of Bentham, but upon the master's dictum that "The first law of Nature is to seek our own happiness," he puts the following important gloss, "It is true we never directly seek our own happiness, but happiness results from the gratification of our desires and affections." And in this way the self-centred morality which Mr. Bray professes to teach is refined away under his touch till we find the proposition, "A man necessarily seeks his own happiness as the law of his being," reduced to the obvious truism that "he can feel nothing else than his own feelings." In fact, so far from referring conscience and benevolence to self-love, what Mr. Bray really does is to deny the existence of the last-mentioned motive altogether. He cuts at the root of Bishop Butler's distinction "between the cool principle of self-love, or general desire of our own happiness, as one part of our nature and one principal of action; and the particular affections towards particular external objects, as another part of our nature, and another principle of action" (Sermon xi.—Upon the love of our Neighbour). Mr. Bray will have none of the "cool principle," but allows conscience and benevolence an equal chance among other particular desires.

It is curious that a moralist who denies any special principle of self-love should be found insisting on the selfishness of every action. Our author tells us that "If we really love to make our fellow-creatures happy, there is nothing unselfish in our doing it; we are only gratifying our own desire," whence he argues that there can be no such thing as a disinterested affection. This is a common argument enough, but surely a twist of language! True, it is in every case our own desire we seek to gratify: but desires equally our own may have very different objects; the starting-point being the same, the goals may be widely sundered. We may desire our own good without thinking of other people, or we may desire the good of other people without thinking of our-

selves. Now, the latter state of mind is just what is intended in common language by "an unselfish and disinterested desire." Similarly, when we do right, regardless of consequences, we do it out of obedience to our own desire. But this is precisely what people mean when they talk of disinterested virtue. We have an interest in right-doing, or we would not do right, but it is not a selfish interest. The word "disinterested" does not imply the absence of interest or liking, but the absence of a selfish interest or expectation of personal gain.

Why Mr. Bray should seek to obliterate the well-defined distinction between physical and moral evil it is not easy to see; except that, while his own teachings are always of the highest, he evidently takes a certain pleasure in deranging the nerves of quiet, respectable people. Certainly the confusion of these two things is no consequence of the doctrine of causation. Granted that moral notions spring originally out of feelings of pain and pleasure, yet in the process of evolution they lose sight of their origin, and become the source of keener pangs and purer pleasures than anything physical can produce. Witness *Regulus* returning to his spikes, an illustration which our author is himself very fond of. Granted also that the good and the evil of actions lie not in the actions themselves, since all is determined, but in the view we take of them, yet the relativity to us of moral good and evil does not at all diminish their reality. The solid earth with all its moving life, the infinite interspaces of the stars, and the dateless epochs of geology owe their reality to minds so constituted as to have ideas of time, space, and matter. But is that reality thereby rendered one whit the less? It is a relative reality only that men are concerned with, though they are not aware of the fact, because they leave out of count their own minds, the one permanent factor in all cognition. The absolute reality of unknown and unknowable causes is assumed and may be fictitious.

This remark brings us by an easy transition to the metaphysical views of our author.

Let us first concentrate our attention on the most salient feature of Mr. Bray's philosophy—namely, the illusion and delusion of things in general. When a man begins to talk in this uncomfortable sort of way, one ought to pin him down to a definition of reality. It will very soon appear that the reality he denies is a reality which the healthy, honest, easy-going people, who are disturbed by his scepticism, are not at all concerned to maintain. It is not philosophical quiddities and entities that Brown and Jones care about, but the facts of sight and touch. Leave them these, with the power acquired by experience of foreseeing the orderly recurrence of perceptions, and you may do what you like with the substrata. But, says Mr. Bray, in effect, though not in these words, the real world is not the world of my perceptions, but something which underlies my perceptions; and as my perceptions demonstrably cannot resemble the external world which they typify, it is evident that man walks in a vain show, Nature is organized hypocrisy, God is a liar, and existence a cheat. He does not go on to wish, as some do, to be freed, once and for ever, from this insulting and painful position of affairs; for, indeed, Mr. Bray exhibits a highly commendable and philosophical calmness under the systematic imposture of which he believes himself the victim. His mind is too well-balanced and his digestion, no doubt, too good, to allow his scepticism to cloud his happiness. But since this scepticism is not the freak of a single mind, but the reasoned, and, as they think, philosophical belief of many, it is well to examine what it is worth.

My perceptions, the sceptic informs me, cannot resemble the external world. That depends entirely on what is meant by the "external world." Most people are ready to believe that A's perceptions resemble B's, if both A and B have the usual complement of senses in good working

order. Now, if there be anything more in externality than the fact that A's perceptions do not stand alone, but are corroborated by B's and C's and D's, and so on to the Nth, it is a pity no one has explained what it is within the last three or four thousand years during which men have been racking their brains on the subject. The table at which I write is a solid reality; I can both see it and touch it; I scout the notion of its being a subjective hallucination. But why? Because I am quite sure that if my wife were to come into the room, her perceptions would corroborate mine. If they failed to do so, one of us would have to consign the other to the care of Dr. Tuke. The only world, then, external to my perceptions is the world of some one else's perceptions; and, as it is commonly allowed that sane, healthy people agree in their perceptions, it follows that it is untrue to say that my perceptions cannot resemble the external world. To avoid confusion, the reader must remember that we are here speaking, by no choice of our own, of externality to mind. Of course there is a world external to my body, for externality is a relation which holds between one set of perceptions and another. But to talk of a world external to my consciousness, in any other sense than as depending on the consciousness of some one else, is meaningless, unless, indeed, we conceive of consciousness as an extended substance.

As for the source of Mr. Bray's scepticism, it is the same as that of all metaphysical scepticism—namely, the theory of a representative perception. This theory postulates that the world of our consciousness is not the real world at all, but only a blurred and distorted image of it. Now, if there be a noumenal world behind the phenomenal, and the noumenal world be the real world, while the phenomenal is all we know, then, of course, we never come into contact with reality at all. But, if the world of our consciousness be the real and the only real world, where is all the illusion and delusion? For even Mr. Bray allows

that we are certain of our own consciousness. This is a faith which no man taketh away from us. But, rightly understood, this is all that is required to secure the reality of the material universe. Sun, moon, and stars, the heaving ocean, and the eternal hills—what are all these but so many combinations of sense-impressions, actual or potential? It is the approaches to idealism only that are sceptical: complete idealism leads men back to common sense. A stupid and unmetaphysical generation pronounced Berkeley visionary, notwithstanding that his system was really a revolt against the absurdities of Locke, who informed a bewildered world that the greenness of a table-cloth was only in the mind of the spectator, while the length, breadth, and thickness of it were in the article procured at the draper's. Berkeley struck at the root of scepticism by identifying things with ideas. Reid, disliking the sound of his conclusions, refuted him, with much self-complacency, by identifying ideas with things! The essential point, of course, is to see that there is no difference between the two—that the ideal (in this sense) is the real and the real the ideal, in opposition to scepticism which declares that the only real is the noumenal, and is inaccessible to sense. But Mr. Bray, instead of following out idealism to its full and legitimate conclusion, has stopped short at a half-assent to it, which is worse than none at all. He has gone far enough to say that consciousness is all we know, and not far enough to say that consciousness is all there is; so that the result is a divorce of knowledge from existence. He thinks himself bound to believe that there is a real and objective world, while convinced that this world is out of reach of human ken, and that no man ever came across any firmer reality than a subjective mirage of his own making. How much those words "subjective" and "objective" have to answer for! If Mr. Bray could only see that the distinction they mark is not between consciousness and some other kind of existence, but between one department of

consciousness and another, he would cease to pour contempt on our daily impressions of reality. Such states of a man's consciousness as are peculiar to himself we call "subjective;" such as are common to him with others are "objective." The latter series of mental states constitutes the external world; for, being common to many minds, they are external to, or independent of, any particular consciousness. If I see a human figure standing in my room, which no one else can see—that is a subjective hallucination; if everybody else, under the proper conditions, can see it, then it is an objective reality. Now, it is this kind of reality only—namely, the reality of corroborated sense-experience, which the mass of men are concerned with. Brown and Jones would stare on being told that there is no reality in a marble, which is green and smooth and round and hard, but that the whole reality lies in an unknown and unknowable something, which is the cause of those impressions; and if they were further informed that their sense-impressions were worth nothing unless they were true copies of what had just been declared to be unknown and unknowable, their astonishment would become tinged with contempt. Even if the metaphysician were to abate somewhat of his pretensions, and entreat them to believe that the marble they beheld and handled implied the existence of another marble, or of a cause of that marble, which they could neither behold nor handle, they would fail to see the necessity of the inference. And the present writer, too, as one of the vulgar, fails to see the necessity of such an inference. He does not, indeed, wish to deny that there may be a cause, or causes, of the consentaneous impressions of mankind. Such an inference is plausible, but cannot be necessary. For since there must be an uncaused somewhere, there is no logical bar to our placing it at perceptions, and resting in them as ultimate facts. But the very doubtfulness of the inference from perceptions to a cause is an additional proof, if such were needed, that a

consideration of causes does not enter into our idea of the reality of things. Sublunary reality implies no reference to, much less consists in, such cause or causes. What ordinary people mean by "reality" is a series of phenomena—the metaphysician may pronounce them "effects" if he will, but that is to import a theory—and beyond these phenomena they never go. Let us, too, be content with a vulgar reality, and we may look on unappalled at the tricks of the "almighty showman," which Mr. Bray lays himself out to explode.

Having now entrenched ourselves within the impregnable lines of a mundane and market-day reality, we will watch Mr. Bray's ship ploughing the abysmal ocean of metaphysic, and throw a shell or two into her at our leisure. Mr. Bray may have his revenge when he finds us sailing on the same waters.

Outside the world of consciousness Mr. Bray discovers two things, force and matter, and these two are one, or, at all events, agree in one. Thus matter and force, instead of being mere abstract names, the one for certain states of our consciousness with their established relations, the other for the changes which these undergo, are transformed in our author's system, as they so often are elsewhere, into a thriving pair of deities—active and passive, if not actually male and female. Mr. Bray tells us that it must be distinctly understood throughout his book that "force" represents an entity, not a condition ("Manual," p. 36). Matter is the body and force is the soul of the one substance of the universe. Now all force is, in its essence, will. This will, working from everlasting to everlasting, has always, in some incomprehensible way, been solidifying itself into organism, making certain grooves, apparently, for itself, out of itself, to direct its own action. At all events, matter exists as well as force—that Mr. Bray is quite sure of—and its function is to determine the action of will, and enable it to become permanent and automatic. Thus matter plays the same

part in Mr. Bray's system as the "occasional causes" of Malebranche. But Malebranche's idea was a step forwards, and led Berkeley to see that matter could be dispensed with altogether, since the direct action of will was quite competent to take care of itself and produce phenomena unaided; whereas Mr. Bray's "matter" we cannot help thinking is a step backwards. Malebranche, moreover, imagined that he had the authority of Divine revelation for the existence of an unthinking substratum of perceptions. But Mr. Bray has no such imperative inducement. Why, then, does he encumber himself with a superfluous principle? Surely the best metaphysician is he who accounts for appearances by means of the fewest assumptions! Perhaps, however, the reason is not far to seek. Finding that certain relations hold true of force and matter within the sphere of consciousness, Mr. Bray transfers those relations to his ontological entities, which are not the force and matter with which science deals. This is a frequent vice in metaphysical treatises. Science knows nothing of the world of absolute existence into which our author attempts to penetrate. Its task is the analysis of the common consciousness of mankind, actual and potential. When science explores the recesses of space and the buried eras of time, she is finding what potential experiences are indicated by the analogy of our actual perceptions. Science, in a word, is inductive inference grounded on existing facts of sense. If, then, Mr. Bray will wing his adventurous flight into the land of no man's consciousness, he must not force scientific conceptions to become the companions of his voyage. Space and time, he tells us, are forms of human thought. Here are his own words for it:—"We have ideas also of space and time, and must, therefore, have faculties that create them; but however difficult it may be to conceive, they are not entities, but *pure creations of the mind*, and have *no* existence out of ourselves." The *italics* are ours, and we hail the declaration. But what

are poor matter and motion and force and structure to do in a world where time and space are not? The structure which makes the whole difference between Shakspeare and a sheep is a structure which does not exist in space—which has neither length, breadth, nor thickness! Surely this is neither science nor metaphysic, but the hybrid offspring of their unnatural union! Science postulates phenomena, and applies itself to ascertain the laws of their succession; metaphysic is an attempt to account for phenomena by means of other than physical causes. It is clear that the intersection of these two planes of thought can only produce confusion. Thus we have Mr. Bray telling us, in emphatic language, that "Consciousness is all we know or can know, and we cannot know, therefore, of anything differing from it" (p. 161), while he lays down with equal positiveness the doctrine of a material basis of consciousness—"Of course, there is a world without us, but the world in which we believe is created by a correlation of forces in the brain, which forces are received in different quantities, and are variously modified before they reach the brain" (p. 163). Now, these two propositions refuse amalgamation. For if consciousness be all we know or can know, then the brain, as we know it, is a part of our consciousness. But, if so, it is clear consciousness cannot depend on the only brain we know. It must, therefore, depend on some other brain—not on the phenomenal, but on a noumenal brain—a brain of no dimensions, because not existing in space, which is itself a product of consciousness. But is this the meaning which any physiologist would care to have attached to his words? When the physiologist refers consciousness to the brain he has in mind the material brain which he can examine and dissect.

The same strange compound of Hume's idealism with the belief in a material basis of consciousness is perpetually presented to us in Mr. Bray's pages. Take the following perplexing passage as typical of many:—"The

phenomenal world is not a reality ; each creature creates its own world and carries it about in its own head ; outside itself there is nothing but the play of forces on the nervous centres of each being" (p. 235). Now, if "outside itself" means outside the animal's head, then there is a whole world of material objects outside ; if it means outside the individual consciousness, then neither head nor nervous centres can exist outside of that, save in so far as they exist in some other like consciousness. Or does Mr. Bray mean to assign a prerogative of absolute existence to the head over the other members of the body ? His phrenological proclivities will hardly carry him so far as that. But, not to press verbal objections, what our author seems to mean is this—Withdraw from the world the glamour of individual consciousness, and you will find only force acting on structure. This may sound like a very ordinary materialism. But there are two things to be borne in mind. One is that this structure is not different in kind from force, but is itself force which has somehow crystallized into form ; the other, that we have here that mysterious extra-spacial structure, whose acquaintance we have already made. This absurdity of a structure which does not exist in space, and is divorced from all the properties of matter, is the outcome of our author's attempt to reconcile the Idealism of Hume with the superficial materialism of science. Idealism implies that the brain, like every other material object, exists only in consciousness. Science, on the other hand, seems to declare that consciousness depends on the brain. Mr. Bray adopts both views at once. And so, to suit the exigencies of the case, there must be two brains—one the phenomenal brain, which we can feel and see, the other a noumenal brain, impalpable and invisible. But the discovery that there are two such different brains is one which the reader has to make for himself : Mr. Bray does not help him to it. He speaks constantly in some such way as this :—"There is nothing outside of us but one

simple force, in various modes of action, acting upon the brain" (p. 95), as if one particular mass of white pulp enjoyed a prerogative of objectivity denied to other objects. It is as difficult to serve two masters in philosophy as in religion. If matter owes its existence to mind, mind cannot depend on matter. The idealism of our author is fatal to his materialism.

But when science refers consciousness to the brain, is she really entering the lists against idealism, and supplanting mind by matter? This point will repay a moment's attention. For there is a loose notion abroad that she does so, whereas the great masters of science are declared idealists.

"The soul, in a sense," as Jonathan Edwards says, "has its seat in the brain, and so, in a sense, the visible world is existent out of the mind; for it certainly, in the proper sense, exists out of the brain." Now, we have seen already in what sense "the visible world is existent out of the mind"—namely, in so far as it exists in other minds. Let us, then, examine in what sense it is true to say that "the soul has its seat in the brain." And let us begin by hastening to grant what Professor Tyndall tells us no profound scientific thinker, who has reflected on the subject, is unwilling to admit—namely, "the extreme probability of the hypothesis, that for every fact of consciousness, whether in the domain of sense, of thought, or of emotion, a definite molecular condition of motion or structure is set up in the brain." But does the admission of this principle mean the dependence of mind upon matter? Nothing could be further from the truth. My brain exists—but how? It exists, along with my whole bodily organism, only in my own mind and in the minds of other people. It is part of the common stock of consciousness. But that particular collection of actual or possible sense-impressions, which constitutes my bodily organism, is, if rightly interpreted, a safe index of my mental capacities. There is a certain fixed and ascertain-

able relation between the powers of the inner individual being and the complexity of its outer manifestation in the consciousness, actual or possible, of others. Not only so, but every change in the individual consciousness entails concomitant variations in that portion of the common consciousness which corresponds thereto. The physiologist believes that feeling is always accompanied by molecular action—in other words, he believes that for every fact of consciousness there are certain sense-impressions with which he himself and others might be affected. The movements of brain-substance which attend the individual consciousness are the outward and visible sign of an inner spiritual fact; they are the objective revelation of a subjective state—objective, not in that they are of a nature distinct from consciousness, but in that they are common to the consciousness of all. Only, then, by a lame metaphor can it be said that “the soul has its seat in the brain,” and what this metaphor expresses is that one series of facts of consciousness stands as an index of another. The discoveries of cerebral physiology do not in any way traverse the conclusions of idealism, as the best physiologists of the day are aware; and Mr. Bray has contaminated his metaphysic without earning the thanks of science.

Precisely the same objections apply to Schopenhauer's system, of which our author's is, in its main features, a reproduction. The following account of that writer's theory of intelligence, which we borrow from M. Ribot (*“La Philosophie de Schopenhauer”*), might equally well have been written of the opinions we are considering:—

“With Schopenhauer the theory of intelligence is a mere theory of appearances. Its object is to explain how one and the same will, the sole reality, presents itself to us as manifold and variable in the endless multiplicity of natural phenomena. He supposes that our world, with its plains, its hills, its rivers, its trees, its sentient and thinking beings—that all these, with everything of the like nature that may exist in other worlds, may be resolved in the last resort into will—that is to say, into

forces; that an extremely small portion of this matter, which we call brain or ganglion, according to its degree of organization or complexity, possesses the marvellous property of giving expression in itself to all that acts upon it; that this portion resembles a mirror wherein will is reflected, and recognizes itself in all its degrees; insomuch that the universe is only a "phantom of the brain" (*Gehirnphänomenon*), and will never parts with its essential sameness, save in so far as it falls under the intellectual (or cerebral) forms of time, space, and causality, which make it appear successive, extended, and changeable."

We are here met by the same astounding contradiction with which we have already been so much exercised. As M. Ribot remarks—"The world, with its physical, chemical, and physiological phenomena, exists, it is assumed, only in the brain; but the brain itself pre-supposes the existence of certain physical, chemical, and physiological facts. This is a grave difficulty." Schopenhauer, indeed, has a loophole in his doctrine of the identity of mind and matter, as one and the same thing viewed from opposite sides. But then he may be confronted with his own teaching that intelligence is only a tertiary phenomenon, the first place appertaining to will, the second to the organism or body, which is the immediate objectivation of will, the third only to thought, as a function of organization. And here, as M. Ribot justly points out, the same entanglement recurs. For an organism cannot be supposed to exist apart from the conditions of existence (time, place, and change), but these are pronounced by Schopenhauer's idealism to be elements supplied by intelligence, which is the sole source of the multiplicity and diversity of things.

But, notwithstanding the close resemblance between our author's system and that of Schopenhauer, there is still one vital difference, which imparts a different complexion to the two. For, according to Schopenhauer, the normal state of will is unconsciousness, whereas Mr. Bray views will as in its own nature conscious, and as lapsing into the unconscious only by accident. Let us call in once

more the aid of M. Ribot to set Schopenhauer's doctrine in a clear light. "There is one point of the highest importance on which we ought to insist at once; for without understanding it the reader will be exposed to a complete misapprehension of all that follows. Schopenhauer employs the word will in a sense peculiar to himself, and which might, without serious inexactness, be rendered by the word force. Will is commonly taken to mean the conscious act of an intelligent being, whereas with Schopenhauer will is essentially unconscious, and becomes conscious only by accident." Now, with our author the case is quite the reverse. The force or will which he finds in the innermost core of things, as the residuum of phenomena, the ἀλήθινον of the ψεῦδος of sense, is originally, and in its proper nature, a conscious force or will, and only loses consciousness when the need for it is removed by the substitution of habit for intelligence. This peculiar anthropomorphism, whereby the laws of Nature are assimilated to the effect of habit in ourselves, is decidedly the most original idea in Mr. Bray's writings, and at once the most worthy and the most likely to live. One may point to sources whence his other opinions were, or might have been, derived; but this one seems a product of the soil. Dr. Martineau, it will be remembered, made use of the idea two years ago in his Article entitled "Modern Materialism,"* and ascribes his own grasp of it to Fechner's theory of protoplasm, as being not the germ but the refuse of life. He was, doubtless, unaware of the simple and vigorous expression given to the idea by Mr. Bray as early as 1869.†

On the religious views of Mr. Bray we need not expatiate. Suffice it to say that he is in the van of that movement which our age is slowly but surely accomplishing, from a Theistic to a Pantheistic standpoint. He looks,

* *Contemporary Review*, March, 1876.

† In a Paper in the *Anthropological Review*, incorporated two years afterwards into the *Manual*.

as we have seen, for no future reversal of the conditions of existence, but finds a present and immediate moral government of the world in his firm conviction that virtue is the gainer and vice the loser here and now.

“ But sometimes virtue starves, while vice is fed !
What then ? Is the reward of virtue bread ? ”

The reader will find in him none of the moroseness and misanthropy of Schopenhauer ; indeed, a serene content is his main characteristic, the outcome of his assurance that the universe is sacred, and that, however queer things may look, “ all is God, and therefore all is good.”

Such is the writer to whom we have thought it worth while to invite the attention of a too neglectful public. If Schopenhauer, in spite of the same flaw in his system, has been able to gain so wide a renown on the Continent, surely Mr. Bray is entitled to some regard in our country, where his views were novel when he first propounded them, and have certainly not received due attention yet. Of course, no writer who follows another in a like train of thought can expect the same credit for originality, however self-evolved his views may be : for opinions go about, like diseases, in the air, and are spread by mere infection. But still, to English readers, the works of the philosopher of Coventry are very worthy of study. Mr. Bray can write with both vigour and beauty, though his diction is sometimes slipshod, and the thread of argument is apt to lose itself, chiefly through the grave fault in style of a superabundance of quotations. If he would reduce his many works to one containing nothing unessential, he would, doubtless, obtain that high place among the philosophers of our country to which his powers of thought entitle him.

WHERE IS HEAVEN?

IF Heaven exists, one is inclined to think it must be somewhere. And yet, where is it? Did the gods, indeed, dwell of old on the peak of Olympus? Or was the virgin snow ever, as now, its only habitant? Shall we set sail across the misty Ocean-stream to find the Plain of Elysium somewhere in the sunset? Or do we not know that we shall only reach the United States, which, with all their advantages, are scarcely Heaven? The vision of an Hesperian Paradise was shattered by experience. It tempted man to enterprise, and vanished like the mirage. Yet, like our own Heaven, it was long the comfort of the mourner. The gentle Pagan who composed the lines to Prote, preserved in the "Anthology," gives the lie to those who declare that Elysium was only for heroes, and that the Greeks knew of no heaven for the homely heart.

TO PROTE.

- "Not dead art thou, my dear one,
But gone to a better shore,
To the Isles of the West, serenely blest,
Where sorrow comes no more.
- "'Mid flow'r-ensemell'd meadows,
Methinks I see thee roam;
Thy face is bright, and thy young heart light,
In that fair Elysian home.
- "No wintry storm comes nigh thee,
No scorching suns assail;
No fell disease may thy dear limbs seize.
No joy, no comfort fail.
- "Nor thirst nor hunger heeding,
Thou dwell'st contentedly
'Neath the glittering ray of the purer day,
Thine own heaven beams on thee."

Before earth had been fairly ransacked, Paradise, like

Astræa, retreated to the skies. Mrs. Hemans reminds us of the true direction in which to look for it—

“For, beyond the clouds and beyond the tomb,
It is there, it is there, my child.”

Somewhere, then, in the star-strewn depths of Space we shall find the Better Land. The impious astronomer, indeed, declares that he has swept the empyrean with the most powerful glasses, and caught not the faintest glimmer of the shining battlements of the City of God. But do we not know that space is infinite, and that there is room for Heaven in spite of Strauss and astronomy? Yet, somehow our minds misgive us, and this local heaven has been left, for the most part, to the women and children. There is a very prevalent impression abroad, that we might travel through the universe for all eternity, and never meet anything more divine than lumps of matter whirling through the ether. Of course, one or more of these may be the abode of the blessed, as Cicero conceived to be the case with the Milky Way. But who among us believes it? We have a shrewd suspicion that the suns and planets have their own indigenous inhabitants, if they are cool enough to maintain them, that they are governed by the same laws as our earth, and are the scenes of a life as chequered as our own. Perhaps, then, Heaven is hidden in the depths, not of Space, but of Time, and is discernible only through the telescope of prophecy. Is it but the soul's dim augury of a glory yet to be revealed on earth, given unto us to labour for, and reserved to others to enjoy? This is a Kingdom of Heaven which is not likely to suffer much violence. For though a good many people are ready to declare that the chief joy they expect in *another* life is an extended sphere of usefulness, they do not somehow take kindly to the notion of working solely for others in this. The Materialist, whose only heaven is an improved state of society, is repudiated with the indignation he deserves.

Where, then, is Heaven, if it be neither on the mountain-

top, nor in the secret recesses of the waves, nor hidden in the vistas of Space, nor carried in the womb of Time? There is no answer, it seems, to be had. But perhaps the fault lies with our question, which involves a contradiction in its very terms. We have been saying, "Lo, here!" and "Lo, there!" and, behold, the Kingdom of God is within us! Within us, in the marvellous mind of man, lies this world of ours, with all its beauties and all its terrors. There is the vivid lightning-flash, and there the rolling thunder; there, too, are the shadowy forests, and the resounding seas. For we cannot reach beyond ourselves, and what we know, we are. It is the senses which make the world, and the senses are part of us. You and I exist not, if the truth be told, in what we speak of as the world around us. "For indeed," as the ghost of Scipio declared, "you are not what that outward form reveals, but a man's mind is the true self, not that shape which can be pointed out by the finger." But if I am a mind, and not a body, then is the universe in me, not I in it. Cease to tell us that we are of the earth, earthy: it is the earth that is of us. Witness Kant, that Space and Time are forms of human sensibility. What are they in deed but the web, "the warp and the woof thereof," whereon the mind spins the cunning fabric of its enamelled and melodious world? But if Space and Time depend for their existence on mind, how much more their contents?

Consider our own bodies. They are parcels of sense-impressions, and can exist only in relation to our own minds and those of others. Even so, the universe, which is God's body, has its existence in relation to the minds of His creatures. The universe is the manifestation of God, as that body of yours is the manifestation, through God, of you. But every manifestation requires not only a manifestor, but a mind, or minds, whereunto the manifestation may be made. It is the operation of one mind upon another, and, apart from mind, impossible. There

is, indeed, an external reality which depends not on any created intelligence, but it is not matter or motion, or any of the things of sense, but only the eternal order wherein sense-impressions occur, so that different minds see and feel the same object in the same place at the same time; the cause whereof, if we will seek it, we may find to be the will of the Most High. It is the stability of this will that makes our world the solid reality it is; but "if He withdraw His breath, we die, we return to our dust;" nay, more, not even our dust is left of us.

Now, if Time and Space exist in Mind, not only is this world of ours a mental product—though not, therefore, be it understood, a fiction; but it follows further that Mind transcends both Time and Space, and we are landed in Eternity at once. Not to one, but to all of us, is it given to say "Before Abraham was, I am!" Sojourners we may be in this world of sense, but we are citizens of a larger country. "Know of a truth," says Carlyle, "that only the time-shadows have perished or are perishable; that the real being of whatever was, and whatever is, and whatever will be, is even now and for ever. This, should it unhappily seem new, thou mayest ponder at thy leisure—for the next twenty years or the next twenty centuries; believe it thou must, understand it thou canst not."

To say that the soul does not exist in the body, but the body in the soul, is indeed a disturbing idea. We prefer, like Descartes, to lodge the soul in the pineal gland, or in some equally safe corner of the body, or else to regard it as an attenuated something diffused throughout the whole system; while the very liberal permit it to project a little beyond in the shape of what they call a "nerve-atmosphere." Locke himself refused to knock under to any such absurd notion as that of a soul which cannot change place, "because it hath none;" and preferred to think that when a man travelled from Oxford to London his soul jogged with him every inch of the way, "as the coach or horse does that carries him."

Nor need it be denied that there are certain strange consequences of the doctrine, repugnant to the natural man. For if my body exist in my soul, in virtue of its being a bundle of sense-impressions, then, by parity of reasoning, every other such bundle exists there too. But is it not monstrous for me to maintain that you exist in my soul, when you are notoriously outside of me, and can walk off, when you please, and snap your fingers at me? *Not quite so fast, my friend, let us first distinguish a little.* You undoubtedly exist outside of me, in the sense that your body is external to mine; and, remember, that it is only bodies that can properly be said to be external to one another. But the soul is known to us only as consciousness—that is, as a certain train of emotions, thoughts, sensations, perceptions, volitions. Now, one such train of consciousness may be independent of another, but cannot be called external to it, for they have neither of them a local habitation. Again, let the shade of Scipio remind you once more that you are not what that outward form reveals. In yourself you are a train of consciousness, with, it may be, a mysterious entity besides, which serves to impart a unity to your successive perceptions. You are a body only in relation to beings who have organs fitted to perceive the same. In so far, therefore, as you infringe upon my consciousness, your physical conformation does exist in me, and forms part of my train of perceptions. That body of yours, which mayhap you think your real self, is no more than a potentiality of affecting minds, whether your own or that of others. But this, you may complain, is to multiply your body a myriad times, since the impressions it causes in me are numerically distinct from those it arouses in my neighbour. This dissipation of your person you must unfortunately submit to, since I cannot possibly have my neighbour's perceptions, though I may, and probably do, have perceptions very closely resembling his, which we call, for shortness, the same. For all practical purposes, we live in the same world; but, in reality,

each has its own ; and my neighbour startles me sometimes into recognition of the fact by an eccentric way of thinking that the grass is red. There is, indeed, something pathetic in the essential loneliness of each human spirit. "Ah ! sir," says Thackeray in his "Pendennis," "a distinct universe walks about under your hat and under mine—all things in Nature are different to each—the woman we look at has not the same features, the dish we eat from has not the same taste to the one and to the other—you and I are but a pair of infinite isolations, with some fellow-islands a little more or less near to us." And if even our outer perceptions are different, how much more idiosyncratic and incommunicable are the feelings which constitute a more interior self. But, as Keble sweetly sings—

"Why should we faint and fear to live alone ;
Since all alone—so Heaven has willed—we die :
Nor e'en the tenderest heart, and next our own,
Knows half the reasons why we smile or sigh !"

There is not, therefore, one world merely, but as many worlds as there are sense-gifted beings. Not that these carry their worlds about with them. Thackeray was not a metaphysician, and so we need not quarrel with him, as we did with Locke, for ascribing locomotion to consciousness. Space is not anything in which my mind exists ; it is a condition under which my mind is compelled to receive its perceptions. I do not derive the idea of it, like that of colour, from the contemplation of material things. When the coloured object is withdrawn from my gaze the impression of colour vanishes along with it ; but even in sleep I cannot rid myself of the condition of space, which is part of the furniture of my being.

Now if matter thus depend on mind, if the world exist but in you and me, who shall say of what other fair and unimagined worlds we are capable—not by our own power, but by grace of the same Almighty Will which has revealed this earth to us ? Imagine your senses gradually withdrawn without extinction of your

being; your world would darken and finally go out; and then imagine some interior inlets to be opened, of finer capacity, it might be, than those you now enjoy—you would then be in a new state of being without change of place. Your soul would not leave the body, because it was never in it; for you who perceive are neither here nor there. Thus, not only is this our solar space infinite, but unnumbered worlds, with their several spaces, may coexist—not, indeed, in the same place, and yet without displacing one another. In this creative, or rather receptive, power of mind—in this utter relativity of matter—lies the true charter of our immortality. It is thus

“The soul, secured in her existence, smiles
At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.”

My friend dies; he quits my ken; and with him he carries *dimidium animi mei*. My train of consciousness is sadly impaired, “wanting the smiling indications” which pointed me to the existence of that sister train, “the recognizable face, the sweet assurance of a look.” But because my consciousness has suffered loss, shall I say that his is ended, when, for aught I know, it may be going on still, unchecked, developed, intensified. Of other states of being we can, of necessity, know nothing, since all our ideas are drawn from our present experience. But our hopes may travel even where the wings of the fancy flag. Take comfort then, ye mourners, there may yet be many an Aden, not so distant as ye think, where ye may regain your lost Lenores.

Yet let no one hope to enter heaven by any easy process of passivity, like a limpet receiving the influx of the tides. In this lovely world our souls may be in hell, and might be so in a lovelier. Heaven lies not in perceptions, which are but the outer husk of our being. Within us, in a deeper sense—in the marvellous heart of man—lies the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the Devil.

Macrobius tells us how it was taught by the institutors of the Mysteries that all the tales relating to the infernal regions were typical of our present state. The body is

the true Inferno, the soul's sepulchre, the Cave of Dis; and all that a credulous fancy feigned as taking place in the nether world is transacted on the stage of our mortal life. For must not the soul taste of the waters of oblivion before it can forget the majesty of its being, and regard the things of sense as all in all to it? And those other direful streams, who does not know them? Phlegethon, "the naphthaline river of passion accursed," rolling through our souls its burning torrent of lust and ire; Acheron, the bitter waters of repentance; Cocytus too, the unfailing flood of human tears and woe; and Styx, that whelms our better natures in the foul quagmires of mutual hate and loathing. Tityus is here—Heaven help him—with the vulture gnawing at his heart-strings. Poor Tantalus starves among us in the midst of his abundance, ever grasping, never resting to enjoy. Ixion, foolish soul, still whirls on his wheel, committing his all to fortune. And Sisyphus—who has not seen him?

"Bare to the bitter skies,
His mournful task he plies
In vain, in vain!

"Sometimes he looks to Heaven,
And asks to be forgiven
The grievous pain.
The stars look sadly down,
The cold sun seems to frown—
In vain, in vain!

* * * * *

"Toil, Sisyphus, toil on!
Thou'rt many, though but one;
Toil heart and brain!
One—but the type of all,
Rolling the dreadful ball,
In vain, in vain!"

Thus the ancients dealt with their myths. It is time that our less imaginative, though more atrocious, Hell should be clearly understood to be of the same character, Shelley said some time ago—

"'Tis a lie to say 'God damns.'
Where was Heaven's Attorney-General
When they first gave out such flams?
Let there be an end of shams."

Poets are always the best theologians. Indeed Shelley's Peter Bell the Third proves him to have been almost as great in this line as Canon Farrar himself. We will, therefore, accept Shelley's authority as final on the subject of Hell and the Devil. And first as to Hell—

"Hell is a city much like London—
A populous and a smoky city;
There are all sorts of people undone,
And there is little or no fun done;
Small justice shown, and still less pity."

Next as to the Devil—

"The Devil, I safely can aver,
Has neither hoof, nor tail, nor sting;
Nor is he, as some sages swear,
A spirit neither here nor there—
In nothing, yet in everything."
* * * * *
"He is—what we are."

From Shelley it is an easy step to Byron, whom we shall find an equally sound exponent of theology. With what scorn does the dying Manfred dismiss the foul fiend!

"Back to thy hell!
Thou hast no power upon me, *that* I feel;
Thou never shalt possess me, *that* I know.
What I have done is done; I bear within
A torture which could nothing gain from thine:
The mind which is immortal makes itself
Requital for its good or evil thoughts—
Is its own origin of ill, and end,
And its own place and time: its innate sense,
When stripp'd of this mortality, derives
No colour from the fleeting things without,
But is absorb'd in sufferance or in joy,
Born from the knowledge of its own desert."

We see here a triumph over death. And yet what a triumph! The triumph of the Indian at the stake, who smiles in the face of his tormentors. Careless alike of the malicious menaces of the demon and of the well-meant officiousness of the ecclesiastic—with proud disdain of the one, with sullen rejection of the other, Manfred sets himself to pursue that journey which each must tread alone. The judgment he anticipates is at the

bar of his own conscience; the books that are to be opened are the tablets of memory, in whose too faithful register every thought, word, and deed is stored up to endless ages—tablets kept by a Recording Angel, awful, stern, and pitiless, who will “drop no tear” upon any page, nor “blot out” the least of our offences.

And what then of “the solemn account which we must one day give before the judgment seat of Christ?” To this let it be replied—What was Christ but an incarnate type of man’s higher nature? It was as such he lived and acted, unconsciously to himself, under the impulse of a power not his own; and in this light must his every word be read. Christianity claimed to be the substance whereof Judaism was but the shadow cast before. Is it not now in its own turn discovered to be merely typical of spiritual truths which the mind of man is of an age to grasp? Christianity presented these truths to the world in a shape in which they could be grasped and acted on. Men could not give up vice for the satisfaction of well-doing, the charms whereof they little felt; but they could relinquish it under promise of a reward in heaven. They could not shrink from the pains of conscience, having no conscience in particular to shrink from; but they could and did shrink from the pains of hell, and the fear of these quickened conscience, and strengthened it to supply their place. Our rude Mediæval ancestors could little appreciate such lines as those in *Manfred*; but they could dimly discern the intrinsic divinity of their own spiritual natures, when it was typified to them under the person of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

But if Hell is in the heart of man, Heaven may be there too, when the affections are purified, and the frosts of selfishness have yielded to the kindly thaw of wisdom and love. If any think this is not heaven enough, is he in a fit state for heaven at all? We may amuse our fancies with visions of a future state; but if we will follow the only analogies we can have, we are bound to

conclude that the sun of that country will rise on the evil and on the good, and its rain descend on the just and on the unjust. This is what we find in our present state. And how else would the free choice of good be possible? For if virtue were rich with reward, and the potent heiress of a heavenly inheritance, how could we love her for herself alone? God, like a prudent parent, does not dower his daughter. Her own charms are enough for the genuine lover; and why should she be sacrificed to the calculating adventurer? The craving for reward, for some bribe to make us choose the better part, must indeed spring from the only scepticism that is really dangerous—a disbelief in goodness. That it is better in itself, at all hazards and all cost, to do right than to do wrong—this is the shield of faith that a man requires for the battle of life: all else is baggage that can be dispensed with. And to grasp this truth must ever be an act of faith. If we wait till we have reasoned out with ourselves the expediency of righteousness, we shall never begin to act righteously at all. Not that life does not read its lesson plainly enough. To reach happiness we try the path of pride and selfishness and self-indulgence, and lust and scorn and hate, and sooner or later have sadly to confess that there is “no road that way.” Then we are only too thankful to be allowed to retrace our footsteps, and essay the other path, which leads through humility and kindness, and self-sacrifice and purity, and tenderness and love. It is these things make Heaven—the sunshine of the soul—a heaven into which no hypocrite can ever steal.

THE END.

