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BELIEF IN GOD



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# BELIEF IN GOD

## ITS ORIGIN, NATURE, AND BASIS

*BEING THE WINKLEY LECTURES OF THE  
ANDOVER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
FOR THE YEAR 1890*

BY

JACOB GOULD SCHURMAN

SAGE PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN CORNELL UNIVERSITY

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## PREFACE.



THE following lectures were delivered before the Andover Theological Seminary during the first week of March. They form the sixth course on the Winkley foundation. That endowment is hampered by no conditions whatever; a rare and surely a fortunate circumstance for any theological school. As might have been expected from the spirit of broad scholarship which animates the Andover faculty, the Winkley lectureship has been occupied by experts in different fields of inquiry, who have treated, each from his own peculiar point of view, of a considerable variety of subjects, none of which, however, was without some special interest for the coming religious teachers and workers of our age. Among the lecturers have been some of our foremost names in theology, economics, political science, and even law. The themes they

considered were largely historical or sociological, and generally of a practical bearing. To add to the variety, an abstract subject was deemed desirable for the present year. But for the choice of the particular subject selected, as of course for the treatment of it, I alone am responsible. While I might perhaps claim the sympathy of the members of the Andover faculty for the general spirit and outcome of these inquiries, it would be strange indeed if they accepted all my conclusions, or even looked at common beliefs from the same point of view.

No apology is needed for a fresh examination of the character, origin, and validity of our belief in God. Historical studies are just now greatly in favor. But no theological belief can rest on a mere historical occurrence. An open-eyed theology must have a philosophical basis. And its fundamental and perennial inquiry is into the evidence of the divine existence.

Whoever has read deeply on this subject must have been struck with the fact that so many of his own thoughts were already the thoughts of others. I cannot, therefore, say that the following reflections are original in any other sense than that

they have actually been made by the author. I am, in fact, aware that some of them were derived from teachers, among whom I would especially mention Lotze, Martineau, and Pfleiderer, while others have been suggested by recent writers like Robertson Smith, Seeley, Fiske, Réville, and Thiele. And if it were possible to deduct all I owe to the unconscious instruction received from the great thinkers of our race, from Plato to Hegel, the residuum of individual ownership might be far from flattering. I have, however, not been unmindful of the golden advice of Goethe — to acquire what has been inherited in order to make it my own; and the result is now submitted to the candid judgment of the reader. From him I cannot expect the sympathetic consideration bestowed by my Andover audience; but for dispassionate criticism I shall be equally grateful. I am conscious of no other desire or motive in these inquiries than to discover the actual truth.

A word of apology at the close. Though my subject is abstract, the treatment will, I hope, be found readable, if not exactly light or popular. I have, however, vent-

ured upon the coinage of a descriptive term, which, as it is not likely to go farther, can do no harm, and does here really conduce to precision and brevity. A theism based on the facts of the cosmos, or universe, is called *cosmic*. To the universe we oppose man; and a theism based on facts of human nature might very properly be called *anthropic*. A theism resting on this double ground I call *anthropocosmic*; and I choose this combination rather than *cosmoanthropic*, to indicate that, while mine is a man-universe theism, man must not be interpreted in terms of the universe, but the universe in terms of man; namely, of that self-conscious spirituality which makes us selves and persons. Anthropocosmic theism is the doctrine of a Supreme Being, who is ground both of nature and of man, but whose essence is not natural but spiritual.

THE BROOKS,  
PINE HILL IN CATSKILLS,  
September. 1890.

# BELIEF IN GOD.

## LECTURE I.

### AGNOSTICISM, OR THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF BELIEF IN GOD.

ADDITIONS to our vocabulary are rendered constantly necessary by the growth of experience, the enlargement of science, and the multiplication of inventions. Owing to the predominance of material interests in modern civilization, most of our new words have come from the mint of the chemical and mechanical laboratory. They have been coined to describe the various elements, appliances, and processes, by the knowledge of which the modern Kingdom of Man has subjugated to its use and convenience the laws and powers of nature. And as each piece of this verbal coinage bears the image and superscription of a

material object or operation, which may be distinctly perceived through the medium of one or more of the senses, it always has a definite circulating value, which is not liable to confusion with currency of any other denomination.

When from the material we turn to the spiritual world, we cannot fail to be struck with the paucity of its new linguistic products. We may almost say that the terminology of the mental and moral sciences remains to-day substantially what it was in the hands of our first philosophical writers, though here and there old words have been impregnated with new ideas, as terms like force, law, development, and history may serve to illustrate. Though conciliatory and even generous on the broad physical road, the Cerberus of language is inexorable on the narrow psychical path to the temple of speech.

That this conservative rule has been more honored in the breach than in observance by admittance of the new word "agnosticism," cannot, at the outset at least, be either maintained or denied. This, indeed, will be admitted by no one more readily than the agnostic himself,

whose creed or temper is to assert nothing without sufficient evidence. He will, however, in this instance very properly remind us that the evidence is not far to seek. For the term itself is but of yesterday. And more than once since it came into being, its proud parent has recounted the circumstances of its birth, and vindicated, before the face of an ungrateful world, its right to existence. Still the natural and pardonable, though purely subjective, satisfaction of Professor Huxley with his linguistic creation must not lull our incredulity, or abate the suspicion — which, indeed, is of genuinely agnostic stamp — that the bantling of agnosticism is not altogether so satisfactory and so indispensable as its too partial parent represents it.

Language being the mirror of thought, we might expect to find some help in etymology. From this source we learn, first, that the word “agnostic” is a barbarism, since in the Greek language, from which it has been imported, the privative *a* never co-existed with the termination *ic*; and, secondly, that it is made up of two elements indicating together a privation of knowledge, and so equivalent to unknow-

ing, unknown, or unknowable. Etymologically, therefore, agnosticism is indistinguishable in meaning from nescience or ignorance. The emphasis of the new word must accordingly fall upon a point outside the limits of its morphology. That there are things we do not know, or perhaps even cannot know, is a fact fully described by saying we are *ignorant* of them. But it is conceivable that a new term is needed to mark a new division between knowledge and ignorance. If so, the term should indicate in itself how that delimitation is to be made. "Agnosticism" is a redundant addition to our language if intended to indicate the fact that we are ignorant of some things, and an inadequate addition if intended to indicate what we are ignorant of. If there were people who asserted they knew everything, and others who asserted they knew nothing at all, the terms "gnosticism" and "agnosticism," in that case signifying knowledge and ignorance of *the same universe of fact*, would undoubtedly form a convenient addition to the language of descriptive philosophy. But since men differ in opinion only regarding knowledge or ignorance of

points lying between these extremes of the nothing and the all, it is trivial for any one to tell us he does not know without adding what in particular it is which he does not know. It is this I find difficult to extract from the various accounts that have been given of the origin and meaning of the term "agnosticism."

It has indeed been more or less officially announced that "agnosticism" is not a creed, but a method. We have been assured that it consists merely in following reason as far as reason can go, and then confessing ignorance with regard to what lies beyond. But though this definition has vaunted itself in popular polemics, it is of little scientific value. For it fails to explain what "reason" is, and how far it can validly go. In fact, this definition merely makes "agnosticism" synonymous with intellectual integrity. It is that respect and reverence for fact which has been, though not actually generated, yet greatly developed and fostered by the severe methods of modern scientific investigation. Of course it does not imply that we should never go beyond the deliverances of sense experience; for knowledge, ordi-

nary as well as scientific, is possible only when the facts of sense are grouped under hypotheses or theories. And, according to Darwin, speculations are of vastly more importance than observations for the development of the sciences. What is meant is, that the agnostic, in the formation of hypotheses (the exclusion of which would be the death-knell of scientific knowledge) must not snatch at conjectures which not only go beyond the facts to be explained by them (for that is necessary), but which have also no probability in themselves, or no ground for their support. The agnostic stands by evidence, and will never move without it. Where he is confronted by conflicting testimony, if he cannot strike a balance, he suspends his judgment. For example, in the attitude of many historians and literary critics towards the accounts of the early Roman State and the composition of the Homeric poems, we have what has been called "agnosticism in history and in literature." From a similar conflict of evidence many persons are agnostics in the field of Darwinian biology. Agnosticism, in this sense, demands only the graduation of subjective convic-

tion according to the degrees of objective evidence. Who that reasons could repudiate this principle, though there may be few who really carry it out?

Removal of prejudice, intellectual honesty, judicial temperament: these phrases all describe from slightly different points of view the conception which, as we have been assured, embraces "all that is essential to agnosticism." I am anxious to emphasize that the principle of *this* "agnostic faith," far from being peculiar to Professor Huxley and his intellectual congeners, is a maxim universally accepted by the thinking portion, if not indeed by all sane adults, of the human family. As a principle, it stands on the same footing as the universal laws of logical thought. In actual practice either may be disregarded; but such lapses do not form an argument either against the validity of the principle or against the universality of its acceptance. The substance of this agnosticism is not only as old as the writer who said, "Try all things, hold fast by that which is good," but as old as the first rude court of justice instituted by prehistoric man. It is not merely the "fundamental axiom of modern

science," but the indispensable condition of that reflective knowledge which, long before the dawn of modern science, woke to life on the plains of Mesopotamia, along the banks of the Nile, and throughout the entire reach of the Hellenic world.

But though all reflecting persons revere intellectual integrity, few, I suppose, will feel the need of a new term to describe it, or if that coinage be allowed, see the propriety of the term "agnosticism." When Professor Huxley exhorts all men to become "agnostics," will his audience suspect, from that irrelevant designation, that what he requires of them is that they shall put away prejudice, weigh evidence honestly, and deal just judgments? To be an agnostic is only to be honest and judicial. If these old-fashioned Latin descriptions are not sufficient, we already have in the English language a term borrowed from the Greek which includes both ideas and which perfectly expresses the conception under consideration,—I mean the term "critical." And as this term, which has also the advantage of the corresponding forms "critic" and "criticism," naturally suggests to popular thought what we have been told

is the faith whole and undefiled of those who call themselves "agnostics," I cannot but think that much misapprehension would have been prevented had these thinkers designated themselves "critics." However, the new word is now a part of our language. And the most we can do is to bear in mind precisely what it means.

This is all the more necessary when we find those who proclaim agnosticism to be only a method of investigation, assuming that it implies certain results in theology. Their foremost champion has in fact asserted that agnosticism is to theology what death is to life, a final stage in its evolution. And with the masses this is now regarded as the true and only meaning of agnosticism. But such a tenet is characteristic rather of the partisan than of the critic. And it would seem to have originated in the heat of recent discussions over Biblical theology. For the influx of German criticism into the English-speaking world has at the same time unsettled traditional beliefs and distorted the judgment of those who had already, on other grounds, rejected them. These latter have failed to recognize that the new movement is alto-

gether historical, not philosophical; that it affects our interpretation of documents without affecting our views of the ultimate problems of thought. It is no doubt true that, by the sober and patient application of the historical and comparative method to all branches of human civilization, Germany has, since the time of Herder, revolutionized our views of the past history of mankind, and rendered largely obsolete the historical writings of the sixty or seventy generations between our own century and the time of Herodotus. These labors have of course shed light, and abundant light, on the writings of the Old and New Testaments. And there is perhaps scarcely a fact of the older record which does not present itself to us in a new and changed aspect. Yet the sudden discovery of this critical view of the Old Testament, which more than one generation of German scholars had already represented, ought not to have unbalanced the sobriety of agnostics. Least of all should noisy criticisms have been taken for the death-knell of theology. Strife and struggle are the conditions of life; and experience does not show that the theology of the past is incapable of

adjusting itself to the equitable demands of all modern science, physical or historical. Our larger conception of the literature of the Old Testament as no longer a medley of proof-texts, but the artistic expression in all literary forms—poetry and prose, history and fable and legend, proverb and prophecy—of the ever-deepening religious life and the ever-growing religious insight of the Jews, indicates rather the rejuvenation than the decadence of scientific theology. No doubt pious minds of certain strata of culture will resent this invasion of their conventional views. But in all domains ignorance is a barrier to the diffusion of scientific truth. Yet our conviction always is that truth must prevail. And if it prevail on the field of Biblical criticism, what matters it either to one's theoretical views of God, or to one's practical sense of life and communion with Him? Let us grant that the book of Daniel was composed in the Maccabæan period, that Ecclesiastes must be referred to an age long after Solomon, that Isaiah was written by several hands, part of it being of Babylonian origin, that the Pentateuch or Hexateuch is a composite work, and,

though containing a Mosaic element, only arrived at its present form in the exilic and post-exilic periods, — and these, we learn from the high authority of Canon Cheyne, are “the facts generally admitted by the experts,” radical and orthodox alike, — is it not still a fact that the great religious ideas and forces of which these works are the record, remain essentially what they were under the older views of chronology and authorship, even to the point of forming part of a religious development or revelation, that found its culminating expression and realization in the benign miracle of history, the truth and life which became incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth? And that gracious vision of divine humanity has only stood forth in distincter features since the critics of the New Testament have set it more accurately against the background of contemporaneous life, thought, and history. Of course the literature of the Christian religion must be subjected to the same critical study and examination as other ancient documents. Of course we shall have to distinguish in these records between objective fact and subjective seeming, between the events

they report and the contemporary moods of thought they reflect. And even those who differ most from Baur and Strauss must acknowledge it was a memorable achievement in historical science when they first operated the critical method on the field of New Testament history, now nearly two generations ago. Through them and their successors we have been led, as Harnack, himself a leader in the movement, declares, to a knowledge "richer in historical points of view." But such increase of knowledge, though leavening traditional and historical theology, is far from fatal to all theology. Nor can agnosticism repudiate theology without deserting its one essential principle, criticism.

The third meaning of agnosticism, and the only one which deserves serious consideration, is philosophical scepticism as represented by Hume and Kant. This is no doubt the ordinary signification of the term on the tongues of people for whom it has any definite significance. And accordingly it is thus defined in the great dictionary of Dr. Murray with pitiless disregard to that "agnostic faith whole and undefiled,"

to which alone the author of the term makes absolute confession.

There is a certain propriety in the use of the term "agnosticism" to express downright darkness and incapacity of intellect regarding one entire class of subjects,—that, namely, which has to do with an unseen or immaterial world. But that our faculties are so limited, the coinage of a descriptive epithet, however felicitous, by no means proves.

It must be remembered that as in physical science so also in philosophy and theology there has been great progress since the eighteenth century. Old problems have been recast, and old methods have been abandoned. The question, Is there a First Cause? is obsolete for a generation that finds God in the world, and not outside and apart from it. Yet it was to prove the existence of such an external Deity that theological thinkers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries spent their greatest strength, as may be seen in the writings of Locke, Leibnitz, and Clarke. Whether their argumentation has been weakened by scepticism or not, the question of an immanent Divinity is left unaffected.

Again, the enormous growth of mathematical science in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries imparted a characteristic complexion to the entire thought of the age. And theology and philosophy alike, ethics not excepted, were content with nothing less than an abstract demonstration of all their theses from axiomatic first principles, *more geometrico*, as Spinoza says and conspicuously illustrates in his system. Following the mathematician in his deductive method of proof, the ontologist followed him also in his disdain of facts of observation, and expected, like his exemplar, to acquire, solely by the manipulation of his own ideas, demonstrative knowledge of the real world, — nay, of its underlying ground and government as they lay prefigured in the Divine mind, as well as of the existence and nature of God himself. Whoever would familiarize himself with this heaven-scaling way of thinking must turn to the pages of the now obsolete Wolff. It is true of man in general, as Sydney Smith said of Dr. Whewell in particular, “Science is his forte, omniscience his foible.” And if human foibles argue the limitation of our

cognitive faculties, surely the fact that man is capable of correcting his foibles, as in the person of Kant he corrected the vagaries of Wolff's omniscient rationalism, argues still more strongly the contrary thesis. At any rate the scepticism of Kant and Hume, directed as it was upon an antecedent system of thought now altogether obsolete, can have only an historical interest for the philosophy of to-day. That it still holds, and must hold, absolute sway over our thinking is the assumption upon which agnosticism, in the ordinary sense of that term, is actually as well as ostensibly based.

That the final dogma of yesterday is only the relative truth of to-day must be apparent to every believer in the evolutionary education of the human race. From the standpoint of Hume's British contemporaries, his scepticism was unanswerable. To them he was a monster of so hideous mien, because they saw in his system the inevitable outcome, under a remorseless logic, of a fundamental principle which he held in common with themselves. No war so bitter as a civil war; no hatred like that of lovers. Hume belonged to the

household of faith—in empiricism. It was this common ground that needed to be attacked. Aspersions on the acute and logical builder of the sceptical structure were of no avail, but to distract attention from the all-important point,—the character of the foundation. If, as the empiricist asserted, all our knowledge comes to us through the senses alone, there is no escape from the nescience of Hume. Sensationalism is the parent of scepticism. But psychology since Hume has shown that sense-impressions alone do not constitute human knowledge. They must be elaborated and impregnated by thought. Much that enters into your perception of a page of print has not been contributed through any of your senses. It is the memorable achievement of Reid, the founder of the Scottish school of philosophy, to have insisted on the error of Hume's premises, and in substance the view of this shrewd and sober thinker has been verified, not only by common sense, but also in the psychological laboratories of contemporary Germany. No longer can it be said that because God cannot be touched, or heard, or seen, therefore He cannot be known;

for my friend is not known in that way either. And if from certain experiences I *infer* the existence of a finite person, who will say that a similar process of reasoning, based on similar empirical data, is fallacious because it terminates in the hypothesis of an infinite, all-embracing personality? If the agnostic makes a distinction in kind between these two inferences, which may of course vary in degrees of certainty, he must explain why the one is valid and the other not. Mere asseverations of the necessary limitations of our faculties can have no place here. If to sustain them you fall back on Hume's theory of knowledge, you are confronted by the fact that that theory rests on a foundation which cannot to-day be defended. Rectify the foundation, as the modern science of mind requires, and what is to prevent its supporting a faith in the existence of the invisible Godhead or the unseen persons you suppose you actually see with your eyes?

If Hume's philosophy is a direct proof of our necessary ignorance of the unseen world, it is also an indirect or *reductio ad absurdum* proof of the initial premises from

which that theological scepticism was inferred. Its permanent result has been to modify the one-sided theory of knowledge from which it sprang. In this work of correction a prominent place must be assigned to Kant, though in some respects Kant was merely the follower of Hume. And his whole system is to be regarded, not as a final oracle of philosophy, but a mere compromise between two currents of contemporaneous thought, on one of which he was carried throughout all the phases of his journey from the school of Wolff to the throne of his critical empire. That predominant influence was rationalism, or the theory that reason alone, apart from impressions of sense, can give us actual knowledge of the objective world. This theory, it will be seen, is as one-sided as the sensationalism of Hume, to which, of course, it is complementary. That Kant effected the union of the two cannot be maintained. His position is rather this: Since the mind does know things prior to sense-experience of them, the mind must itself be the co-creator of things; it endows them with the forms of space and time, with causal and other relations, all of

which have no existence apart from the mind. Hence the objects we know are not things as they are in themselves, things reflected in the unrefracting intelligence of a rational spirit, but things as they appear to us in the mind-originated forms of our sensuous apprehension. We cannot know God as He is, but only as He might appear to us in the picture of space and time which we project upon the whole material world. Nay, we cannot know God even as our own phenomenal creation; for nothing appears to us as an object without antecedent impressions of sense. God is unknown and unknowable.

But so also is the *ego* according to Kant. I have and can have no knowledge of myself. I should know myself only as I appeared to myself through the self-originated spectacles of space and time. I know not God; I know not self; I know not anything else save as it appears under the transformation of my knowing it.

This Humian limitation of knowledge finds its place in Kant's system solely to vindicate a rationalism that nobody to-day accepts, sacred as it was to the scholastic soul of Kant. That the mind should not

have the potency to know things without sense-experience of them was a thought Kant found intolerable. And that is the motive of his entire philosophy. But in order to save this quintessence of rationalism, he was obliged to limit it to the field of sensible objects. We can have knowledge without sense-impressions, but only of objects of which sense-impressions are obtainable. God, therefore, is excluded. But the exclusion, I repeat, has no other motive or ground than Kant's belief in the rationalistic principle, and determination to save it at any cost. Had this disciple of Wolff found a way of saving rational knowledge which would have spared theology and metaphysics, he would have been more than content; but since none appeared, he would save a rational knowledge of space and of nature even if it involved the surrender of everything else. The principle that the mind is the co-creator of the objects it knows accounts for a rational mathematics and physics. At the same time it negates a rational theology, since nobody wants a God of his own creation, like the space and spatial objects of the material world.

This scepticism is obviously the result of historical conditions of thought, beyond which it is the glory of Kant himself to have led the reflecting intelligence of mankind. The growth of the sciences of nature, by the application of the Newtonian method of hypotheses and verifications, has also given us new insight into the nature and constitution of knowledge. We see there is no rational or *a priori* knowledge of space or nature or anything else. All our cognitions are made up of perceptions of sense and inferences from them or hypotheses to explain them. Accordingly, Kant's rationalistic system is overthrown, and with it is broken the theological scepticism that perched upon its summit.

Agnosticism, in the sense of the philosophical scepticism of Hume and Kant, is the product of historical conditions of thought that have now ceased to operate. In the light of contemporary philosophy, there is no ground for such an *a priori* agnosticism. It is a sheer dogma. And it is contradicted by the enunciation of it. For if you *know* that your cognitive faculties cannot go beyond the domain of objects apprehended by the senses, they are already

beyond that domain. Your assertion of the limitation of our knowledge is not itself a fact of seeing, smelling, touching, or any other form of sensuous perception. If there is a barrier to the onward movement of knowledge, it can only be a relative barrier. The consciousness of a limit is possible only to an intelligence which is capable of transcending the limit. The oyster knows nothing of its finiteness. Man does ; and it is this that exalts him above the limits of sense.

We have now completed our survey of the various meanings of agnosticism. The last refers to the subject of knowledge, the second to an object of knowledge, and the first to the method of knowledge. We all agree that for the acquisition of knowledge, the critical method must be followed ; no one but Professor Huxley would designate it agnosticism. This method must be applied to the study of the Bible ; but that particular results regarding this particular object of knowledge should be designated agnosticism is to make terminology the sport of individual caprice. On the other hand, the dogma that the knowing subject is limited to the apprehension of

material objects, and can never explore or even report a spiritual realm, might without impropriety be described as agnosticism. But the designation of this dogma by a new term must not be taken for a proof of the dogma, as would seem hitherto to have been generally the case. Nor shall our just demands for proof be put off by a jaunty reference to Hume and Kant. For if these sons of thunder preached a philosophical scepticism, it was only by appealing to antiquated texts, which are now known to have been no revelation, but mere traditional and erroneous reports of the genuine processes of human intelligence.

## LECTURE II.

### THE LOGICAL CHARACTER OF BELIEF IN GOD.

THE result of the first lecture must not be overestimated. It has not been proved that a knowledge of God is attainable. Nothing of the kind has even been attempted. For our refutation of agnosticism — agnosticism, that is, in the sense of philosophical scepticism — was effected, if at all, by undermining its own citadel, in disproving the theses whereby Kant and Hume thought to restrict human knowledge to impressions of sense or, at most, to the world of sensible phenomena. Nor must this refutation be considered incomplete because no account has been taken of the agnosticism of Sir William Hamilton and of his unexpected pupil, Mr. Herbert Spencer; for what is of weight in their demonstration of the limitation of our cognitive faculties goes back to the founder

of the critical philosophy or to the subtle sceptic who first waked him from his dogmatic slumber. Our aim has been to put agnosticism, in the person of its classic defendants, on trial. And the result, I submit, has been a failure to make good its one essential thesis, that human knowledge is bounded by an horizon, within which there can be no altar save to the unknown God.

Can we then prove that finite man is adequate to a knowledge of the infinite Godhead? Manifestly, at the outset we have no right to make an antagonism between the human mind and the Divine Spirit by predicating of them contradictory attributes. The finite and the infinite seem mutually exclusive. A single point is lost in the immensities of space. And yet it remains true that the vast overhanging firmament is composed of a congeries of actual points. And a closer examination may hereafter show that the Infinite Spirit includes the finite, as the idea of an organism embraces within a single life a plurality of members and functions; in which case the finite and the infinite would be no longer contradictory, and the contrast

they imply would convince none but the unthinking of the incommensurability of God with the capacity of the mind of man. For the present, however, all that can be demanded is that the problem shall not be put in terms that may prejudge the answer. And to the simple inquiry whether we can demonstrate the capacity of the human mind to apprehend God, the sufficient answer is, that we cannot prove the capacity of the mind to know anything whatever, and that it is only by actual trials, most of them failures, that mankind has found out what knowledge it is capable of compassing. We grow in knowledge, as in virtue, by cultivating it. The attempt to define the proportions of the stature beyond which the intellect may not expand has proved utterly vain. Philosophers may analyze the elements that enter into cognition and describe their respective functions, but this gives them no *a priori* criterion for setting up, as Kant did, one sort of knowledge as valid and another as illusory. And if it did, they could find no reason for refusing to group together our knowledge of finite spirits and that of the Infinite Spirit. It may be said that expe-

rience alone tests all our beliefs. But when the agnostic proclaims the limitations of our faculties, his voucher is not experience, but that precarious *a priori* reasoning of Hume and Kant which presumes to tell us, in advance, how knowledge must be constituted, and to brand as illusion whatever refuses to comply with their dogmatic conditions.

The agnostic never wearies of denouncing metaphysics. Yet, probably, the most dogmatic of all contemporary metaphysicians is the agnostic himself. For even though his censure of the schools were well founded, it would not be hard to show that they never so completely desert the solid ground of actual experience as to attempt a demonstration so purely *a priori* as the agnostic's delimitation of the cognitive faculties themselves. The rationalistic leaven of Kant's philosophy is now most active where it is least suspected; and, on the other hand, the critical spirit of the master, which can be worthily honored only by the practice of independent criticism, receives the idolatrous worship of a final avatar in philosophy. For, let me repeat, though it is now the fashion to follow Kant

in discarding metaphysics for theories of knowledge, it is the emptiest of all illusions to suppose that anything but presumptuous dogmatism can measure, in advance of actual trial, the mind's capacity to know. The *Critique of Pure Reason*, as an analysis of the elements of knowledge, is of great and permanent value to philosophy. But as an inquiry into the extent and validity of knowledge—and this was its primary object—it was foredoomed to failure. For this problem is unanswerable of cognition as a whole; and even in the case of particular cognitions, the solution, if it is to be anything more than a process of arbitrary exclusion or inclusion, turns on the greater or less adaptability of the proposition under consideration to the rest of our knowledge. But Kant could not rid himself of the rationalistic assumption that the mind, which with the empiricist he supposed limited in its range to the world of sense, had nevertheless the power of mapping out *a priori* its own limitations. In this respect the critical philosophy has been the bane of modern thought, as it is the basis of agnosticism. For nothing but the great name of Kant

could have kept so long from bursting that rationalistic conceit which, soaring above the solid ground of experience, inflates itself to the deliverance of an oracle, proclaiming the fixed and everlasting boundaries of the knowable world. The scepticism of the day is a common complaint. But timid souls may find comfort in the observation that current agnosticism is well seasoned with gnosticism, and is perhaps as near to omniscience as it is to nescience.

The ancient sceptics went much further. The sophists, Gorgias in particular, taught there was no truth; that if there were, it could not be known; and that if it could be known, it could not be communicated. While the modern agnostic abides in the uncritical half-truth that we know *only* phenomena, Pyrrho went on to assert the utter subjectivity of all opinions, forbidding any one to say, "this is so," and allowing only, "this seems to me to be so." For him, therefore, the normal and necessary condition of mind was suspension of judgment. Herein he was followed by the founder of the New Academy, who, however, with still more rigorous consistency, would not allow this principle of suspension of judgment to

pass as knowledge. The view of Arcesilaus rather was that we know nothing save that we know nothing, and this is not so much a cognition as a feeling. It is the outcome of a sceptical mood, not of reason or insight. A similar result was reached by Carneades, who forms the culminating point of Academic scepticism. And the conviction of the impossibility of knowledge and the demand for suspense of judgment have established themselves as permanent positions in all the sceptical schools.

I am not sure that the modern agnostic always perceives, or at any rate is anxious to recognize, his kinship with the more radical schools of ancient Athens. Men who find an intellectual relief in the escape from a difficult problem by the assurance that God is unknowable do not care to be told they know nothing at all. This is a shock to common sense and an outrage upon science. For as scientific results obtrude themselves constantly upon our observation, custom makes their unquestioning acceptance a property of easiness. And to question their validity, in this age of scientific culture, would be like accusing

Manlius in sight of the Capitol. But I contemplate no such attack. On the contrary, I think it may be shown that the sciences, by means of which the agnostic would undermine our belief in God, are as well established as those truths to which the ancient sceptic appealed for the destruction of the sciences. What I desire to emphasize is the community of procedure in the two cases, unwilling as the New Academy would have been to admit it. For they professed an unconditional denial of all truth. Yet they not only gave out their own results as true, they not only endeavored to prove them by reasonings, but they must have been in possession of some valid truth, in relation to which, as ideal, doubt of other assertions could first become possible. And this is precisely the position of the modern agnostic. Children, on the other hand, believe everything. We all believe as much as we can. We follow thus the line of least resistance. This is why ignorant rustics, whose experience is narrow and whose mental activity is not much above the infantile range, are always sound in the faith. There is absolutely no limit to their credulity. But education

and civilization make man critical and sceptical. And what each doubts is what is not in harmony with some circle of facts he has chosen as the absolute resting-place of his intellect. The geologist disbelieves the Mosaic story of creation, which for the pious peasant is no poem, but a literal record of fact. "The prejudice against the supernatural," of which we hear so much, means only that the modern belief in natural law is casting out that prejudice *for* the supernatural or the extraordinary which originated in the fears, imaginations, and ignorance of primitive mankind. The physicist, with his faith fixed in the undulations of an impalpable ether, denies the objective reality of colors. And because the experimental method has proved so fruitful in science, the agnostic refuses to lift up his gaze above the natural world in which alone that method can operate. For him, therefore, God, if existent, is unknowable.

As every denial, therefore, rests on the conviction of certain truths, it will be instructive to examine the character of that scientific certainty which is the absolute standard of the modern agnostic. Now this standard is not the same as what is

ordinarily called common sense. For the latter embraces that aggregate of the fundamental beliefs of the race, of which some have already been transformed by science, while others seem altogether inaccessible to it. As examples, respectively, may be mentioned the now wavering belief in the objectivity of color and the still unshaken conviction of the existence of other reality than our own ideas. The validity of this antithesis between the contents of consciousness and a world of reality of which they are the reports is a question which the phenomenalist scientist relegates to metaphysics. But in doing so he breaks with common sense, which is not less certain of this correspondence than of the truth of any of the scientist's first principles. I allude to the difference between phenomenalist science and common sense, because the champion of popular agnosticism is wont to appeal indifferently to both, in happy ignorance of the fact that phenomenalist science knows nothing of *his existence*, and that the common sense of mankind which does recognize it is persuaded also of the existence of other beings, finite and infinite.

Agnosticism and phenomenalism are complementary aspects of a single doctrine. The agnostic emphasizes what cannot be known. The phenomenalist explains that even what we do know is, not the thing as it is in itself, but its appearance in our consciousness. The scepticism common to both is rooted in the assertion that scientific investigation is limited to connections between phenomena as objects of consciousness. But this statement must not be misinterpreted, as it generally is. Certainty belongs to what is immediately given in consciousness, as, for example, a sensation of bitterness; or to what is inferred or constructed by thought from this sense material. Thus the Copernican theory was developed by thought from a host of sense perceptions. And the progress of knowledge consists just in this interpretation of sensations, this passage from the immediate material of sense to the mediated inferences of thought. The scientist is simply doing over again the intellectual work of the race, whose interpretations of the same data of sense can no longer hold a place in the growing organism of knowledge. The ancient sceptic was right in his contention

that nothing was immediately given but sensible impressions, and that these facts of consciousness have a purely subjective certainty. But it does not thence follow there is no objective certainty, — no real knowledge about things as they are in themselves. It follows only that objective certainty, which is not immediately given, must be established by the interpretative activity of thought. And the only real value of those subjective data of sense to which the sceptic limits his view, because they alone are what is momentarily given, is that they form a basis and a fixed point of departure for the objective interpretations of the scientific intellect. After centuries of conflict between sensationalism and rationalism, it seems to be now pretty generally accepted that scientific truth is always the result of the elaboration by thought of the given materials of sense. The Baconian conception of the knowing mind, as a mirror, passively reflecting as it actually exists a world existing apart from it, cannot to-day be accepted by any logician of the sciences.

Scientific truth is not, therefore, as is often supposed, given to us from without.

It is we, the thinkers, who make it, by reflection upon the suggestive materials of sensation. We construct theories of these data, which are reconstructions of them to thought. These interpretations must agree in being accepted by all conscious minds. They must also agree with that accepted stock of interpretations which constitutes existing science. But they show their objective certainty, or their basis in reality, most of all when they are incapable of being cast aside by the progressive rectification which knowledge is constantly undergoing. And of all parts of our knowledge none so absolutely fulfils this condition, none, therefore, is so indubitably certain, as that ever-growing section which has found expression in laws of space and time, the fundamental forms of all existence. Mathematics, pure and applied, satisfies most completely our criteria of objective certainty.

Yet there is scientific knowledge, apart from the demonstrative sciences. But the latter, by their clearness, their convincingness, and their earlier and most marvellous development, have had an irresistible fascination for our great theological reasoners.

The conditions of their development, meantime, were altogether ignored. We can see, however, to take only the case of geometry, that the possibility of its demonstrations, and their convincing force, arise from the peculiar nature of the subject of investigation. For space is perfectly simple. It has only one attribute, — extension. Every part of it is like every other part, and it is capable of being represented to the eye in figures which correspond accurately to the conceptions we desire to determine, — circles, triangles, squares, etc. Geometry is a perfect science, because it deals with the simplest and most transparent of all objects of perception. We could not expect the same insight into material objects (stones, for example), because they are given to us with an unknown number of attributes, thus being the very opposite of those geometrical figures which we construct in precise agreement with a carefully defined rule. The disparity is still greater when we ascend from chemistry to the sciences of life, mind, and society. Here the phenomena under investigation are infinitely complex and bewildering, and experiment, which might

bring order into even such a chaos, is all but impossible, because we have scarcely any control of the conditions. At any rate, a science of concrete existences cannot be demonstrative. Space is the most abstract of all our notions. God, on the other hand, who is the ground and source and moving spirit of all reality, must be the most concrete object of our thought. By no possibility, therefore, can a theology or science of God follow the demonstrative method of mathematics.

The lack of this insight into the peculiarity of mathematical knowledge led the great thinkers of the seventeenth century into serious confusion. Living in an age of mathematical progress, to which they themselves largely contributed, they aimed at a demonstration of the divine existence by reasoning like Euclid's. Thus Locke could maintain that we have an intuitive knowledge of our own existence, a sensitive knowledge of the existence of external things, and a demonstrative knowledge of God's existence. This knowledge of God he considered "the most obvious truth that reason discovers," and its evidence not one whit inferior to "mathematical certainty."

But a proof of the existence of God corresponding to Locke's ideal has never yet been given; nor, from the nature of the case, can it reasonably be expected. And I apprehend no little harm has been done by attempting to make our belief in God more certain than it actually is. We have such a belief, and I hold it is legitimate; but it does not belong to that kind of absolutely certain knowledge we are able to have of objects so simple and abstract as the space and numbers of mathematics.

There is, however, another sort of knowledge. When I say "The sun will rise tomorrow," or "All men are mortal," I make an assertion resting upon invariable experience in the past. Without any hesitation, you accept the proposition. At first glance it seems absolutely certain. Yet it is only a summation of past experiences. No day has passed without the rising of the sun. All men who have lived have also died. But how am I to know the future will resemble the past? For if nature is not uniform, men may hereafter be born who shall never die. My belief that this will not be so rests upon an assumption of the invariability of natural laws. Such knowl-

edge, which is called induction, has not the same absolute certainty as geometry. Yet it is the best we have in many of the sciences and over a large area of the concerns of life.

Our belief in God is not of the nature of an induction. The only inductive evidence of which it is susceptible would be the generalization that all or most men actually possessed it. But no one would say that was ground on which the belief might really be based.

When we turn to the third source or method of knowledge, we find the province of which we have been in search. If our belief in God is to be vindicated, it can only be as an hypothesis in explanation of certain facts. This is the ordinary method of the scientist. Newton observes the fall of an apple. To explain it, he forms the theory of a universal mutual attraction between bodies. The consequences of this theory were worked out mathematically, and all his calculations were verified by observations of new facts. In many cases, such verification must be imperfect. But just in proportion as it is, is our knowledge removed from certainty. It may, for ex-

ample, be reasonably conjectured that social conditions have much to do with vice, and that if poverty were eliminated, drunkenness among large classes of the people would scarcely survive. But this hypothesis is not susceptible of direct verification. Again, there can be no experimental verification of the hypothesis of the existence of intense heat in the interior of the earth. Yet it explains so many facts that geologists regard it as a highly probable supposition, or, indeed, almost a certainty. To the same class of probable truths must be assigned the theory of natural selection, Darwin's hypothesis to account for the formation of species of plants and animals.

Probability is the guide of life. And science, if we except the small portion which has a demonstrative certainty, can pretend to nothing higher than probability. But it must not be overlooked that there are different degrees of probability. If the generalizations of induction rest upon an assumption of the uniformity of nature, it is an assumption that commands our entire confidence. If there is still doubt about the existence of a luminiferous ether, the long procession of phenomena which the

undulatory theory has already explained forms an almost sufficient verification of it. Like these, our belief in God is hypothetical. Its antiquity and universality give it a prerogative over the hypotheses of science. But, like the assurance of our own existence, it is not susceptible of verification by scientific tests. The most that can be claimed is, I conceive, that the belief is not absurd in itself; that it accounts for facts whose existence is admitted, and accounts for them more satisfactorily than any other theory. At any rate, I am unable to assign to our belief in God a higher certainty than that possessed by the working hypotheses of science. And this allocation of it seems to be warranted both by the confessions of individual thinkers of different schools and by the controversies which we find in the long history of reflective thought.

Nevertheless, an agnostic scientist might object to this assignment of our belief in God to the class of hypothetical truths. His own creed is phenomenalism, the doctrine that we know only phenomena, or what appears to consciousness, and the laws governing their connections. And he might

contend that, though hypotheses are the life of science, the scientist must not posit anything in explanation of actual phenomena which is not itself a possible phenomenon. The hypothesis of the divine existence is regarded as illegitimate, on the ground that God is not a *vera causa*. He is not a phenomenal antecedent of the consequent to be explained. Furthermore, when knowledge is thus restricted to the field of phenomenal sequences and co-existences, what place is left for theology, or what facts are there which require us to postulate as their condition the existence of God? And even if it were conceded that there were facts lying beyond the margin of scientific explanation, can it be said they are accounted for by an hypothesis which sets up as their condition an infinite reality, when the phenomenalist has assured us that we know nothing about reality, that we know only phenomena and their laws.

It may hereafter be seen that this phenomenalism is no part of science, but an accidental accretion rooted in a dogmatic metaphysics. For the present, however, let this phenomenalist account of science be accepted. What then? It by no means

follows there can be no further elaboration of the facts with whose sequences and co-existences the sciences make us acquainted. I see not why the intellectual interests of the human spirit should be confined to the acquisition of a knowledge and control of phenomena. And this alone is the aim of science. Its sole object is to enable us to infer from present observations what has preceded them, or what will follow them, or what is now in unseen conjunction with them. To this end scarcely anything is needed but an accurate comparison of phenomena. At any rate, science fulfils its mission without having to raise a question regarding the true ultimate nature of those objects whose modes of behavior engross its entire attention.

But because science has been successful within the limits prescribed, we are under no obligation to surrender all the other ends and interests of the intellect. Among these is the desire to ascertain the underlying ground, the real basis, of all existence. The human spirit is satisfied with nothing less than a consistent view of the world as a whole. And even the universe of the phenomenalist, which contains noth-

ing but actual or possible appearances in consciousness, is not exhausted for the intellect which we might conceive to be acquainted with all their sequences and simultaneities. For it is a changing world, yet not a flux of becoming in which anything follows anything. Definite consequents flow from definite antecedents, as science both assumes and verifies. Nature, even for the phenomenalist, is not a chaos of different atoms, each appearing as one in the series of phenomenal occurrence and then vanishing forever. With such a procession of abolitions and originations, even phenomenistic science would be an impossibility. But to present the spectacle of phenomena recurring in accordance with law, nature must be the subject of real inner connections and mutual dependencies, which nothing but absorption in the discovery of causal sequences could have induced the scientific investigator temporarily to overlook. The plea that the real basis of things is inscrutable might seem a modest and satisfactory defence. But it has already been shown that it is to a certain extent self-contradictory, asserting, as it does, the existence of essences and the

relation in which they stand to the thinking spirit.

Yet the phenomenalist might readily acquiesce in this realistic account of his universe, without accepting the theory of a mutual connection of all existence in a unitary subject. Whether this hypothesis can be defended as a fair regressive interpretation of the facts of his world, need not now be further considered. For it has to be confessed that, even though this real basis of phenomena be admitted, we are still far from the conclusion that it is identical with God. Nor can such identification be made so long as we suppose ourselves ignorant of the existence of spirits, including our own spirit. The difficulties, therefore, raised by the phenomenalist cannot, from the standpoint of his theory, be altogether resolved. True, he may be shown that he has overlooked problems as interesting to the thinking spirit as the temporal relations of phenomena. But even though he yielded to our argument that reality must be one and interconnected, he might persist in denying that we knew anything else about it. And if the ground of all phenomena cannot be

determined as spiritual, we have, as theists, no further interest in it.

Still, though the phenomenalist remains in possession of his field, he has not won any victory. For his theory is no part of science; it is not even the expression of any reasoned conviction. It is rather the mutiny of a hasty and uncritical temper, which lacks patience to weigh perplexing and uncertain evidence. If reasoning fails to dislodge the phenomenalist, neither was it reasoning that lodged him. And so long as he maintains, at least in disputation, the dogma that can scarcely be held in fact, that the superficial procession of phenomena is exhaustive of the universe, or at any rate of what is knowable in it, so long will he denounce as illusion our hypothesis of the existence of God. But in this condemnation it must be remembered (though the agnostic constantly forgets it) that our belief in every reality, even in our own, shares the same fate as our belief in the existence of God. It is not merely metaphysical and theological entities that are despatched into the limbo of vanity. Thither are consigned also all other existences, sensible and spiritual alike. For

the phenomenalist the only meaning of Being is, appearing in consciousness.

It is some relief to recall that this all-corroding scepticism, which is fatal to our hypothesis of the divine existence solely because it repudiates every extra-mental reality, is not the outcome of science, but of a one-sided and erroneous theory of knowledge. No doubt it is often proclaimed by our men of science, but they have learned it, not from the book of nature, but from the *Logic* of John Stuart Mill. That work first revealed to them the methods they were blindly following in inductive research. But its invaluable logical results were infused with the spirit of that extreme empiricism which teaches that the only organ of knowledge is sense and the only object of knowledge sense-affectations. Its enormous influence with men of science has ensured the propagation both of its vital truths and its fatal errors. To it, more than to any other source, we owe that phenomenalism which is now so widely diffused in scientific circles that remain closed to the influence of Kant.

In a certain sense, of course, all knowl-

edge is subjective ; it is an act of *our* consciousness. Such subjectivity belongs to the very idea of knowing. Objects must be perceived by the mind, and that not as they are if it does not perceive them, but as they are if it does perceive them. But this subjectivity of the process of knowledge does not disprove the objective significance of the content of knowledge. On the other hand, it must be acknowledged there can be no *proof* that our thoughts about things actually correspond to the nature of things. Yet we see no ground in the foregoing characteristic of knowledge to deem ourselves the victims of illusion. And were the existence of God once established, we should venture to express the conviction that He had not implanted in us habits of thought which are out of harmony with that world of reality of which He is the source and soul.

Be that as it may, science, if we put aside its phenomenalistic spokesmen who have already too long detained us, assumes that everything is objectively real which it does not discover to have originated in the percipient subject. Recognizing that

all elements of our knowledge are subjective in the sense that they are states or activities of our consciousness, it distinguishes between those which are purely subjective and those which, since they cannot be explained from consciousness alone, must be given to it from without, and have therefore an objective significance. Here science and common sense are at one in their opposition to phenomenalism. They both set out with the assumption that perceptions give us objective facts. Phenomenalism, treating them as subjective, maintains they cannot be connected with the world of reality. Supposing ourselves, however, actually in possession of objective truth, it could only be by means of perceptions which are acts of our consciousness. At this subjectivity of the process of knowledge, therefore, the scientist takes no offence. For him every perception remains objectively true till other perceptions, gained under ascertained conditions which guarantee their accuracy, fall into contradiction with it and disclose in it an admixture of subjective elements. This mutual control of our perceptions, along with the elimination of what is

purely subjective in them, is brought about by repeated observations, under various conditions, of the same object. The indispensableness of such critical observation is a maxim of science. For experience has led the scientist to suspect the presence of subjective factors in all objective perceptions, and he will call nothing pure objective truth which has not stood the tests of his regulated observations. But he never finds his knowledge of the world dissolving altogether into subjective elements. And the residuum, which must therefore be given to him from without, he regards, in agreement with common sense, as a record of objective fact.

Now this procedure implies the existence of a world of reality apart from consciousness. It is a world of which percipient man is only a part, a part not wholly unlike other parts. But because every percipient is the centre of his own sphere of observations, the philosopher is constantly tempted by speculation to make himself the central or indeed the sole reality, resolving all other existences into his knowledge of them. To such phenomenalism science brings disenchantment. It makes man but

an atom in an infinite orb of reality. But it does not deny his competency to reproduce this reality in his thought. A part of it he already knows, more of it he is to know, all of it is knowable. Nor will the scientist have natural laws treated as other than records of occurrences in the actual world. He is an uncompromising realist. While the sceptic, the agnostic, and the phenomenalist have gone on weaving their tissue of argument to prove the incognizableness of things, science has reared a solid fabric of objective knowledge, whose possibility is thus demonstrated by its presence, and whose actuality must henceforth constitute the data of sound philosophy. This is a circumstance which in modern philosophy has been far too little considered. Human knowledge is no longer the medley of unsifted experience, in whose contradictions the ancient sceptics found their most potent weapons of attack. The verified results of science, which form the larger part of modern knowledge, are of recent acquisition. And whatever our theory of the possibility of knowing, it cannot discredit truths so firmly established and so frequently verified.

Hence, though the ancient scepticism were revived, it could not shake our conviction of the objective truth of the laws of nature. Or rather, I should say, the ancient scepticism has been rendered obsolete by the establishment through science of a large body of systematized knowledge. Take the ten *τρόποι* or logical grounds of doubt, as in the last school of Greek sceptics they were formulated by Ænesidemus and repeated by Sextus Empiricus, and you will find they have been answered by the careful experiments of modern science. Those variations in objects under different conditions, which seemed to these Greek thinkers impediments to knowledge, have become starting-points for modern investigators, whose reward has been the discovery of general laws governing the changing play of the objective world. Again, the different and even contradictory reports of perception do not prove it is nothing but a subjective process in the individual. They are rather a challenge, which the modern scientific experimenter has taken up, to separate the purely subjective from the objective factors of perception. Science, in making us acquainted with the laws of

nature, must drive out the haunting doubt of their objective reality. Experiment shows that the materials of this knowledge are not originated by the subject. They are given to it from without. The relations we know are relations that actually obtain in that self-existing universe of which man is a part.

I must not be understood as implying that modern science *proves* the existence of a universe outside human consciousness. It only renders doubt or disproof of such reality difficult and unnecessary. In a last analysis "this given miracle of reality," as Lotze describes it, is a primary, but indemonstrable, datum of all intelligence. All knowledge is knowledge not of itself, but of a reality apart from itself. And this realism, we have seen, is presupposed in all science and gives meaning to scientific methods. Still, while science borrows from common sense this fundamental belief, it makes no inquiry into the ultimate nature of reality. In its quest of simplicity science has indeed postulated a world of moving atoms, by which it has been enabled to explain many of the co-existences and sequences that constitute the object of

its investigation. But this is only a provisional and partial hypothesis, and it is attended with many difficulties. While it satisfies our love of unity and simplicity, it fails to convince us that the richness and variety of the universe have their source and ground in the mere motion of such homogeneous elements. And whatever original essences be assumed, if they are a plurality, we shall have to ask how they could come together and form a single orderly world, and what is the exact nature of those actions and reactions between them, which science dogmatically assumes, but which, from its own standpoint alone, are found to contain insoluble difficulties. In short, the scientific intellect, when it reflects upon itself, its method, its attainments, and its assumptions, is driven beyond itself to make a final synthesis of its knowledge, a final interpretation of the ultimate constitution of that universe whose parts it has brought to the light of an intelligence which cannot rest satisfied with mere causal connections. It is by such a final effort we are carried, if at all, to the hypothesis of the existence of God. The grounds that may warrant that

hypothesis will be considered hereafter. At present our only aim is to show the need of this or some similar hypothesis, in addition to the results of natural science, even though natural science had completely fulfilled its mission, as an answer to the legitimate demand of the thinking spirit for a connected view of the universe as a whole. Science is the record of causal relations; but causation is only a single ray of that prismatic intelligence which needs to diffuse itself in unbroken unity over the whole sphere of Being.

The nearest approach made by science to our hypothesis of the existence of God lies in the assertion of the universality of law. This assertion is a mere postulate whose validity no experience can confirm. Confirmatory instances in the past and of the known warrant no inference with regard to the future and the unknown, save on the tacit admission of the principle itself, — the universality of law. What the supposition is based upon is the conviction of the unity and systematic connection of all reality. It is this conviction, and this alone, which enables us to argue from one part of reality to another, from the past to

the future, from the known to the unknown. Owing to the prevalence of phenomenalism the scientist rarely expresses his initial assumption in these realistic terms. The chemist or physician, however, must often have a suspicion that in explaining phenomena he is noting their real mutual dependence upon one another. Yet if interrogated, he would probably speak by the card, and tell you he was only noting relations of succession and simultaneity. This, however, need not hinder us from interpreting the universal postulate of science as involving the existence of a unitary interconnected cosmos embracing all reality. And when the scientific position is thus stated, the scientific impulse itself forces us to the next inquiry: How shall we conceive of the nature of that one reality in order to make intelligible its modes of behavior, as science has recorded them? This is surely a legitimate question. Of course it is a difficult one; but we have no more right to say it is unanswerable than to say that a problem in physics yet unsolved is insoluble. Equally true is it that the question has not here been answered. At present my only en-

deavor is to justify the asking of it. Whether the hypothesis of the existence of God contains a satisfactory answer is a point reserved for subsequent consideration.

The results hitherto attained will seem to many minds very inconsiderable. But the progress of sound knowledge is always slow. And in a matter like the present, it seems advisable to begin at the beginning, to set down nought in haste, and to extenuate nought of all the objections that have been brought against our undertaking. And though little, something has actually been gained in the course of our inquiries, something too of not inconsiderable significance. It has been seen that science *per se* is not phenomenalistic, but realistic. It has been seen that the indispensable postulate of science — the universality of the laws of nature — is only the expression of a conviction of the unity and universal inner connection of all reality. What the nature of this reality must be, if it is to render intelligible those fixed mutual dependencies of things which science reads as laws of causation, is a question the reflecting spirit cannot possibly forego, though the answer can never be more certain than

a scientific hypothesis incapable of complete verification. As, however, the only reality we know from the inside is a spiritual *ego*, it may be premised that if the hypothesis of a universal spirit or world-soul accounted for the fundamental assumptions of science, it would be in itself an admissible hypothesis, and probable just in proportion as we could reconcile with it all the remaining facts of our knowledge.

Such an hypothesis I hope to be able to establish with reasonable certainty. But we can scarcely reckon upon the sympathy either of popular or of scientific thought. The mass of mankind refuses to associate God with nature except as its distant creator and designer. The champions of the natural sciences maintain that their discoveries of casual connections are the be-all and end-all of our knowledge of nature. Both agree in the scholastic dictum of Sir William Hamilton: "Nature conceals God." And the scientist especially is sure that the cosmos (man apart) presents no problem that might lead us to look for a divine presence. Theoretical thought, he tells us, if left to itself, would never find an occasion to step beyond the

connections of the material world we perceive by our senses. It might recognize the infinitude of these relations and the inability of thought to compass them, but beyond the horizon of actual experience it would have no ground to assume anything but an unbroken series of causal connections. This similarity of the unknown to the known I do not call in question. But I must repeat that it rests on the postulate of the inner systematic connection of all reality. And of this connection—these fixed mutual actions and reactions of things—theoretical thought is surely obliged to form some conception. And if so, we are driven by thought itself beyond the realm of its achievements in science to an interpretation of the nature of ultimate reality. It is not beyond the connections of the sensible world we expect to see God, but in and through them as the sole condition of their possibility. That our belief in God, therefore, must be without cosmic grounds cannot be conceded to the scientist. Only by arbitrarily limiting the operations and interests of intelligence to the bare fact of causal relations can such a dogma be maintained. It is impossible to give a reason

for this limitation; but the cause is no doubt found in our absorption in science, our adoption of scientific methods, and our temptation to measure the mind of man by what it has achieved in a conspicuous, though single, field of its activity. It seems probable, however, that in the progress of science the human mind will return to a critical analysis of its scientific starting-points. And in this metaphysic of science what we mean when we say a thing exists or an event happens will have to be explained. Should it turn out that our hypothesis of the being of God is the only one that can render intelligible existence and change, which the scientist is obliged to recognize, the result would be what might fairly be called a doctrine of *cosmic* theism.

This metaphysic of nature could not, however, become a doctrine of *cosmic theism*, unless it had been shown that the ultimate ground of being and change were an infinite spirit. And this proof would be wanting so long as man, the only spiritual being we know, were omitted from the data. Consequently, while nature does not conceal God, it reveals him only as a meta-

physical unity, demanding characteristics which would remain unintelligible to us but for our own experience of self-conscious existence. This is the humanistic, or, as I should prefer to call it, in contrast with the cosmic, the *anthropic* element in our idea of God. I might indeed have described it as anthropomorphic. But that much-abused term, as its etymology suggests, signified originally the ascription to God of a human form. It was this belief among the Greeks of the sixth century before Christ that excited the irony and aversion of Xenophanes of Colophon, the burden of whose complaint was that mortals believe the gods to have senses, voice, and body like their own, just as oxen and horses, if they could paint, would foolishly represent the gods with the bodies of horses and oxen. But the ascription to God of moral and intellectual attributes akin to the human was not branded as anthropomorphism by the ancients, nor by the moderns either, until within very recent times. At present, however, eminent professors of the natural sciences, who have the ear of the public, have effected this extension in the use of the term; and anthropomorphism

has degenerated into a fashionable epithet of reproach for any theory which essays to form even an hypothetical conception of God. But the fashion of this world passeth away ; and despite its present frown, I see no alternative to our ascription of self-consciousness to the one ultimate reality whose existence science obliges us to assume. For that reality must, to say nothing more, be so constituted that it shall be a unity in the midst of change. And this condition is satisfied, so far as our knowledge extends, only by self-conscious spirit, of which we are immediately aware in our own inner experience. Our hypothesis, then, is a *cosmic* hypothesis, for its object is to account for facts in the objective world. It cannot, however, be completely developed, without taking account of our own conscious experience ; and this appeal to man may be called the *anthropic* aspect of the hypothesis. If, then, self-consciousness is the only admissible form under which the ground and essence of things may be represented, our ultimate interpretation of the universe is not merely a cosmic, but an *anthropocosmic theism*.

— This hypothesis, let me repeat, I do not

attempt to establish here. That is a task to be undertaken in later lectures. At present I am only maintaining that the postulates of science warrant and demand some interpretation of ultimate reality, and that anthropocosmic theism satisfies at least the formal requirements of a scientific hypothesis. To make this clear, I have incidentally given hints of the subsequent argument, which is to show that our hypothesis is a tenable one in view of all the facts. It will not surprise me if these hints are deemed inadequate. But the proof of a position ought not to be expected in a preliminary statement and vindication of it.

To some it may seem strange that I dwell upon the mere *possibility* of a scientific hypothesis of the existence of God. But the fact is that this possibility is generally denied by the spokesmen of modern science. Repudiating the ideas of creation and design, they find no objective basis for our belief in God, no facts in nature requiring such an hypothesis. We have endeavored, on the other hand, to show that science draws its life from an assumption regarding the nature of reality, which needs only elucidation to lead scientifically

to the hypothesis of the divine existence. Such an hypothesis, therefore, would deserve the name of knowledge, though not ranking among demonstrative truths. But the whole spirit of modern science is towards the extrusion of every theistic interpretation of the world from the domain of scientific knowledge. It is supposed that the only vouchers for the existence of God, if indeed there are any, are to be found in ourselves, — in our ethical postulates. The idea of God is not required, we are told, for the interpretation of the universe, but only for the satisfaction of the demands of our moral nature. Without it there would be moral paralysis in the life of man. Here you have a form of anthropic theism that may be called *ethical* theism. It is not of the nature of a scientific hypothesis. It is a mere subjective faith, based on the conviction of the moral vocation and destiny of man. But this ethical theism lacks the solid basis of cosmic facts. And it will remain a mere postulate, without scientific foundation, until the discovery is made that, if we look steadily into the face, or, at any rate, into the heart of the universe, we can escape permanent intel-

lectual confusion only by that hypothesis of a world-spirit, which I have ventured to christen anthropocosmic theism.

The moral evidence for the existence of God, taken by itself, is inadequate. As part of a cumulative argument, it is, no doubt, of very great weight. But if no God can be found in the universe, there will always be a temptation to dilute morality to the consistency of this cosmic atheism. It is easier to relax the high sense of duty to expediency than to maintain it at a tension which nothing but faith in God can keep from snapping. Ethical theism cannot long sustain itself beside cosmic atheism. It is, therefore, a matter of great moment to understand how they ever came to be put together. Were it true that nature conceals God while man reveals Him, this combination of cosmic atheism and anthropic theism would not surprise us. But this is not the fact, as we have already shown. On the other hand, a close examination of our belief in God reveals characteristics which must always render it an object of some suspicion to men of science. They accept truths as objective only when all subjective fac-

tors have been eliminated from them. Scientific truth is absolutely disinterested. It reports the facts of the world as they are, without any concern for the hopes and fears and yearnings of the scientist himself. Now we are all deeply interested in the momentous question of the existence of God. It is big with our own destiny, with the mysteries of the whence, the what, and the whither of every human soul. With protracted thinking of God, the flood-gates of the heart are opened, and all the springs of life are thrown into commotion. Now it may be urged, and not without appearance of reason, that an hypothesis of the existence of a Being with whom our own life is so commingled, cannot have the disinterestedness, the pure objectivity, which the scientist demands of every cosmic hypothesis. Is, then, anthropocosmic theism after all an illegitimate hypothesis? Does our belief in God resolve itself into mere vivacious feelings, as, according to Hume, is the case with our belief in all existence, that of self and nature as well as that of God?

One thing is certain. Those objective facts in explanation of which we framed

our hypothesis remain precisely what they are, whatever be our psychological account of the grounds and motives of belief. That being premised, I readily admit the influence of wishes, desires, and feelings, especially hope and fear, upon human belief. It is a popular saying that men believe what they want to believe: "the wish is father to the thought." And the mental life of the race, as of every new individual born into it, begins with absolute credulity. But this intellectual gluttony soon produces dyspepsia, and many of the former relishes must be abandoned. New beliefs conflict with old, and stable equilibrium is restored only by elimination of the less favored. In this struggle for existence, the beliefs that survive may first of all be those that stimulate the feelings and the will, but in the long run they are those that accord best with the objective facts. Even among the lower animals this is necessary, for otherwise that intelligence by means of which they have escaped destruction could not have been a guide to action. And this predominance of objective beliefs over subjective interests is what intellectual education aims to effect. The man

who can maintain his intellectual centre of gravity in the presence of highly exciting and stinging interesting objects of belief is, at least according to the standard of science, the man of ideal education.

Now what I maintain is, that in the long education of the human race, at least its most favored members have outgrown the influence of those fancies, illusions, and hallucinations which distort the intellectual vision of infancy. And though those liars — hopes and fears — are still with us, we know they are liars, and stand upon our guard. An illusion recognized is no illusion. Now the proof that intellectual judgments are independent of our own wishes, is the existence of that great body of objective knowledge which we call the sciences. To a greater or less degree, astronomy, chemistry, biology, and all the sciences originated in practical interests. The history of their growth is the history of the triumph of rational belief over the seductions of alchemy, astrology, witchcraft, and the whole horde of subjective illusions. Hopes and fears are strong, but stronger still in the modern man is the love of truth. And so I conclude that, though

the hypothesis of the existence of God is one in which we have a deep and moving interest, our minds have been so trained and poised by thought, that we can estimate the evidence of this hypothesis with the same disinterestedness and objectivity of attitude that we bring to the examination of any other wide cosmic hypothesis. Of course we shall need to be on the alert against the influence of feelings. But that is no peculiarity of the present inquiry.

The general conclusion is that anthropocosmic theism, though not yet established as absolutely satisfactory and tenable, must nevertheless be admitted to be a possible and even legitimate hypothesis for the interpretation of the ultimate facts of existence. The next step would be to confirm this hypothesis by proof, or rather to adduce the grounds on which its validity may be maintained. The genius of history, however, must not be outraged. And before advancing new arguments in favor of anthropocosmic theism, I cannot forego an examination of the historical phases of man's belief in God, with a view to discovering the essence of their content and the goal of their development. If it should

be found, as I am persuaded is the fact, that the human mind begins with a vague, naturalistic-humanistic conception of the gods (a conception whose elements are not yet differentiated, much less opposed), and that reflection, after developing this latent contrast in the opposite directions of naturism and animism, rises everywhere with the progress of civilization to a synthesis of both nature and man in one eternal and spiritual ground, the history of the development of the religious consciousness would be itself an argument in favor of that hypothesis which we here seek to establish. That anthropocosmic theism is the goal of man's growing consciousness of God, — and as goal also its final cause and essential content at every stage of development, — must be left to the following lecture to show, from a survey of the facts of religious history.

## LECTURE III.

### THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF BELIEF IN GOD.

SPACE is the form of the material universe. But all that is, physical and psychical alike, exists in time, and in time has come to be what it now is. To understand the nature of things, therefore, we must see, not only the completed result, but the entire succession of phases of which it is the final outcome. This is the justification of that historical method which has been so fruitfully applied to the sciences during the present century, transforming them, from a miscellany of superficial observations, into a progressive and systematic record of the ever-unfolding drama of the world. Evolutionary science is the name ordinarily given to this new historical knowledge of nature. But the same method has been carried into our study of man — the province of history in its narrower sense. And

we bind together all our knowledge of human thinking, doing, and suffering, by this modern conception of gradual development. So far, indeed, has this excellent method been pushed that some philosophers have supposed themselves to be describing the nature of things when they were only enumerating the circumstances that favored the development of them. And it has been widely assumed that certain beliefs lost their validity when once the history of their origin and growth had been discovered.

But the faults arising from the misinterpretation of a principle are not to be charged to the principle itself. Whatever erroneous inferences have been drawn by this or that evolutionist, the soundness of the evolutionary method remains intact. That method is based on the fact that all existences, all objects of thought or inquiry, are in a state of becoming. And this process is a series of changes in time. The evolutionary or historical method, therefore, makes science a reproduction in thought of the successive phases of objective reality. And this is absolutely necessary for our knowledge, since the full

nature of any reality reveals itself only in the totality of its development. This is a point too little noticed by current evolutionism, which exhausts itself in discovering the changing phases of developing reality with scarce an attempt to effect a synthesis of their essential content. Such one-sidedness is a prolific source of scepticism, especially in morals and religion. One historical variety is confronted by another, as though both were not differentiations of some common species. Polytheism, monotheism, and pantheism are supposed to cancel one another, leaving the enlightened mind with no belief in God. For the correction of such an hasty inference, it needs only to be observed that two functions are required in all knowledge, — the perception of difference, and the perception of likeness, and that one is not more indispensable than the other. However valuable the discriminations of the evolutionary historian, they yield no knowledge till fused together by the complementary function of assimilation. Identity in difference is the characteristic both of being and of thought.

We may, therefore, expect to be in-

structed by a survey of the historical varieties of man's belief in God. But we cannot be content with the mere juxtaposition of them. We must understand their connections and the principle of their growth. In a word, we are in quest, not of a morphological classification of man's belief in God, but of a real history of its growth and development. Now we are assured by our most trustworthy historians of religion, that no tribe or nation has yet been met with destitute of belief in any higher beings. As this aspect of religion seems a universal phenomenon of humanity, it might also be assumed to be as old as the human race. But so far backward we certainly cannot follow it. Our data do not carry us far beyond the millenniums of recorded history. It would be interesting to know whether man had any idea of God in that long prehistoric period, when a thousand years were but as a day, during which took place the distribution of mankind over the earth, the formation of races, and the development of speech and languages; but of this incalculable æon of savagery and barbarism every trace has perished, and the

memorials of the later prehistoric ages are confined to rude tools and weapons.

For the epoch to which they belong, however, the material arts may be taken as a fair index to the general culture. The archæologist can read the mental status of races from the character of their celts, hatchets, awls, and other implements, or from such arts as cooking, pottery, and weaving. From this connection between the material and the mental elements of culture, we are able to infer with high probability that the religions of mankind prior to the beginning of civilization could not have been higher than the religions of the lowest existing savages. If such unpromising germs have given birth to the great religions of the world, in the outlying regions of savagery their development has been arrested. Not, of course, that even there the original features of religion have been preserved altogether unimpaired. But we may be sure the changes have not been great, since the intellectual condition has remained unchanged. This is confirmed by the fact that higher religions abound in elements of the savage creed, which can only be regarded as sur-

vivals and revivals; and that these elements are the more apparent, as they have been the more influential, the farther one retraces the history of religions. While, therefore, primitive religion is not to be identified with any existing creed, its mental type, at least, must be looked for in the polydæmonistic beliefs of savages.

This theory of the gradual development of man's consciousness of God is still often opposed by the dogma of a primitive revelation. In one sense it is quite true that God has revealed himself to man. For, as we are all partakers of the divine life, it can only be the spirit of God that gives us understanding. But from this community of the human and divine essence must be derived also all our intellectual and moral capacities. A primitive revelation of God, therefore, could only mean that God had endowed man with the capacity of apprehending his divine original. This capacity, like every other, is innate, and like every other it realizes itself only in the presence of appropriate conditions. The infant knows nothing, but through experience and reflection it is capable of knowing everything. To say, therefore,

man has had a divine revelation is tantamount to saying he is so constituted that, on reaching a certain stage of development and traversing a certain field of experience, he must arrive at a consciousness of God. And everything we know of the psychology of children and of primitive races favors the supposition that the first form of this consciousness expressed itself in the worship of natural objects conceived as superhuman persons influencing human destiny.

This view of revelation is perfectly compatible with that evolutionary treatment of religion which is demanded by the facts of archæology and history, and (it may be added) of philology and mythology too. But so much cannot be said for the dogmatic form in which the hypothesis of a primitive revelation has crystallized in the popular consciousness. Here God is represented as making a special supernatural communication of religious truth to certain favored individuals. The idea of God is brought to man from without, by means of a miraculous revelation. As, however, this pure and true idea of God is not to be found among any of the varieties of early history,

it is conjectured that it was lost almost as soon as it was gained by the fall of primitive man from his high estate of sinlessness. This solution of the theistic problem is beset by invincible difficulties. I pass over the unscientific character of the hypothesis and its dependence upon arbitrary assumption. I shall not undertake to inquire whether the narration in the book of Genesis, which is supposed to contain the primitive revelation, makes any such claim; and whether, even if it does, Biblical criticism has not refuted its pretension by showing that the record is no history of the actual beginning of things, but only a reproduction of current traditions regarding that beginning. I confine myself to a single issue, namely, the psychological possibility of such a primitive revelation; and I hold it is quite inconceivable. The theory arose when men knew little of antiquity, when the golden age of mankind was still believed to lie at the beginning. There was no more scruple about assigning elevated ideas to primitive man than there was in accepting the belief of his intercourse with the Creator. But modern discoveries have changed all that. We

now know that our earliest ancestors lived a life of cruel hardships, of constant struggles, and of unimaginable savagery, grossness, and ignorance. And the farther we can follow man back through that stony age, the nearer is he seen to approach the condition of the animal. Now, how could such an one apprehend any of the sublime truths of spiritual religion, even if a teacher were there to give him the instruction? Learning is a process of interpreting the unknown by what is already known. And the knowledge of primitive man, who was engaged in an absorbing struggle for life, whose experience scarcely got beyond objects of food, shelter, and defence, whose very language denoted only sensible things and events, did not contain the elements necessary for an assimilation of the doctrine of the existence of one infinite spirit, even though one imagined it poured into all the avenues of his intelligence by an external revealer. No, the teacher is not a pump; the pupil is not a tub. And the necessity of a human faculty of comprehension cannot be dispensed with even when the Eternal Wisdom condescends to instruction. The influence of mind on

mind is never mechanical. There is always self-active co-operation. Even

“ A jest’s prosperity lies in the ear  
Of him that hears it, never in the tongue  
Of him that makes it.”

And on this principle no primitive savage, no innocent Adam still merged in the life of nature and of sense, could ever construct in thought the doctrine of God as one infinite spirit, even though we suppose it communicated *ab extra*. It follows, therefore, that this idea is the natural product of man’s own mental activities in the gradual course of their development.

For an interpretation of the early religious history of mankind, which has first been seriously studied in recent years, we should look in vain to the unhistoric rationalism of the eighteenth century. In the article on *Religion* in the *Dictionnaire Philosophique*, Voltaire makes monotheism the primitive religion, and supposes the sages of antiquity were deists like himself. Yet he makes a suggestion of profound truth and insight when he likens the mental attitude of man in the infancy of the race to the mental attitude of our children.

Embryologists tell us that the foetus in its development passes through all the stages of animal existence, thus reproducing in miniature the evolutionary history of the species. That its mental life after birth should also reflect the mental life of the infancy of mankind is a corollary that equally demands acceptance. But we are not dependent upon *a priori* reasoning for our knowledge of primitive modes of thought. They are preserved for us by savages, whose arts show them to be on the same mental plane as primitive mankind; that is, the earliest men of whom anything is known. Now observation of savage races reveals to us characteristics of thought which we find also in our children. The most striking feature perhaps is the unrestrained tendency to personify natural objects. The lowest savage endows everything with a life like his own, though often on a larger, or even on a smaller scale. For him nature is a complex of beings, each of which is animated by desires, passions, and affections. His attitude towards them is that of a little girl towards her dolls and toys which she knows to be friendly companions, or

towards new and strange objects before which she hesitates or from which she starts back in alarm. A consequence of this personification is the obliteration of sharp distinctions between one kind and another, as well as between things of the same kind. Science having resolved the universe into a multiplicity of kinds and individuals, it is the aim of modern philosophy to make a synthesis of them under a monistic conception of all existence. But primitive man, like the little child, ignores our distinctions between the animate and the inanimate kingdoms, between plants and animals, and between man and beast. The growth of knowledge has consisted in a progress from the vague to the definite; and with early mankind the world was as yet undefined and shadowy, a manifold blur of indeterminate personalities, all akin because all like himself. This crude philosophy of nature was also the theology of primitive savages. And it lives on in the lower strata of civilization, where, though the prevailing conception of the Godhead is anthropomorphic, the list of gods is drawn from all quarters of the organic and inorganic world, including at once

animals and trees, sun, moon, and stars, the earth, or even the stones upon its surface. Men, animals, plants, and natural objects form to the personifying imagination of primitive mankind a unitary kindred, any member of which might be represented as a god without prejudice to the others. And whether it was a personified tree or stone that was so represented, it enjoyed the same rights in the matter of ritual, and exercised the same influence and effects upon its worshippers, as a god of human or superhuman embodiment.

It will be a matter for future investigation, if any, to determine the accidents or caprices, as we call them, that led to the deification of certain objects and not of others. That among many races the sun or the sky should have enjoyed this pre-eminence is intelligible enough, and the deification of domesticated animals may perhaps be explained by their familiar intercourse with uncivilized man; but the larger number of the objects of early worship do not carry on their face the obvious reasons of their exaltation. Some external relation to the first worshippers may always be conjectured. But such casualties can-

not, at present at least, be ascertained. On the other hand, there are certain psychological conditions which every object of worship must fulfil; and, failing these, no natural being, even though personified, could ever be transmuted into a god. First of all, the worshipper must be in some way dependent upon it. It must be, or seem to him to be, superior to himself. When stones, which were once worshipped as mighty giants, came to be regarded as things, worship of them ceased; for with growing control of natural objects, man instinctively felt they were lower than himself. An object of worship must be capable of arousing a sense of dependence and inferiority. From the perception of this fundamental relation may arise two other feelings, both of which, though in degrees varying to the vanishing-point, must be produced by every object worshipped as a god. One of these, according to its shades, we name fear, awe, or terror; and its presence in the religious sentiment is the truth of the words of Statius: *Primus in orbe deos fecit timor*. But fear alone would have been inadequate. And we know that nature, and even the very

same natural objects, which at one time terrify the savage and the child, at another time fill them with delight. If primitive man was scared to his cave by the gathering clouds and the rattling thunder, he felt himself strongly attracted by the kindly sun, which rolled majestically across the unsullied azure. Or, in sublunary regions, the rock over which he one day stumbles becomes at another time the hiding-place from which he takes his prey. If he then dreaded it as a superior evil being, he now delights in it as helpful and beneficent. Thus of necessity his gods are objects both of his terror and of his confidence, either separately, or, as experience widened, of both together. Nor is there any incompatibility in this union of fear and love of the same object. For when terrible phenomena do not actually harm us, we delight in their presence, as tragedy certainly demonstrates. Accordingly fear or awe will not prevent man's yearning for communion or fellowship with those superior beings towards which joy, admiration, or affection attracts him. And in this communion with the powers that govern his destiny, we have another characteristic of

the earliest as of the latest faith in God. An actual proof of the solidarity of the life of gods and men is found in the institution of sacrifice, which shallow rationalism has treated as a bribe offered by selfish worshippers to selfish gods, but which historical investigations prove to have been a common meal of man and gods, the expression and the seal of a community of feeling, purpose, and existence. And just in so far as this relationship of the deity to his worshippers is vividly realized, do nature religions take on an ethical character. The superhuman kinsman invests with religious sanctions the social customs and institutions of the kindred group of worshippers.

Still it is probable that the earliest religions were neither directly moral nor immoral,—they were simply non-moral; and the sentiment of dependence upon the gods and communion with them presupposes a considerable evolution of intelligence. So that there is nothing unlikely in the assumption that the palæontological races either had no religion, or apprehended only in dim, fugitive outline the elements out of which religion was afterwards to

grow. But when men did arrive at a stable consciousness of the gods, we cannot but hold, from what we know of the facts of religious history and the operations of undeveloped intelligence as seen in children and savages, that these gods were personifications of natural objects, conceived as superior to men, and to some extent, at least, as arbiters of their destiny.

From this probable, though inferential, primary consciousness of the Godhead, all other phases of the belief may be accounted for in a fairly satisfactory manner. Evolution is a progress from the indefinite and homogeneous to the definite and heterogeneous. But in the historical world, as Darwin showed in the organic, progressive evolution is often accompanied by retrogression or backward development. And it ought not to surprise us if, while the history of the religious consciousness exhibits in general a successive unfolding of richer and purer forms, a different movement is observable among those sections of mankind which have never felt the vitalizing breath of civilization. For the causes of civilization are also the causes of religious development. They are to be sought

partly perhaps in the genius of races and of individuals, but mainly, I suspect, in a larger knowledge of nature with the consequent development of all the intellectual faculties, and in a richer experience of social and political events and institutions, which has the effect of subduing random impulses and self-seeking appetencies as well as quickening the activity and enlarging the range of conscience and affection. When knowledge, morality, and social order grow, man's idea of the Godhead expands in the same proportion. Where they are stationary, it may change, but it cannot advance. Primitive religion, therefore, will undergo two fundamental sorts of variation: one progressive, in the direction of a higher and fuller content; the other, non-progressive or, in very unfavorable circumstances, even retrogressive; that is, farther removed from actual reality. The first gives us the religions of historic races; the second, those of savages and the lowest barbarians.

The religion of these rude peoples may be described as an unorganized polydæmonism. It consists in the belief in the existence of an indefinite and motley throng

of spirits who may be controlled by magic, which only rarely rises to the attitude of worship. It is often designated *animism* or *fetichism*; but the terms are used somewhat vaguely. This religion is considered by the English school of evolutionists to represent man's earliest consciousness of the Godhead. But it almost certainly demands more reflection and abstraction than primitive intelligence was capable of. For it implies a clear distinction between soul and body, and the peopling of nature with independent spirits. And this is much less *naïf* and simple than the concrete personification of natural objects. From this primordial belief it can be readily derived, but the sequence of connection cannot be reversed. The savage who has arrived at the power of reflecting cannot but be struck with the strange phenomena of dreams, trances, and death. We explain dreams by the distinction between objective events and subjective illusions. But early thought knows no such distinction. The savage who dreams he has gone to a distant country and met strange inhabitants can only explain the fact by assuming that, since his body has lain all the

time at home, his soul can go out on journeys of its own and bring back reports of what it sees and encounters. In a swoon there seems to be the same temporary absence of the soul. At death, the spirit quits the body forever, but it continues to live a phantom life of its own, and in this form often visits the survivors in dreams and visions. What we call illusions and hallucinations the barbaric psychologist treats as direct perceptions of spirits. These subtle essences he names after the breath which is felt to be the life or soul of man; and even developed languages like the Aryan and Semitic still retain the traces of this early theory of ghosts. But of course not only men, but also horses and dogs, and not only animals, but things, in a word, all objects of organic and inorganic nature, have souls which come and go like the souls of men. Naturally, therefore, adoration of spirits supplants the worship of concrete natural objects. And of spirits the manes of departed ancestors occupy a foremost place. They are supposed to keep up their interest in the living, who consult them, share with them secrets, and even provide them with food

—a custom of which a survival may still be seen on the festival of All Souls, at the cemetery of Père-Lachaise.

Ancestor-worship has been, and still is, one of the great faiths of the world. And it has always in its first stages made for morality; since the ancestor who cared for his children while alive would punish violations of established customs now he had become a god. In early times the bond of blood was the sole basis of rights and obligations. Accordingly, when a deity was conceived as a blood relation of a group of kinsmen, he brought to their social order and morality the superhuman sanctions of religion. But while the worship of the dead keeps up the old-fashioned virtues of the tribe, it prevents all moral progress; and by clinging to the ethical ideals of a society that has passed away, it may in time become positively injurious. Yet it must not be forgotten that the conception of the brotherhood of mankind, which is the greatest moment of progress in the history of morality, rests upon the earlier fact of the fraternal relationship which actually existed between all members of the kindred clan; and that the sentiment

of humanity has still much of warmth and zeal to borrow from all the sweet charities of parent, child, and brother.

But the manes of ancestors are not the only higher spirits which animistic religions exalt above the commonalty of souls. As these rule over the life of man, so among the nature-spirits there are great gods who rule the universe. The highest natural deity is apt to be the heaven-god, or the soul of the sky. But in savage religions this supreme being would seem to have little advantage in the innumerable throng of nature-spirits, among whom there is no such ground of preference as ancestry afforded in the case of the souls of the dead. Indeed, the lowlier spirits might be the more attractive because they seemed more manageable. And there was no limit to the multiplication of deities, now that they were not dependent for their being upon objective reality. At any rate, observation of savages, African, Polynesian, and American, shows us that animistic religions produced an indeterminate chaos of atomistic divinities, whose limited powers and mutable destinies put their worshippers upon the idea of bringing them

into subjection to human caprice. Hence the origin of magic, which plays so large a part in polydæmonistic religions. Finally, as a spirit might be domiciled, forcibly or fortuitously, in any portable object, which thereafter served (like an idol) to symbolize or represent it, we see at once the close connection between animism and fetich-worship. Fetichism is in fact the lowest form of animism, having much the same relation to it as adoration of images to worship of the invisible gods.

The demons or spirits of barbarous religions tended to fade away into airy nothings, the sport of man's superior power and caprice, because they had lost that local habitation and definite character which a fixed connection with natural objects gave them in earlier thought. But even with a separation of nature-spirits from the sphere of their material embodiment, another course of development was also open. If savages dissipated them into empty phantoms, races which had reached the lower stages of civilization invested them with the moral and spiritual potencies of that life which the worshippers had begun to feel and lead. It is written that

“God created man in his own image”; but it is no less true, and necessarily true, that human thought has always created God in the image of man. But it makes all the difference in the world to theology what is regarded as the essence of the human exemplar. Hegel and the Hottentot alike proclaim the affinity of man and the Godhead; but to one the essence of man is rational spirit, to the other some vague, invisible ether. And the animistic divinities, in their fickle and insubstantial character, reflect the low, capricious, and irrational life of savage tribes, which lacks that stabilizing and exalting that comes only from consecration to the high ideal ends of civilization. On the other hand, where favored clans amalgamated and created political institutions, so that higher morals and better manners became inevitable, where knowledge grew, and men had a freer outlook upon the universe, the throngs of personified objects were generalized into great spirits of nature, which, though ruling the world, were nevertheless brought into close moral relation with mankind. It is of these quasi-personal nature-spirits that imagination, with its

eye on the corresponding natural phenomena, weaves the complex and highly original tissues of mythology. The events of nature are co-ordinated into the parts and scenes of a drama, enacted by these manliké spirits or powers of nature. Such mythologies are found in China, India, Persia, Nineveh, Babylon, Egypt, Greece, Italy, Germany, and, in the new world, in Mexico and Peru. They represent the gods as relatively independent of their natural elements. So far they agree with animism. But two essential differences are to be noted. First, the detachment from nature is never complete (Zeus, for example, always remains the heaven-god); for the myths and stories of the gods and heroes manifestly grow out of the personification and dramatization of natural phenomena. And, secondly, there associates itself to the naturalistic aspect of the god an analogous spiritual function which has reference to some of the ideal ends, moral, intellectual, or political, to which incipient civilization has already devoted itself. It matters not, therefore, whether these mythological religions of early civilization be designated polytheism or only advanced polydæmo-

nism, they indicate a real progress in the development of the religious consciousness of mankind. The progress, however, is not to be measured by the richness or grace of mythologies (which certainly reflect the imagination of their makers), but by the nature of all those ends, moral and spiritual, in the realization of which the worshipping races have recognized their supreme historical mission, and in relation to which, therefore, they could not but fashion the character of the gods who presided over their destiny.

For proof and illustration of this position let us look for a little while at the conceptions of the Godhead reached respectively in the religions of the Indo-Germanic and the Semitic races. These great races are the bearers of civilization. To the first belong the Indians, the Persians, the Letto-Slavs, the Germans, the Greeks, the Romans, and the Kelts. The latter includes the Arabs, the Hebrews, the Phœnicians, the Aramæans, the Babylonians, and the Assyrians. The mere collocation of these great historic names is enough to remind you that I can attempt only the slightest sketch of the development of their ideas of the Godhead.

As comparative philology has proved that all the Indo-Germanic races once possessed the same language, so more recently has the identity of their original religion been established by comparative mythology. This religion bears the clearest impress of its naturalistic origin. And sublime, as in the main it is, it has not altogether escaped the deteriorating tendency to animism. Still there can be no doubt that it derived its god from celestial phenomena. They are the "shining ones." Chief among them was the heaven-father, the Zeus and Jupiter of the Greeks and Romans, who was, however, partially supplanted in Indian worship, and altogether transformed in character by the Germans. Of the Indian development of this old Aryan religion, we have a picture in the Vedas. What characterizes Vedic religion is the moralization of the original powers of the sky. The heaven-god, Varuna, who created and upholds all things, is the sustainer, not only of the order of the universe, but of moral law in the life of man. He punishes iniquities, transgressions, and sins; but to the humble and contrite he is gracious and forgiving. The heavenly

brightness of the god's material embodiment is the objective side of his inner wisdom and purity of character. And this feature of the Vedic consciousness of the Godhead is the natural result of an infusion of the old Aryan light-gods with the spiritual ends to which Indian culture had already devoted itself. The evolution is clearer in the case of Varuna than in the case of Indra, the storm-god, or Agni, the fire-god, or Aditya, the sun-god. Yet, according to the hymns, Indra was to be approached in faith. And Agni was the typical heavenly priest, the mediator between gods and men, ruler and helper of the sacrifice. In this pantheon Varuna seems in himself to be the highest god; but the deity actually worshipped is, for the time being, regarded as chief, to whom all the rest are subject. This monarchy in a democracy, ephemeral as is the monarch's reign, appears to betoken an endeavor of the human spirit to rise from multiplicity to unity in its conception of the deity.

The Vedic religion was followed by Brahminism, a system of caste and sacerdotalism. It made little change in the theology of the people. But it gave birth

to schools of philosophy, whose esoteric doctrines overcame the polytheism of the masses by identifying the world with the divinity, or making him its creator, or even by denying altogether its objective reality. In this uncontrolled tide of profound but fruitless speculation, we find side by side the types and elements of much later thought: the hylozoism and pantheism of the Greeks, Christian theism, the mysticism of Böhme, the acosmism of Spinoza, the ethical atheism of Fichte, and the absolute idealism of Hegel. Of these forms of monistic speculation, the best known, though probably not the earliest, is that which makes Brahma the world-germ, the womb of all existence. But this impersonal being is himself, without form or attributes, a mere indeterminate unity. And those who have reached the "higher knowledge" see that this seemingly real world he has produced is nothing but an illusion, a phantasmagoria (*Maja*). Alongside of this orthodox theology of the Brahmins we find the heretical system of Sankhya. It denies the unity of the world-soul; and substitutes for it a plurality of individual souls and matter. But the outcome is not unlike

that of the Vedanta doctrine of Brahma. For the soul does nothing; it only knows. And the world is an illusion, the ground of which lies in primordial matter. The practical result, therefore, of the two schools, as of all Brahminic speculation, was the self-alienation of the spirit from nature. But in this divorce from the real object of his knowledge, nothing was left for man but mystic introspection, absorption in himself, which was also regarded as union with God. In speculative repudiation of the things of sense, in monastic renunciation of the world, in mystic fusion of the self with the eternal Brahma, who neither acts nor suffers, lay the chief end and the redemption of man.

But this deliverance could only be for the elect. Buddhism, which followed the philosophy of the Brahmins, was a simple gospel of universal redemption. It was the first national religion to become international or universal: a position which has since been attained only by Christianity and Mohammedanism. Like these, Buddhism is steeped with the personality of its founder. His relation to Brahminism, from which came his contemplative ascet-

icism, is much the same as that of Jesus to Judaism. It would be too much, however, to say that the Brahmins were as the scribes and Pharisees. Yet Buddha rejects their entire system of tradition, legalism, worship, and penance. But whereas Jesus proclaims that God is spirit and father, Buddha relegates the doctrine of the Godhead to those metaphysical speculations which make not for pious conversation, nor unworldliness, nor the destruction of desire, nor ceasing, nor rest, nor knowledge, nor Nirvana. His is a religion without God. It is an ethical evangel to all the suffering sons of humanity. Buddha has read the world-secret of the necessity of pain, and offers a way of redemption. Change is the law of the universe. As soon as an act of will relieves man from the pain of one desire, another has taken its place, so that endless pain is the consequence of volition. The will, therefore, must be extinguished. And its extinction is brought about by insight into that law of change which makes all desire for happiness self-defeating. This is the redemption offered by Buddhism, as it is the essence of Schopenhauer's pessimism.

Nirvana is nothing more nor less than that quiescent state of consciousness in which desire has been extinguished and the will is at rest. It was not so much this doctrine, however, as the gracious personality of the man who first realized it, that made Buddhism one of the world's great creeds. Not, in fact, until it had really become a religion by the strange irony of making its founder a god, did Buddhism move the heart and subdue the intellect of oriental nations. But it could not become the faith of the more progressive branches of the Aryan family. It negated their struggles for advancement by systematically turning away from the world. When its first mighty wave of universal compassion had spent itself, Buddhism settled down to resignation, to quietism, to indifference, to the despairing scepticism that comes from the absence of a positive ideal of life. Though sharing with Christianity a common point of departure in the idea and felt need of redemption, it lacks the Christian conception of the kingdom of God in which the yearnings of the spirit find complete satisfaction, and that, too, through the fulness of a life which is the very opposite

of the Buddhist panacea, — self-annihilation.

When Buddha had been deified, and his appearance on earth explained as one of a series of incarnations, Brahminism regained its hold upon the masses, which had been greatly relaxed through its conflict with Buddhism, by finding gods adapted to the popular consciousness in the two surviving elemental deities, Vishnu and Siva. These the Brahmins set by the side of their own god Brahma. And the philosophical demand for unity was met by treating all three as manifestations of the one primordial god, Brahma. And not only the doctrine of the Trinity, but the doctrine of the God-man, was also familiar to later Brahminism. The avatars of Vishnu, whose presence in an individual made that individual very god while still leaving him very man, were numerous and various. But the most important was Vishnu's incarnation in Krishna. And Krishna became in Brahminism the rival of the deified founder in Buddhism, a divine saviour, an incarnation (though but one of many) of the highest godhead.

If among the Indians the old Aryan the-

ology developed into a mystic and dreaming metaphysic with an ascetic ethic, among their cousins, the Iranians, who dwelt between mountains and deserts in a somewhat harsh climate, there were preserved, along with the ancient hardihood and valor, the simplicity of earlier thought and the practicalness of earlier morality. The Iranian religion, which in later centuries became the state religion of Persia, is known as Mazdeism or Parseeism, and was ascribed to the reformation of Zoroaster. To the Brahminist doctrine of the illusoriness of the world and the motionless indifference of the one real existence, Mazdeism opposed the conception of a universal world-struggle in which the ever-living and active godhead was engaged in overcoming those limitations to his absoluteness, which, as a matter of fact, seem actually existent and operative. Virtue, therefore, could not be placed in quietism and renunciation of the world, but only in action and struggle, and the victory over the world which they ensure.

Mazdeism inclines both to polytheism and monotheism. It exalted far above the pantheon of lower divinities Ahura-mazda,

the all-wise lord or spirit. The name *Ahura* indicates a connection with Asura, the heaven-god of the Hindoos. Ahura is glorified as the creator of the world, and the source of truth, light, and purity. The doctrine of his sublime supremacy was, it is probable, the chief element in the preaching of Zoroaster. But with the survival of old Aryan nature-gods, the doctrine was liable to corruption. And in fact not only these, but new personifications also, some of them quite ideal, were grouped about or under the supreme Ahura. First came the circle of the "sacred immortals," consisting of Ahura and six spirits, who seem to be personifications of abstract ideas (such, for example, as purity, wisdom, immortality), though in some cases a sensuous reference is also discernible. Beyond these was the lower and larger circle of the "worshipful" spirits. They consisted partly of old Aryan light-gods, and partly of fresh creations out of abstract notions. Of the latter sort was the personification of prayer as a divine logos or creative word. Last in the descending scale of good spirits came the "genii," the souls of the dead and the immortal part of the living. They prove that

Mazdeism had not altogether outgrown the animism of ruder peoples.

The same influence, combined with the opposition between light and darkness, may help us to understand the dualism of this religion. For while it teaches adoration only of Ahura and the good spirits who do his pleasure, it recognizes the existence of a kingdom of evil spirits, subject to Ahri-man, the "striker" or "attacker," who is the opponent of Ahura, and the source of all the evil, sin, and imperfection in the world. The good spirits dwell in heaven above, the evil spirits in the lower regions. And this world, which lies between the two, is, as in the cosmography of *Paradise Lost*, the scene of their conflict. The warfare rages everywhere, and in everything. It was Ahriman who brought death into the world, and seduced the first pair to sin. With his deviltries he compasses man about on every side. And though Mazdeism knows nothing of a fall among the angels, Ahriman in all other respects may be compared with Milton's Satan. It was only in late times he rose to the rank of Ahura himself. Originally he was a subordinate power, and his sole function was to

thwart, obstruct, and pervert the good and wise ends of the great creator and ruler of the world. Man seeks protection against him in worship. At death the good walk across the bridge to heaven, while the wicked, finding it too narrow, tumble into the depths of hell, where demons torment them till the fire of the great judgment burns up Ahriman and all the evil in existence. From the flames rise a new heaven and a new earth, refined and purified by the consuming fire. Over this transfigured universe, in which the dead shall have been resuscitated (sinners being purged and quickened to a new life), Ahura-Mazda, in the presence of a glorified and redeemed humanity, is to reign forevermore in undisputed supremacy. But this consummation will not come for three thousand years, and then only at the hand of a saviour who is to be conceived of the holy spirit of Zoroaster, and born of a virgin mother.

The germs of the dualism of the Persians and of the polytheism of the Hindoos are to be found in the theology of the Wends or Letto-Slavs, which is, however, the lowest of all the Indo-Germanic religions. Its

nature-gods have not yet been moralized. Its doctrine of spirits is scarcely above the level of the animism of savages, if we disregard its more poetic expression. When it was supplanted by Christianity, it was still at a stage of development greatly inferior to that attained by the oldest Vedic religion.

It seems to be due rather to a difference of race than of civilization that religion attained a higher development among the Germans than among the Slavs. The superiority attaches, however, only to their conception of the gods: their doctrine of the soul and immortality, as well as their rude cultus, being obviously a continuation of animism. Germanic theology resembles Persian. While the Letto-Slavs, in common with all the Aryan nations, conceived of a dual conflict between the powers of nature, the Persians and Germans alone gave to the physical occurrence an ethical interpretation. The terrible forces of the natural world, which were at first pictured as giants devoid of moral character, developed in course of time into evil beings, who stood opposed to the good deities. These last, of whom Odin and Thor were

the chief, were also personified powers of nature; but they were nature-gods who had been humanized and moralized. In the conflict with the giants, the good deities are victorious till the death of Balder. Afterwards the monsters of wickedness break forth in uncontrolled fury, and overwhelm all the ordinances and appointments of the world. This is the "twilight of the gods." They struggle against this general dissolution of the elements, but in the end they perish with their assailants. Then comes the final act of this great world-drama, — a general resurrection, renovation, and purification, after which man lives a life of unalloyed happiness, and the supremacy of the highest god continues undisputed.

It was not on Oriental or Germanic, but on Hellenic soil, that the spirit of the Aryan race produced its richest mythology and its highest religion. This superior development is doubtless due to that unique complex of circumstances which enabled the Greeks, if not absolutely to create, at least to invest with full life and perfect form, the main branches of human culture, — art, science, literature, and philosophy, — and

to infuse into conduct and the modes of social intercourse a grace and decorum, a freedom and dignity, which are quite as characteristic of the Hellenic spirit as its intellectual and æsthetic achievements. The genius of this remarkable people combined in a wonderful degree the most prominent and even opposite characteristics of human nature. They were at once practical and speculative, lovers of beauty and lovers of truth, healthfully realistic, yet passionately devoted to the ideal, appreciative of the individual, yet bent on seeing the individual in relation to the whole. No doubt, too, their bright air and sky, as well as the wonderfully varied features of their country, have left an impress upon their religion. But much greater was the influence of free intercourse among themselves and with their foreign neighbors, — an intercourse pre-determined and facilitated by their location on the islands and coasts which, like an irregular bridge, connect Europe and Asia. Who can estimate the beneficent results of intercourse between man and man? To take only one example, it may be said to have moralized the race. Within historic times we can see, in con-

sequence of intercourse, the narrow morality of the tribe expanding to the broad code of a multiracial nation; and in recent centuries the same agency has been making national morality international and humanitarian. Naturally enough, then, it has been regarded as a law of the history of religions that the richness and elevation of their context are proportional to racial and inter-racial intercourse.

Of this law Greek religion is a striking example. In the Pelasgic period its gods were still nature-powers, and its worship, to some extent, fetichistic. Yet through assimilation and fusion of foreign ideas, many of them Semitic, the Greeks formed, in very early times, a circle of divinities and heroes, ennobled by all that is best, highest, and most divine in man. Our earliest picture of this pantheon is contained in the Homeric poems. The gods appear as superhuman beings, who share with man intelligence and moral freedom, but not less appetites, passions, and all the weaknesses flesh is heir to. But a deeper view reveals a distinction between the gods of poetic mythology and the supreme rulers of the world. For, however human

in their failings the individual gods show themselves, they stand forth in their totality as the inviolable upholders of moral order, the sublime judges and avengers of the acts of men. And this twofold aspect is especially observable in Zeus, who comprehends in his own potent will the will of the Olympian council, of which he is the chief. Like the Christian pope, Zeus is conceived in the Homeric poems to be fallible as an individual, but infallible as head of the sacred convocation. And the analogy happily illustrates his relation to the other gods, who are scarcely more than representatives and executives of the supreme ruler of gods and men. Yet this divine monarchy is not to be identified with monotheism. For, though the Greek believed in a single government of the world, and was persuaded that a stern justice presided over the affairs of men, he found no difficulty in the supposition that it was administered by a plurality of gods. There was a unity of result without a unity of personal agency. Here we touch a striking difference between Greek and Jewish theology. When Plutarch blamed the Jews for not making the Deity benevolent and

friendly to man, he showed a right sense of the importance of goodness in man's conception of the divine character, but he betrayed utter indifference to the sublime Judaic thought of the unity of God. It must be added, however, that the greatest dangers to Greek religion came rather from anthropomorphism than from polytheism. It was no easy thing to worship in spirit and in truth gods whom tradition, poetry, and statuary had invested with definite human forms.

The post-Homeric development of popular theology in Greece consisted mainly of a purification and deepening of the ethical character of the Homeric divinities. Its most significant phase was the exaltation of Apollo, originally a light-god, to the rank of divine author of all moral, intellectual, and religious illumination and purification. He became the embodiment of the ideal ends of life,—of the true, the beautiful, and the good. Of the clarifying and ennobling influence of his worship we may form an idea from the lofty and fervid odes of Pindar. Yet Apollo is not supreme god; he is son of Zeus, and mediator and saviour of men. Of Zeus himself

Pindar's conception is practically monotheistic. But Æschylus reproduces the Homeric thought of a fate to which even Zeus himself is subject. And he illustrates both the older view of the implacable justice of the god, who visited the iniquities of the fathers upon the children even to the third and fourth generation, and the serene piety of the age of Pericles, which mitigated the wrath of heaven and transformed the envy and jealousy of the gods into love, tenderness, and forgiving mercy. The best exponent, however, of this highest stage of Greek religion is Sophocles. He, too, is full of reverence for Zeus. But the divine government, instead of being an object of fear and awe, is interpreted in a spirit of cheerful piety, trustful resignation, and heartfelt and simple devotion. It is already seen that God is love, and that, as in the *Œdipus Coloneus*, there is reconciliation for even the chief of sinners.

This ethical monotheism of the choicest spirits of the Greeks was in all probability above the reach of the multitude. Yet it necessarily influenced their thinking, even though an unapproachable ideal. The same is true of the metaphysical panthe-

ism which dominated Greek philosophy throughout its entire course of a thousand years. As monotheism was the outcome of the Greek conception of God as governor of the world and supporter of moral order, pantheism was the doctrine in which the philosophers found an ultimate principle for the interpretation of the universe as a whole. The Deity is regarded as the soul of the cosmos, and conceived now materialistically, now ideally, and again in both fashions, without any consciousness of their distinction. The theology of Aristotle, indeed, is an abstract monotheism, but the outspoken pantheism of the Stoics is much truer to the spirit of Greek speculation. And though we cannot here trace the influence of Greek philosophy upon Christian theology, one point of juncture may be noted. The soul or reason of the world, which the Stoics designated "Logos," became in the mediating philosophy of the Jewish Philo (30 B.C.-50 A.D.) the most universal intermediary between God and man, nay, the first-born son of God, the second God, — thus supplying early Christianity with the Hellenic formula: "In the beginning was the Lo

gos, and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God."

It now remains to describe briefly the character of Semitic religions, of which Christianity was the noble fruitage. In former times the differences between Semitic and Aryan religions were supposed to be original and fundamental. But more recent investigations, conducted in the light of a fuller knowledge of primitive thought and culture, make it highly probable that the two races began on lines which were scarcely distinguishable. Yet from a very early period two differences — one psychological, the other historical — must have tended to produce divergency of development. As between the demands of the heart and the head the Semites were disposed to satisfy the former, the Aryans the latter; as soon, that is to say, as culture had advanced far enough to bring out the consciousness of their antithesis. And even, unconsciously, the Aryan eye was turned outward, the Semitic inward; the one seeing nature-gods rather than free spirits, the other inclining in the opposite direction to animism. Hence every Semitic clan had its deity, who was the

counterpart, not of the forces and aspects of nature, but of the longings and wants of the worshippers. Such was the intimate and exclusive relation between Bel and the Babylonians, Baal and the Canaanites, Chemosh and the Moabites, Dagon and the Philistines, and, in early times, Jehovah and the Hebrews. Of course this distinction is not to be carried so far as to exclude all objective or cosmic features from Semitic theology. On the contrary, star-worship is a characteristic of it. Yet it remains true that, as the Semites have never distinguished themselves in objective science, so their theology is prevailingly subjective. Their adoration of the supra-mundane powers expresses their sense of the exalted character of the divinity, and of man's absolute dependence upon him. This feature of Semitic religion — its recognition of a celestial Lord over nature, before whom man is very dust — is probably due to the historical circumstance that the Semites, unlike so many branches of the Aryan family, never attained to political freedom, and could therefore only conceive of the divine government after the analogy of the despot's relation to his

enslaved subjects. In this conjunction of religion with a despotic monarchy may also be found an explanation of the supposed innate tendency of the Semites to monotheism. This certainly it is which makes the Hebrews appear monotheists prior to the Babylonian captivity.

Among the Semites, as elsewhere, monotheism is the gradual achievement of the human spirit. The ancient religion of the Arabs was a mixture of nature-worship, animism, and fetichism. And these elements lived on even after Mohammed, transplanting to Arabian soil the kernel of Judaism, founded Islam with the formula: "There is no God but God, and Mohammed is his prophet." Indeed, Islam has become a universal religion only by the admission of extraneous beliefs and practices which are more akin to animism than to monotheism; namely, the adoration of the saints and the worship of Mohammed himself as divine mediator with Allah. In the case of the Northern Semites the religious development was at an early period much more rapid. This was due to intercourse with non-Semitic peoples. Thus the inscriptions show the Babylonio-Assyr-

ian pantheon to have been derived from the theology of the Akkadians, a people who in very remote times occupied Mesopotamia, where they originated astronomy and invented the cuneiform writing. Even among the Semites in Syria, Canaan, and Phœnicia, the purely Semitic ideas are obscured by foreign deposits. The gods fell into two classes, male and female ; and the generic names by which they were denoted — Baal and Ashtoreth — must have come from Chaldea. It was at any rate a licentious religion, as was inevitable from the sexual analogy on which its theology was based. But so little is yet definitively established regarding the evolution of the religious spirit of the Semites among these branches of the race that no apology is needed for turning to the Hebrews.

The Hebrews, like other Semitic clans, had their tribal god, who helped them against their enemies, gave oracles for the guidance of their national affairs, and delivered judgments in cases too difficult for human decision. As the Ammonite had Milcom and the Moabite Chemosh, so Israel had his Jehovah. It was through hard fighting that the Canaanite was driven

out of the promised land. Jehovah, therefore, was primarily a god of war. The very name Israel means "God fighteth"; and this defender of his people is designated the Jehovah of the armies of Israel. After their settlement in Canaan and their adoption, at the hands of the conquered, of an agricultural life, the Israelites naturally imitated, in their service of Jehovah, the luxurious festivals which the Canaanites held in honor of Baal. And in fact the two gods were almost identified by the masses. Even the most devout worshippers claimed only a supremacy for Jehovah. But the religion of Israel was saved from extinction by numerous wars, which, as they intensified national feeling, revived the faith in which it centred and out of which it sprang. Jehovah was the bond of national unity among the Israelites. He had delivered them from bondage; and with the priceless boon of freedom, he had given them, in the Ten Words, a law of social righteousness. They had a national destiny and a national god. In peace and prosperity they might yield to the sensuous attractions of the Canaanite worship. But in battle they felt themselves again the

host of Jehovah. And by the close of the period of the Judges, Canaan had become the land of the God of Israel, so that the people had no strong motive to worship Baal. But the supremacy of Jehovah was all that Samuel, Saul, David, and Solomon maintained; and even the Baal denounced by Elijah stood for a political alliance to which the people were opposed. But in the eighth century B.C. the prophets began to insist upon the worship of Jehovah alone. They had arrived at the conception of an absolute difference between Jehovah and the gods of the nations. These were seen to be the reflex of the worshippers, without any fixed character or steady will of their own. But as the prophets pondered over the dealings of Jehovah with His people, they perceived in Him a will higher and steadier than the human, leading them on towards the realization of a purpose which their own minds had never formed. Thus Jehovah approved himself a being of moral character and holy will, who was bent on making Israel a people of righteousness. Hence arose Hebrew monotheism, which as yet remained national. That is to say, it had its ground

in the organization and historic achievement of the nation. The prophet Amos, indeed, rose to a larger conception of God as the ruler of the destinies of all nations. But Israel could realize the thought of universal monotheism only through the collapse of its own nationality and its long exile in Babylon. As the Jewish mind then came under the influence of Babylonian and Persian thought, so in later centuries it was open to the philosophy of the Greeks, and from this blending of Aryan and Semitic elements came in due time that universal religion which has been the soul of European and American civilization. It may be hard to define what the Christian religion is. But the religion of Christ consisted in a vivid consciousness that Jehovah, whom Jeremiah and the second Isaiah described as gracious and forgiving to his people Israel, was the universal Father, a God of love to every son of man. Otherwise expressed, the new religion taught that God was spirit, nay, the spirit in all spirits, and that in conformity with this nature and relation His attitude to man was one of unbroken and unlimited love.

On its anthropic side the conception of the Godhead is here completely and definitively formulated. The Father-Spirit must take the place hereafter of natural or quasi-natural powers in man's consciousness of God. Instead of hostile divinities, of whom even the Greeks retained a memory, namely, their belief in the envy of the gods, we see a divine heart of infinite love. Though those great ideas were soon obscured by the emergence of the older doctrines and the rise of new dogmas, they were at least actually born, and not only born, but realized and incorporated in the life and teachings of the divinest of all the sons of men. They could, therefore, never utterly perish. And in something like their pristine purity they seem to be breaking afresh on the reflective consciousness of the modern world, which many centuries of education have enabled to spell out the meaning of that of which religious genius has immediate feeling and apprehension.

But no age or person can do the entire thinking of later generations. And as regards this higher consciousness of God, our problem is to make it cosmic as well as anthropic. For it originated, let us remem-

ber, among a people who had no science of nature, for whom nature had no interest in comparison with the events and ends of human life and history. On the other hand, the Aryan conception of God was rooted and fixed in the powers and aspects of the natural world. They were humanized and moralized, but their objective attachments were never completely loosened. Hence, in its highest reach among the Greeks, the Aryan spirit, while postulating an ethical monotheism, still cleaved to the pantheism which was the necessary development of its philosophy of nature. Between such a metaphysic and natural science, of which the Greeks were also the originators, there seems to be a close, if not necessary, connection. The union was proclaimed indissoluble by Giordano Bruno, the martyr of modern science. And as he spoke under the inspiration of the new Copernican astronomy, so under the influence of recent physics and of Darwinian biology Professor Tyndall spoke to the same effect in his now famous Belfast address. I do not hide, therefore, the conviction that the problem of the modern theist consists in the union of the Aryan and Semitic modes

of interpreting existence. We must have a synthesis of the Father of all spirits with the ground of all nature. In other words, we shall be satisfied with nothing less than anthropocosmic theism.

The evidence for this hypothesis must be considered in the lectures that follow.

## LECTURE IV.

### BELIEF IN GOD AS CAUSE OR GROUND OF THE WORLD.

IT is now sixty years since Carlyle wrote his *Characteristics*. In that famous essay on the evils of reflection he maintained this thesis: Unconsciousness belongs to pure, unmixed life; consciousness to a diseased mixture and conflict of life and death; the one is synthetic and creative, the other analytic and destructive. To Carlyle his own generation (which was of course like every other) seemed the most intensely self-conscious that ever had existed. He complained that all its relations to the universe, to man, to God, had become a matter of inquiry and of doubt. Everything had to be anatomically probed into and studied; nothing would go on of its own accord and do its function quietly. Alas! alas! "had Adam remained in Para-

dise, there had been no anatomy and no metaphysics."

Certainly if knowledge was the consequence of the fall, as scepticism is the fruit of knowledge, Adam's continuance in Paradise would have dispensed us from the obligation to find proofs for the existence of God. A man needs proof only of that which has become doubtful to him. Hence, even in the world as we find it, the overwhelming majority of mankind have not the slightest personal interest in a demonstration of the divine existence. Like innocent Adam they have not eaten of the tree of knowledge, they have not suffered from its sour fruit. Extremes meet; and as to the simple peasant so also to the poet rational theology is a matter of little moment. He sees the divine idea of the world, he feels the divine presence in his heart; and with the experience of these immediate intuitions and emotions, why should he heed or need the slow-built arguments of the intellect?

They that be whole need not a physician, but they that be sick. Were all mankind unreflecting Adams or victoriously creative Goethes, we should indeed need

no philosophy of religion. But it is between this upper and nether altitude that modern education leaves her votaries. For us the fever of doubt is actually burning; and philosophy is the means to allay it. Our belief in the existence of God is not fresh and whole as when we absorbed it with our mothers' milk. A larger knowledge and experience has dislocated our faith. And we want to know of philosophy, whether in the march of mind a place can still be found for the ancient belief in God. The idea of the divine being still haunts us, and the heart yearns for its acceptance by the intellect; but as thought produced the discord so only thought, free and dispassionate, can restore the harmony. Can then our faith be vindicated at the bar of reason? Are there proofs, valid proofs, of the existence of God?

Before answering this question, I must point out that we have here to do neither with a new belief nor with altogether new grounds to support it. A being in whom the consciousness of God were altogether wanting could not be expected to acquire it from our argumentation. No description of color can communicate an idea of

it to the blind. The human faculties and their normal operations must be assumed. And these have brought man in the course of human history to a consciousness of God. No doubt different conceptions of the Godhead have prevailed among different peoples. But the drift and issue of the religious consciousness, as it unfolds itself in the course of civilization, are clear and unmistakable. Accordingly, the grounds and motives which led man to form and mould the conception of God must still be the basis of our proofs for the validity of the conception. There is a spirit in man, and the way of the spirit is the method of the philosopher. He aims to bring into the full blaze of consciousness the darkling, unsuspected considerations that shaped the thinking of the race. It would be a mistake, however, to regard the philosopher as a mere photographer of spiritual processes invisible to the rest of mankind. He is also a chemist whose crucible is reflective thought. And in it he tests the elements which have hitherto passed as independent and indissoluble constituents of human belief. It may very well happen, therefore, that a theory which

was stable enough for earlier thought will fail to produce conviction in us. Only since reason is everywhere one and the same, the philosopher must recognize in that primitive theory a relative truth. And in dealing with the grounds of belief in God, it is especially important that we should distinguish the formulas, more or less imperfect, in which they have been expressed, from the essential substance and content which philosophy reflecting upon them sees to have been already involved in the religious consciousness of the rudest thinkers though they themselves were unaware of it.

*Im Anfang war die That.* This profound saying of Goethe's means in the present case that the act and fact of man's apprehension of God preceded his meditating afterthought of it. And this situation of affairs deserves more consideration than it generally receives. That the human spirit is, as a matter of fact, in possession of the idea of God is an argument for the existence of God unless it can be shown that certain ideas, though uniformly produced, are insubstantial pageants of the phantasy. It is no reply to say that all men once

believed in the motion of the sun round the earth. Science does reveal to us modes of behavior of things, of which our ancestors unskilled in experiment and artificial observation could have no suspicion. And the scientific interpretation of the fuller body of facts naturally differs from the prescientific interpretation of the narrow field of unassisted perception. But existence itself as distinguished from its modes of behavior is unapproachable by science. And if we cast out our belief in God because it is prescientific, the same logic will forbid us to believe in the existence of a self or of an objective world. Real existence we cannot prove; we cannot even construct it in thought. Our belief in it belongs to the nature of intelligence itself. We cannot imagine a consciousness stripped of this primary constituent without ceasing to be a consciousness. Science may change our views of what reality does, but not our intuition that reality is. Now human intelligence has recognized two dependent realities and one independent reality. It knows the soul as unitary substratum of all mental phenomena, the world as the complex of all natural phenomena, and

God as the absolute ground and source of both the soul and the world. The thorough agnostic repudiates all three realities and breaks with common sense. He is consistent, but for us impossible. Generally, however, the divine existence is denied while that of the world at least is assumed. In such a case we demand to know why intelligence is allowed to make a synthesis of a part of its experience into an objective world and forbidden to make a synthesis of the residue into a soul, and of both soul and world into one absolute ground or God. Until this discrimination can be justified in some other way than by an indiscriminate denunciation of "theology" or an undiscerning appeal to that obsolete rationalism which forms so large a part of the philosophy of Kant, I see no way of escaping the conclusion that man's consciousness of God, as ultimate principle of all reality, is at least strong presumptive evidence of the real existence of God.

But there can be no doubt that this evidence generally fails to produce conviction, whether because it escapes observation or is really insufficient in itself. The sceptic has an idea of God, but he is without be-

lief in the objective counterpart. It falls to reflective thought, therefore, to discover other grounds of conviction. And these constitute what are called *par excellence* the arguments for the existence of God. These arguments stand related to the tripartite division of the human soul. As man is active, rational, and moral, so the causality, design, and goodness exhibited throughout all existence are judged to be the expression of a divine will, intelligence, and moral nature. The existence of this being is demonstrated by showing that the world in its origin and orderly constitution and man as a moral agent are explicable only if we postulate an eternal first cause, a wise designer, and a moral governor. The grounds, therefore, for belief in the existence of God are at once cosmic and anthropic. The last yields what is known as the moral argument. The first, which contains the two conceptions of the causation and the rationality of the universe, yields respectively the so-called cosmological and teleological arguments for the existence of God.

Such, in outline, is the argumentation to which we now address ourselves. It seems

scarcely credible that in proofs which have satisfied reason, in the person of so many distinguished thinkers, we shall not find essential truth. It would be false modesty, or something worse, however, did I not express my conviction that the one vital truth which underlies all these arguments receives but a very imperfect expression in any of them. Nor can it be attained by a mere synthesis of their complementary phases. There is needed a higher standpoint, — a more spiritual view of God, a more dynamic view of the world, and a more organic view of their connection with one another, and of both with man. It is, however, by traversing and transcending the successive stages of the old theistic argument that thought most naturally, if not inevitably, ascends to the all-surveying altitude of anthropocosmic theism. And I see no better way of establishing that theory than by developing it in relation to others, whose truth it must absorb, whose limitations it must avoid. As oldest, simplest, most concrete and pictorial, I begin with the cosmological argument for the existence of God.

This argument originates in a condition

of mind in which observation (internal, as well as external) and reflection, both of which are presupposed to a considerable degree in the teleological and moral arguments, are at the very lowest stages of development. Who made it? is a question that can properly be asked only where a maker and a material apart from the maker are both upon the scene. This is the case with man, whose entire external activity is directed upon the transformation of material masses or elements into new shapes or combinations. Thus, the savage makes tools and weapons of pieces of stone, and the civilized man constructs machinery and apparatus of wood, iron, and steel. Now, although God, simply because there is nothing outside him, cannot be a mechanism, it is natural for the sensuous, pictorial thought of unreflecting humanity so to conceive him. This *naïf* anthropomorphism, overlooking the absence of the condition absolutely necessary for such an analogy between the divine and the human activity, represents God as standing in the same relation to the world as man to the machine his hands have fashioned. This picturesque theology takes on surprisingly delightful forms in the

minds of children. And the infantile races all tell their legends of the divine creation of the world. That is a graphic myth which represents God as living primevally in a mussel, whose two shells, when forced apart, became heaven and earth, while the waters are the streams of perspiration that flowed from the struggling creator. Greek cosmogony pictures the formation of the world from an original chaos. In all these, as in the Chaldean legend, the world and the gods grow up together; cosmogony is, at the same time, theogony. But in the more advanced Hebrew thought of the first chapter of Genesis, which seems to be dependent upon the Chaldean account of creation for its idea of a primeval chaos of water and darkness, the spirit of God is conceived as pre-existent and independent of the chaotic mass, which he separates and moulds by the mere fiat of his will. No one can fail to recognize in this sublime story a notion of the Godhead infinitely higher than in the theogonic myths of earlier and more naturalistic thinking. And beneath all its graceful touches of Oriental fancy, which the unimaginative Occident has too long taken for the prose of

an abstract system, lies in noble outline the essential truth of the dependence of the sensible universe upon an infinite and eternal Spirit. But the philosopher cannot follow the poet in conjoining, in this arbitrary, fortuitous fashion, the creative spirit and the act of creation. God did not first exist, *and then*, as though in need of something else, create a world. It is of the essence of spirit to manifest or reveal itself. And just because God is spirit, the world is his constant expression. Creation is the eternal self-revelation of God. Furthermore, though, in the Biblical narrative, God is represented as higher than nature and independent of it, he is yet not the All. Chaos is real, and apparently eternal, too. This dualism could not stand the examination of thought. And in opposition to the Gnostic philosophizings of the second century, the church put forward the dogma of a miraculous creation of the world out of nothing. This has remained the official doctrine of Christendom. But some of the greatest Christian theologians have been unable to maintain the dogma in its original purity. As Thomas Aquinas confessed that it could

be believed only on the authority of the church, so the "angelic doctor" of our own day — the venerable James Martineau — in his *Study of Religion*, seems to make the creation of the world an eternal process, conceiving it as a self-sundering of the deity, in whom in some way the world was always contained. That natural science long ago broke with the traditional view of creation needs, I suppose, scarcely to be observed.

The husk of the argument from causality may be peeled off and thrown away, but its kernel seems to me imperishable truth. That soul of truth lies in the recognition that the world, which is immediately revealed to us in sense-perception, and the processes of which are recorded in science, has a deeper ground than this material appearance, — a ground which reflective analysis obliges us to hold as spiritual. If the scientist is not conducted to this ultimate source of things, it is because, in his absorbing study of the orderly sequences and co-existences of events, he is under no obligation, and finds no occasion, as in general he has not the inclination, to raise the ultimate question of the ground of the

possibility of those phenomena and their laws. If, on the other hand, he turns and rends the theistic argument from causality, it is because, in his repulsion from the fanciful and arbitrary forms in which pictorial thinking has represented it, he loses sight of the sole essential content of the argument, the witness of the natural to the spiritual. His procedure is all the more excusable for the reason that the professed champions of theism — not excepting so thoughtful and intelligent a reasoner as Professor Flint of Edinburgh — have almost invariably put forward the accidents of the causal argument for its essence. Insisting that nature is but the name for an effect whose cause is God, in just the same fashion as one natural event or existence is the effect of another, they have not hesitated to assert that the atoms into which science has resolved all material things, are “manufactured” articles, supernatural creations of God. This attempt to picture the making of reality shocks the sound instincts of the scientist, without bringing any satisfaction to the higher religious mind. What is needed is, not a supernatural creation of a non-existent world,

but a natural interpretation of the world we find actually given, and can never annihilate, even in thought. What both the scientific and religious consciousness demand is a God here in the world, not there outside of it or making it.

Why this argument, in spite of its more abstract formulation in terms of causality, should yet continue to emphasize only that external relation of God to the world which the innocent anthropomorphism of infantile thought pictured as creation, may be explained partly by the authority of tradition, and partly by the presence of an underlying truth, for which a more appropriate mode of expression has not yet been discovered. In a certain sense, no doubt, the creational dogma satisfies the yearning of the intellect for an explanation of things, but the explanation is so arbitrary, and even so childish, that the persistence of the dogma can scarcely be due to theoretical considerations. But students of human civilization know that of all its factors none so stubbornly resist change as the ideas and institutions of religion. This conservatism of the religious consciousness explains why the church always seems

against the saviours and renovators of mankind. It explains, too, why religious beliefs survive after their grounds have been completely undermined by more scientific views of nature and of man. Such beliefs are apt to perpetuate themselves, apart from the unconscious sway of feeling, by alliance with ideas and considerations quite foreign to those which gave them birth; and I cannot but think that the creational form of the argument from causality owes its present respectability, not so much to its theoretical sufficiency, as to its capacity for satisfying the devotional needs of a certain class of worshippers. Originally a philosophy of the world, it is now a mere postulate of the heart that craves a more human God than it can find throbbing in the pulsations of universal being. For the worship of such a heart, God must be sharply separated from the cold, mechanical realm of natural law; and this external realm must yet be so subject to the divine will that interference with its normal order must be permissible if the prayer of faith demands it. Both ends are gained by making God the arbitrary creator of a world which is conceived as an instituted

mechanism, not as a spontaneous life. But the presuppositions that require such conclusions are those of a narrow piety, however sincere. The error consists in forcing the given facts of the universe into an arbitrary scheme of our own making, which is quite foreign to them. What God is we can know only through the revelation he has made of himself in nature and in the soul of man. It is therefore manifestly illogical to begin by assuming there is any incompatibility between the course of the world and the heart of the eternal. The one must express the other, as the countenance is the image of the soul within. If God's ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts, it is surely a mistaken piety that continues to assert they are, and refuses to study the divine character in the one record in which it is described,—a record that is perennially unfolding itself to him who has eyes to look into the mysteries of the life of man and of nature. These are the tokens by which we shall know the ever-living, ever-active God. Others there are not, howsoever we may fondly dream. To him who examines these comes wisdom, and the be-

ginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord. In awe and reverence the new-born soul discerns that the one great fact is the eternal life of God. Man recognizes that his own highest life consists in hopeful, trustful resignation to the Infinite Spirit, with whom he feels himself in union and communion. The glow of such a faith consumes the somewhat selfish piety which thinks of God as existing mainly to guarantee satisfaction to the wishes and desires of the human heart. He that loses his life shall find it. In this joyous resignation to the will of the Father-Spirit man will cease to think of nature as a set of arrangements instituted mainly with reference to mankind; and, with this practical prejudice removed, theoretical reflection will be left free to show that nature is the living garment of God, as eternal as the infinite spirit of whom it is the revelation. It is therefore only the lowest kind of piety that needs for its support that dogma of creation which thought can never accept. It is the piety that would construct the world according to its preconceived ideas. Substitute for it the higher piety, which accepts in faith, hope, and love the given

facts of the universe, as the eternal expression of the mind of God, and the heart will have no motive for suggesting an obsolete interpretation of the essential content of the argument from causality. But heart and mind, according well, will now recognize that the underlying truth of the dogma of creation is the eternal dependence of the world upon God.

I have dwelt on this point at some length because I am convinced it is not so much the theoretical grounds (which are yet to be examined), but the supposed needs of the pious heart, that lend support to the dogma of creation, and put philosophical theists upon the track of defending it by an appeal to the law of causality. Those well-meant efforts, it will be seen presently, end in failure. But let me here point out that the insistence upon the dogma of creation as essential to belief in God, has given agnostics an opportunity, which they have not missed, of undermining all theology. Who taught Mr. Herbert Spencer that "ultimate religious ideas" all arise out of and converge upon the question of the origin of the world? Those theists, I should answer, who, instead of seeking God here

and now as ultimate principle of the universe, both in its own being and in our knowledge of it, refuse to see him at all, if not as an external creator in long past ages. Taking the problem, as those theists have formulated it, Mr. Spencer easily shows it to be insoluble. His reasoning, indeed, is not new. It consists in showing that even if we grant the assumptions of the creationist, his theory cannot be realized in thought: it is a mere name or symbol of a process wholly unintelligible to us, because outside of the circle of our experience. And, secondly, it would not in the least help us to understand the origin of the material of which the universe consists. No simile can make intelligible to us the creation of matter out of nothing, which is the real mystery. Then, lastly, it might be asked, How came there to be an external agency? But without dwelling upon this last point, we have enough left to warrant the rejection of the creationist's dogma. And Mr. Spencer rejects it. In my opinion, a great gain might thereby have enured to theology, had not its defenders identified with this suppositious creation the fact of the existence of God.

But as the case stood, Mr. Spencer was entitled to say: "If it is from the creation of the world you argue to a First Cause, I declare God unknowable, since creation is absolutely inconceivable." But Mr. Spencer was not entitled to go farther. As originator of the world at some point of time, God is certainly inconceivable. But as eternal ground of all existence, God is not only conceivable, but necessary to the thought that goes far enough in its analysis of given reality. How short a journey Mr. Spencer made in this direction is evidenced by his *naïf* designation of the doctrine of the eternal existence of the world as the atheistic theory, and his declaration that self-existence is rigorously inconceivable. The fact is, he has been taught by the theist there is no God who does not begin things; and since he finds no evidence of such absolute origination, which is also inconceivable, he draws the all too hasty conclusion that the power which the universe manifests to us is utterly inscrutable. Thus agnosticism becomes the theoretical result of that practical postulate of the pious heart which demands that God shall have created the world in order that he may control

it with some reference to the needs of mankind. The dogma that, on a certain plane of reflection, reconciles head and heart in religion, on a higher plane proves inconceivable to the one and unrefreshing to the other.

I have failed in my purpose if it is not now clear to you that, logically considered, there is no connection between the question of the existence of God and the supposed creation of the world in time. Or, to speak more precisely, as we do not know that the world had a beginning in time, and see no evidence to suppose it had, while the very thought is beset with inner contradictions, it is impossible to base on such a supposition our belief in the existence of God. This conclusion, however, you may hesitate to accept until a fuller hearing has been given to those who, denying our doctrine of the eternal existence of the world, hold that it originated in time, and is, therefore, an effect which must have been produced by an adequate cause — a cause that there is other warrant for identifying with God.

To these defenders of theism I readily concede all that is demanded by the most

favorable interpretation of the principle of causality. Whatever has begun to be, whether a thing or an event, must have a cause or antecedent which accounts for it. So much may be admitted as self-evident. And its self-evidence, let us grant, is not affected by Hume's irrefragable demonstration that we can give no reason for the necessity which always attaches to our thought of the relation between cause and effect. For everything that has come to be, there is a cause of its coming to be. If, then, it can be shown that the universe had a commencement, it may be maintained with absolute certainty that there existed a cause adequate to this great event. On the other hand, the causal principle has no application unless it can be proved that the world had a beginning. If it be an eternal existence, thought does not demand anything further. Accordingly, it will be admitted by every candid mind that the argument for the divine existence which is based on the principle of causality can be no stronger than the proof that the world actually had an origin in time.

How, now, is the absolute beginning of the universe to be established? That the

individual objects we perceive have all come into existence, nobody will be disposed to call in question. They are compounded of divers elements which came together in the lapse of time. There was a period when the strata of the earth's crust had no existence, when the earth itself was not, and the living things that creep upon it, when sun, moon, and stars were a blank, and all our world one vast abyss of impalpable ether. But when facts like these are cited to prove that the universe is an effect, the one important circumstance is overlooked, that if at any given moment the universe is an effect, its cause is found in the state of the universe at the preceding moment. We find no such thing as an absolute beginning. Alike in our examination of particular objects and of the entire solar system, what we find is, that reality abides, while its phases vary. The confusion between relative and absolute beginning, which is unavoidable for immature thought, but which the Hellenic mind had overcome in the first stage of its philosophy, ought not to have been offered as the foundation of theism to a generation that had just made the great discovery of

the law of the conservation of energy and the indestructibility of substance. To the modern scientist, as to the ancient Greek cosmologist, the universe is eternal, but subject eternally to evolutions and dissolutions. As a whole, it is not an effect of anything outside itself. And if you cannot find God in the world as its substance and very self, you certainly cannot make him first cause of what you have so far failed to prove an event in time.

But at this point the argument from causality takes a new turn. It admits for the nonce, at any rate, that there is something eternal in the physical universe; and, having identified this eternal element with dead atoms, it challenges them alone to produce the world we know. The challenge is unanswerable. Matter and motion are in the world; but they are its mechanism, not its essence. The atomistic theory furnishes a useful net to catch the world in for the purpose of expressing its relations by mathematico-physical formulæ. But of course it abstracts from everything in the world save extended atoms moving in a void. And these no more constitute the universe than a skeleton constitutes

the living organism that once built it up for the development of its own life. When the atomistic framework of thought is represented as the formative principle of the cosmos, the abstract thinker has simply become the slave of his own abstractions. Of course the germ of the universe must have been pregnant with all that the universe has since become. There, too, lay order, unity, life, thought. But this perfectly just conclusion makes against that separation of nature and spirit, of which our theist was guilty when he admitted, at least for the sake of argument, the existence of eternal and immutable atoms of matter. Material atoms, he argues, even if eternal, could not produce our world. Ordering intelligence is necessary. But the law of parsimony forbids the assumption of two ultimate causes if one is sufficient. Matter alone is not sufficient. But mind which originates the universe, when matter is given, could presumably have created its materials as well as control them. Therefore, a Supreme Intelligence is the cause of the universe. The argument which began with conceding the eternity

of matter ends with an assurance of the eternity of spirit alone.

But neither has this intellectual somersault made good the position, without which the argument from causality is of none effect. It has not yet been shown that the universe actually had a beginning in time. The one-sided abstraction of materialism has been brushed away by an equally one-sided abstract spiritualism. Matter is a mere symbolic conception. What we actually know is a complex of material things, arranged and organized as nature. Go back as far as science and imagination can carry you, and this external sphere, however changed in aspect, remains still a cosmos. To posit, therefore, the eternity of a chaos of atoms is a sheer absurdity. You can reach it only by annihilating in thought this orderly reality that is given to us. You pulverize the body of nature, and then find the dust inadequate to produce the universe. You next call in the aid of Intelligence. But being unwilling to accept two ultimate principles, you ask us to believe that spirit once existed without embodiment, and sometime afterwards manufactured nature. Mean-

time we have waited patiently for the indispensable proof that nature, both the inner spirit and the outer material expression, was not an eternal existence. The refutation of materialism, far from touching this question, only showed that the universe, whether created or uncreated, is the scene of intelligence, as well as of mobile and extended atoms. That one of these was prior to the other has as little meaning as that two intersecting lines are prior to the angle they enclose. We can in thought attend either to the intersecting lines or to the enclosed angle; but in reality there never can be an angle without intersecting lines, nor intersecting lines without an angle. Similarly the universe we know, and therefore the only universe we can talk about, embraces not only moving particles but a plan of their arrangement, and not only a material cosmos but organic life and self-conscious thought. In this case, it is true, natural history assures us there was a time when the earth held no living or thinking beings. But since they have actually appeared, it is certain there never was a time when nature had not the capacity of producing them. And instead of regard-

ing nature before their emergence as a chaos of atoms, we are bound to interpret it as a developing cosmos, which contains in itself the promise and potency of all terrestrial life and intelligence. To ask if the atoms took counsel together and formed the world, is an absurd question, for it supposes atoms existing apart from intelligence. But atoms are merely the hypothetical elements of that material vesture in which spirit has eternally expressed itself. Spirit is the eternal reality, and nature its eternal manifestation. The vice of the argument for the origination of the world in time is, that it mistakes the relation between intelligence and its expression for an opposition of entities, of which one has to be shown prior to the other. In truth, nature is the externalization of spirit, and no more separable from it than the spoken word from the thought it symbolizes.

I think it will now be conceded that the argument from causality, through failure to prove that the universe began in time, cannot demonstrate the existence of a First Cause outside the universe. And this conclusion is independent of Kant's dictum that the causal relation holds good

only of phenomena within the universe, not of the universe itself and something beyond. I will not object to your applying the causal relation to the universe as a whole, provided you can show that, like any other effect, it has come into existence at some moment of time. But this *conditio sine qua non* it is impossible to satisfy. Hence I conclude that the truth of the argument from causality lies not in an extra-mundane Cause or Maker of a created world, but in an intra-mundane Cause or ground of an uncreated world. Against both these latter conceptions, however, Kant would protest. Restricting causality to sensible phenomena, and maintaining we could know nothing of what lay beyond or beneath, he would pronounce the conception of an "intra-mundane cause" an empty illusion. I have shown, in an earlier lecture, that this agnosticism is in large part the outcome of a rationalism which later thought has completely overcome. And with the modern view of the relation between sensation and thought, we find it perfectly legitimate to interpret sensible phenomena, which are only the raw material of knowledge, in terms of

their supersensuous ground. And the real meaning of the argument from causality is that the objects we perceive by sense are not themselves ultimates, since their material character of independence vanishes in the light of reflective thought; and that, standing as they do in fixed relations to one another as members of a single cosmos with a single system of laws, they must be interpreted as moments of one underlying reality, which to explain all their characteristics, can only be conceived as an infinite spirit. The contention that this spirit has expressed itself eternally through nature will also be met by the Kantian disproof of the eternity of the world. But keen as is the reasoning in all Kant's antinomies, which Hegel regarded as the crowning achievement of the *Critique*, I can find no contradiction in the thought that far as we recede in time we never touch the initial point of existence. And since what is true of the area actually traversed by thought is true of all that remains, we may, following the reasoning of the mathematicians, conclude that nowhere had the world a beginning in time. On the other hand, we can see

the absurdity of annihilating at any given stage of our regression the universe which is given to us as real. If such legerdemain is practised for the sake of winning a deity, it is certainly unnecessary; for God is ever present, underneath our hands and among our feet, in the actual world which is given to us and which we can think of only as eternal.

Our datum is the universe of reality. A sound philosophy must discover God, if there be a God, here and now at the heart of this reality. When we think of it as non-existent to make place for a creator, we are only playing with an abstraction that could never have been formed save as an opposite to the given fact of existence.

It may further be remarked that our views of matter have undergone a great change since Locke gave to the argument from creation its first classic expression in modern philosophy. We still hold that the invisible things of God are clearly seen from the existence of the world, being understood by the things that appear, even His eternal power and Godhead; but we can talk no longer of a making, manu-

facturing, or creating of matter. Yet to Locke such creation of an incogitative material being seemed one and the first great piece of God's workmanship; and for that reason he refused to think of matter as co-existent with an eternal mind. Now were mind mere thought and matter mere passive extension, as the philosophy of the seventeenth century conceived them, we might hesitate to bring them together in one existence. But the science of later centuries has shown that we can draw no clear line between cogitative and incogitative beings (to use Locke's phrases), and that this seemingly passive, inert matter that forms the stuff of the world consists of elements or molecules, whose essence lies in activity and which can scarcely be distinguished from souls. Or, in more precise terms, while Locke's conception of nature was that of a vast mass of dead extended substance, we know it as an infinitude of activities, ranging from molecules to souls and forming an aggregate which is a cosmos, whose containing, vivifying, and ordering principle is God. For Locke, the Deity is needed only as creator of the inert world. For us, He is the

universal life in which all individual activities are included as moments of a single organism. Of these individual activities that constitute what we call the created world some are higher than others, some have risen to the relative independence of self-conscious souls; but none of them are other than parts or functions of the eternal life of God, who, as the Scripture says, is above all and through all and in all, and in whom we live and move and have our being.

We have now reached a point of view from which it may be seen that the relation of God to the world is not happily described in terms of causation. God is the immanent ground of the universe. The universe is the eternal expression of the divine will. But as ordinarily understood, cause and effect express a relation between finite and separable things. This is too meagre a category for representing the eternal connection between the existence and the external or mundane manifestation of the infinite Spirit. But in a way not often suspected the notion of cause and effect does, as Lotze has in recent times insisted, lead to this very conception of the God-

head. The course of the argument must now be exhibited, although its abstractness demands fuller treatment than can be given to it in the remainder of this lecture.

The causal relation is absolutely necessary for our apprehension of the facts of the universe. So much even Hume admits, sceptical as his theory of causation is. Now although science can get along with abstracting from everything in this relation save order in time, we fall victims to our own abstractions when we suppose that causation is nothing else than uniformity of sequence or co-existence. This is only the temporal expression of a real connection between things. How there came to be such a thing as causal efficiency in the world we can no more explain than how there came to be an actual, and not merely a thinkable, world, or why, given reality, it should not have been in everlasting rest rather than in an eternal state of becoming. But given the fact of efficient causation, we may, nevertheless, ask what we mean by that fact and how the universe must be constituted to make it possible, mysterious as in its nature the fact will still remain. In a word, how can things act on one

another, as we say they do when causally connected?

This mutual influence is generally attributed to contact in space. And in many cases, if not in all, the approximation of one body to another is the indispensable condition of their reciprocal action. But this observation, customary as it is, gives no explanation of the real ground of all physical occurrence. What inner connection is there between contact in space and the exertion of physical action? If two beings were really independent of one another, how could a change of position in space affect their self-contained sufficiency or induce them to become dependent upon one another? If through a certain co-existence in space (contact, for example) two things originally and essentially indifferent to one another are forced out of their indifference and compelled to have respect to one another, so that the one orders its states according to the states of the other, then it must be supposed that this co-existence is more than a co-existence in space, being perhaps a metaphysical co-existence of which the spatial is only a symbol, and consequently that the self-

sufficing independency of the two things is not actual, but apparent only in and through the isolating nature of space. At any rate, mere spatial contact does not explain why things originally indifferent to one another, become susceptible of mutual action or wherein action consists.

Equally unintelligible is the popular saying that in efficient causation some influence passes over from the cause to the effect. The states of *A* are *A*'s and the states of *B* are *B*'s, and as the first cannot leave their attachment and wander over to *B*, neither could *B* receive them if they did. And were the case otherwise the problem would still remain; only instead of asking why *A*, we should now ask why a state of *A* should produce a change in *B*, which was originally self-sufficing and independent of everything else. The causal relation, in a word, cannot be thought without contradiction if we continue to represent it as a transference of efficacy from one independent element to another. This conception of transeunt action must be abandoned. And so much was recognized by the authors of the theories of Occasionalism and Pre-estab-

lished Harmony, whatever other defects may be found in their systems. How causal action is produced, how it comes about that the realization of a certain condition effaces one state and superinduces another in the real world, no philosophy can pretend to explain. But given this indubitable fact, then it may be thinkable from one point of view and unthinkable from another. Now that the occurrence of something should be the condition of the occurrence of something else we readily admit so long as both states fall within the unity of a single being. But that a state of one being should be the condition of the state of another separate and independent being is little less than contradictory. The former operation we call immanent, the latter transeunt. Manifestly then, the desideratum of thought is that causality shall be construed as the immanent operation of one single and real being, as infinite as the universe whose processes we apprehend through the notion of causal efficiency.

The unity of being is involved in the notion of reciprocal action between individual beings. If *A* and *B* were really

independent and self-subsisting unities, the states of *A* would be quite indifferent to *B*. But *A* and *B* are so far from this mutual indifference that each concerns itself with the states of the other and conforms its own to them. Nothing remains for us, therefore, but to surrender the vulgar belief in the existence of a multiplicity of independent things. There is but one real being; and of it *A* and *B* and all existing things must be conceived as parts, moments, or functions. We perceive them separately; but they are not really independent and self-subsisting. The difficulty in understanding the influence of *A* upon *B* vanishes when the false supposition which we all bring from "common sense," namely, that finite things, so long as they exist, have an absolute existence, is replaced by a philosophical monism that treats them, not as self-subsisting essences, but as manifold elements, of which the existence and content (to appropriate the language of Lotze) is throughout conditioned by the nature and reality of the one self-identical existence of which they are organic members. In a case of reciprocal action, when *A* becomes *a*, *B* becomes *b*,

and we naïvely describe the occurrence as the transeunt operation of one isolated reality upon another. But when *A* and *B* are recognized as modifications of the one absolute being, it will be seen that the change of *A* to *a* is already a change in this absolute being. And if this absolute being is to maintain its identity it must set up a compensating change or state *b*, which appears to our apprehension as a change in the thing *B*. Thus what seems to us an action of *A* upon *B* is in truth only an immanent operation of the one absolute being. In maintaining its own identity, it brings about that appearance of connection between *A* (*a*) and *B* (*b*), each of which is complementary to the other, in expressing the ever-abiding import of the one absolute being.

Efficient causation is a fact. It cannot be interpreted without contradiction as an action between independent beings. The assumption, which in common life we all make, that there is a multiplicity of originally self-subsisting things, must therefore be abandoned. In its place we must set the postulate of one absolute being, of which so-called things are merely states or

modifications. In this absolute being and for it, through it, and by means of it, and above all for the sake of it, individual things exist, act, and cease to exist. Of these immanent existences some are *mere* states of the absolute reality; others are also self-conscious subjects, which in a measure lift themselves above and outside the universal basis of existence. The difference between the two groups is, in Hegelian language, that of being *an sich* (in itself, or simply) and being *für sich* (for itself). To the former class belongs the whole world of impercipient things, with all their so-called activities. To the latter class belong all spiritual beings, that is, every subject which is conscious of its states and opposes itself to them as the permanent unity that has them. That is a subject of states, which distinguishes itself from its states. That is a unity which opposes itself as one to the multiplicity of its states. But this spiritual life, of which we are immediately aware in ourselves, is precisely what is required of the absolute being if it is to satisfy the conditions for the sake of which it was postulated. The unitary, all-embracing reality, which emerged

from our analysis of efficient causation, takes accordingly the characteristics of an infinite spirit.

Thus the causal argument proper points to anthropocosmic theism. And the causal argument improperly so designated, namely the inference from creation, contains at least the truth of the eternal dependence of the world upon God. But the nature of that being which is the ground of the world, and which we have called God, remains as yet undefined. We have, indeed, expressed a conviction of the life and spirituality of the one absolute reality. For we could find nothing but living spirit that was able to solve the problem of holding together in a unity those modifications or moments into which our analysis of causality compelled us to resolve all finite things. And this spirit must be volitional as well as self-conscious; for without will there could be no activity, no efficient causation, no material universe. But further determination of that absolute life, as it is in itself and as it manifests itself in nature and in human history, is necessary to the satisfaction both of the philosophical and the religious consciousness. And this I

hope will be to some extent attained in the two remaining lectures, the next of which will start with the argument from teleology.

## LECTURE V.

### BELIEF IN GOD AS REALIZING PURPOSE IN THE WORLD.

WE have convinced ourselves that the ground or immanent "cause" of the universe must be an Infinite Spirit. Of the nature of spirit we are immediately aware through our own self-conscious experience. In the light of this microcosm we must regard ultimate reality as a subject conscious of states, which it distinguishes from itself as the unity that has them and holds them together, and as a subject exerting will-power whereby changes are produced in the totality of these states, yet without detriment to the identity of the absolute life they all express. This is the underlying truth of the argument from a First Cause. It takes the universe up into the eternal life of God.

Popular thought, as usual, attempts to gain pictorial distinctness by turning this

organic union into a process of fabrication with well-marked differences of space, of time, of power, and of essence between the universe and God. God was first, and the world afterwards; and as in the regressive eternity he was alone before its creation, so in the progressive eternity he will be alone after its annihilation. The world is limited in its extension; but God fills the immensities of space. The world is a storehouse of second causes; God is the First Cause; and though it was he who invested the world with its powers, that was long ago, and ever since the world has gone on of itself, while he has been a mere sabbatic observer. God is the absolutely perfect being; the universe, like everything finite, is imperfect. Such is the hard and fast theology of popular thought, of which the deism of the eighteenth century is the most highly developed sample.

But these theses are all not merely arbitrary and improbable, but unthinkable and contradictory. What God did he was always doing; and the universe is the eternal manifestation of his activity. If you call it a creation, it is a continuous creation. And those second causes, which you

think stored up in the material universe, — what are they but centres of energy through which the one supranatural will pours forth his all-animating life and power? The world is not a machine, charged with limited dynamics, but the expression of one ever-active and inexhaustible will. Furthermore, that the external manifestation is as boundless as the life it expresses, science makes exceedingly probable. In any event, we have not the slightest reason to contrast the finitude of the world with the infinitude of God. At the farthest imaginable remove of space, the universe stretches indefinitely beyond, and we can think of it only as illimitable. Lastly, as the universe, at every moment of its existence, expresses at least a phase of the divine life, its so-called imperfection resolves itself into a momentary aspect, a part, of a perfect whole. At no moment does it reveal the absolute fulness of the divine life; but at no moment is it anything else than a function of that divine life.

Nor let us draw back from these inexorable demands of thought as pantheistic. So long as we have an infinite spirit holding

communion with finite spirits, we need not be terrified by a terminological bugbear. And this essential of theism (of which we shall have more to say in the next lecture) is certainly not endangered by the cosmic philosophy I have just propounded in refutation of deism. That nature should be comprehended as the living tissue which a divine spirit is ever a-weaving may be unacceptable to the unreflecting masses, as it certainly is to the materialistic philosopher; but there is nothing in the doctrine dangerous, or even antipathetic, to natural theology. I cannot even agree with those who think that the theist is concerned to maintain the actuality of a divine life or agency beyond the natural order of things, and prior to it. For if the natural order is eternal and infinite, as there seems no reason to doubt, it will be difficult to find a meaning for "beyond" and "prior." Of this illimitable, ever-existing universe God is the inner ground and substance. He is, of course, no more identical with the world than a man's self is identical with his body. It may, therefore, readily be conceded that God is more than the contents of nature, if by these is meant a summa-

tion of all natural existences as perceived or perceivable by the senses. On the other hand, there is no evidence, nor does any religious need require us to believe, that the divine being manifest in the universe has an actual or possible existence somewhere else, in some transcendent sphere; though in such a supposition there is, of course, no contradiction, and it has recently been urged with noble fervor by Dr. Martineau. That God should speak his whole being in the world of natural, animate, and human powers seems incredible to this great religious thinker. Agreeing in the doctrine of *All-immanency*, which finds nothing in the objective world but God, he couples with it the doctrine of *Some-transcendency*, which makes God not only almighty in the sense of all the infinite might there is, but mighty for absolutely all things, conceivable and real alike. Now, it is no doubt possible that though nature and humanity are manifestations of God, they do not express his whole being, any more than our words are an exhaustive expression of our personality. Yet it is equally conceivable that God has revealed his whole being, though man has yet read

but part of the revelation. And in any case, we may be sure that the revelation, whether total or partial, is a true expression of the divine nature. Hence we cannot follow Dr. Martineau in treating the cosmos which has come into being as but a sample of an unknown number that might have been. Such a plurality of cosmic possibilities he thinks necessary for the vindication of the ways of God, against those who complain of the arrangements of the present world, and attribute them to weakness, as though God could not have done otherwise.

In short, this belief in a divine potency to realize an infinitude of possible universes is the opposite pole to J. S. Mill's suggestion of a beneficent but baffled designer of the world. But the motive to a philosophy, however moving it may be, is no proof of the validity of that philosophy. And I cannot discover any theoretical ground for that notion of *Some-transcendency* which plays so large a part in Dr. Martineau's system of theism. Complete as is his break with deism, I cannot but regard this feature of his teaching as an unconscious survival from the deistic conception of God's relation to

the universe. Of course, if God created the universe at a definite moment of time, he leads a transcendent life apart from it. And in imagining the process of creation, the deist naturally represented the divine builder as realizing, through his will, one of a number of ideas which floated before his mental vision. When, however, the world is regarded as an eternal act, as it is by Dr. Martineau, it becomes more difficult, though perhaps not absolutely impossible, to preserve the analogy to a human artificer. We have not the same motive as before for emphasizing that selective will-function which we attribute to self-conscious beings who *begin* events. Of course this is no reason for conceiving God as devoid of will. But the divine will differs at least in two respects from the human. With God volition and realization are one. And conflicting motives being absent from an all-wise being, the divine will functions with a perfection so absolute that, even to a spectator who believed in freedom, it would have at least the appearance of determination. Our best analogy is not the perplexed and hesitating mechanician, but the good man, who,

by a kind of necessity of his character, cannot but will the virtuous acts which express that character. Of course the good man has made this second nature by moral endeavor. But the fact remains that the perfection of human nature is reached only when will has become, as it were, secondarily automatic.

Now, of all human volition, it is this that is likeliest God's. The divine will can express itself only as it does, because no other expression would reveal what it is. Of such a will the eternal universe is the eternal realization. If you cease to think of God under the deistic conception of creator, author, designer, or maker of the universe, you can justify his ways only by appeal to the movements of this universe, which are, in truth, his volitions; for any primeval selection and realization of this cosmic scheme, in preference to others equally possible, you have not the slightest ground to assume. The world is not one of countless possible machines, as the mathematico-mechanical genius of the eighteenth century conceived it, but the organic expression, and the only real expression, of the life of an eternal and infinite spirit. To imagine its place

taken by another world is to imagine God other than he is. The possibility of a multitude of worlds is like the possibility of a multitude of gods. But a right thought of ultimate reality must recognize it as the primal ground of distinction between the actual and the possible, — a distinction, therefore, not applicable to that reality itself.

As popular thought has turned the truth of a self-revealing spirit into the picture of an external creator of the world, so it has converted the fact of arrangement, especially noticeable in the realm of organic life, into an argument for the existence of a designer of the world. From the orderly arrangements and adaptations that appear an inference is made to a rational creative architect of the universe. In the history of philosophy this step appears to have been first consciously taken by Anaxagoras. To him the beauty, harmony, and design in the world seemed inexplicable save as the work of a rational, intending, and omnipotent intelligence or *νοῦς*. His predecessors inclined to materialism or to hylozoism. But from this time onward designing mind remained a cosmic

principle in the schools of Greek philosophy. Socrates is especially noteworthy for the prominence he gives to ends in the interpretation of nature, though he conceives them rather superficially and almost altogether in relation to human welfare as a final object. This anthropocentric teleology continued to flourish in the post-Aristotelian schools, and in the dogmatic theology of Christendom it was an essential constituent. It was the natural counterpart of a geocentric astronomy, and both received their doom at the hand of Copernicus. So that at the present day we should all agree in the observation of Hegel that, though wine be useful to man, neither religion nor science is profited by supposing the cork-tree to exist for the sake of the corks which are cut from its bark to serve as stoppers for wine-bottles.

Obviously from this class of adaptations to external ends, all of which are incidental results of the otherwise established constitution of natural objects and forces, no inference can be made to the character of the power that animates the universe. The modern teleologist, therefore, turns to adaptations to internal ends. These he

finds, in living organisms, where the parts exist and act for the sake of the whole, by the idea of which they seem to be controlled. Here at any rate there appears to be indication of an aim in nature. Not that the teleologist regards the rest of the world as aimless. On the contrary, he is persuaded that the order of the whole cosmos, which science is only beginning to reveal to us, is evidence of an intelligent cause. But the marks of intentionality are more obvious in the field of organic nature than elsewhere. The features of intending will, nowhere absent, are especially discernible in the adaptations and adjustments of the parts and functions of living beings. And it is these select and conspicuous instances that form the starting point of the so-called argument from design.

This argument, under the designation of the physico-theological proof of the existence of God won the respect, if not the assent, of the "all-destroying" Kant. Of all proofs to establish the existence of a Supreme Being, Kant pronounced it the oldest, the clearest, and the most consonant with human reason. And in spite of later attempts at improvement, his

analysis of the argument is still perhaps the best that has ever been given. He enumerates four principal points. First, there are in the world clear indications of intentional arrangements, various and boundless. Secondly, these could not have originated spontaneously from the nature of things themselves, but only through means selected and arranged on purpose by a rational disposing principle, according to certain fundamental ideas. Thirdly, there exists, therefore, a free, intelligent cause of the world. Fourthly, the unity of this cause may be inferred from the unity of the reciprocal relations of the parts of the world.

Without inquiring at present into the inner connection and consistency of this argument, I may observe that it cannot get under way at all without affirming the presence of aims and intentions in the world. Intentionality we know from our own self-conscience experience. The teleological theist ought, therefore, to compare the works of nature with the purposive activity of man to discover whether they have the marks of intending thought. Given design, there must of course be a

designer; but that there is design anywhere in the world nothing but the discovery of analogies to the intellectual purpose of man can make even probable.

It was much easier in the eighteenth century than it is to-day to be persuaded of the presence of design in the universe. The growth of chemistry and biology has made impossible to us that mechanical view of nature which the physics of Galileo and Newton impressed indelibly upon the mind of earlier generations. Conceiving God as an extraneous maker of the world, they regarded living organisms as curiously wrought machines which, more than any other piece of the divine handiwork, showed the purposive activity of the great artificer. Indeed, the whole inanimate universe, from the structure of the solar system to the fall of an apple, was accounted for by the inherent qualities of matter and the empirical laws of motion, so that in the field of cosmic infinitude God was needed only as original creator of unarranged materials. But for the science of that day living organisms were not amenable to similar treatment. And not only did they demand a creator for their matter,

but a designer for their balanced and harmonious forms. The arrangement of matter in the inorganic world seemed natural and necessary; in the organic, supernatural and contingent. Here, therefore, reflection found machines in which the divine artificer with wondrous skill and cunning had embodied plans and realized ends of transcendent intelligence. And this remains the view of the generality of mankind until this day.

But it is no longer so inevitable for the scientist. The scientific view of nature has been transformed by the recent discoveries of the conservation of energy, of the dynamics of molecules, and of the cellular structure of organisms. Had the thinkers of the eighteenth century been aware of these later results in physics, chemistry, and biology, there can be little doubt they would have left us a purely mechanical or, at any rate, naturalistic account of organic beings. This would have been quite conformable with their habitual mode of thought. But whether such expulsion of purpose from the organic sphere would have been justifiable is by no means so evident. All that I am maintaining is the

greater difficulty of establishing the presence of purpose in the world under the changed conditions of contemporary science. We have gained so much more knowledge of nature's operations that even the correlation of parts and functions in living organisms has no longer that unique unexplicableness that stamped it for earlier thinkers the special product of creative purpose.

This explains why a philosophical theologian like Dr. Flint virtually abandons the argument from design. He misses the analogy between the works of nature and the products of art. The former, he says, disclose adaptations, but not purposes. An organism is defined as a systematic unity whose parts are definitely related to one another and co-ordinated to a common issue. In it we find an orderly arrangement. And it is the presence of order, not of purpose or intention, that justifies, according to Dr. Flint, our inference to a divine intelligence.

Still, we shall find it difficult to surrender altogether our teleological view of the world. Though unable in perhaps the majority of cases to assign ends to the nicely

co-ordinated structures of living beings, we cannot but believe that they do actually realize ends preconceived by intelligence. Of course it must not be hastily assumed that every conspicuous property or function which we find in objects, is their intrinsic end. "That the property of rain is to wet, and fire to burn," is of interest only in the natural philosophy of Touchstone. Again, though conic sections are described by the movements of the planets, it would be rash to suppose such orbits were the final cause of their existence. On the other hand, it scarcely admits of doubt that the end of the eye is sight, and of the ear hearing. Of this kind is the abiding truth, as I think every candid person must concede, in the so-called argument from design. But this fact tells us nothing of the intelligence that had a preconception of the end. And for anything we can see to the contrary, it may be immanent in the original nature of the elements, or if it is external to them, it may have its seat in a plurality of creative spirits. There is much, therefore, wanting before a theistic structure can be reared on the teleological basis. Indeed, did we not already know from the cosmological argu-

ment of the existence of one infinite spirit as ground of all existence, we should, I think, never become convinced of it by means of the argument from design. But given that belief in anthropocosmic theism, we readily find in the adaptations of organisms the expression of an infinite self-conscious will and intelligence.

Of course the case would be much worse were the reality of purpose in the world denied or explained away. The teleologist holds that living beings are conspicuous examples of the realization of an end, for the sake of which all their adjustments and adaptations originated. That end could be conceived only by an intelligence. But as the animal's organs are ready-made gifts of nature, and its instincts original endowments, intelligence, it is held, works through it as a medium rather than in it as a subject. Organisms do not shape themselves by self-conscious reflection; and yet they are the embodiment of reason. It is this circumstance that justifies their comparison with works of art, and, in spite of many dissimilarities, suggests the inference to an organizing intelligence. But manifestly this inference would be supererogatory, if

it were thinkable that ends might be realized in the organic world without any preconception of them. In the products of human skill the idea always goes before and guides the movements of the hand. And as our own causation is the only one we know immediately, and know on the inner as well as on the outer side, we have taken it as a universal type, and supposed with Aristotle that without an idea there could be no action directed upon an end. And as the idea was not to be found in the living organisms themselves, it was naturally located in a supreme intelligence that worked through them. But the modern philosophy of unconsciousness would change all that. It sets out, not with self-conscious intelligence which is nearest and best known, but with animal instincts which are earlier, more distant, and more opaque. Because there is no intention on the part of the animal that follows its instincts, it is assumed that nature, working blindly, may realize ends. This universal mode of operation comes in man to the light of consciousness. Man knows that he realizes ends ; but, according to Schopenhauer, the end also operates as

a motive on a being that knows it not. Nor is this paradox relieved by Hartmann's motiving the will with an unconscious idea. The contradiction remains, that ends unconceived should ever become motives for their own appropriate realization. To human understanding this is simply unintelligible. It asserts and denies in the same breath. Whether or not there be purpose in the world, no end can exercise an influence on its own realization unless it be actually present to an intelligence.

The philosophy of unconsciousness is of course pledged to the ejection of a conscious intelligence from nature. That it should, however, cleave so tenaciously to ends, of which that intelligence alone is the condition, is a remarkable testimony to the strength of our natural conviction of the presence of purpose in the world. Unfortunately this ineradicable belief in design, this rejection of a purposeless universe, has been associated in the popular mind with certain theories regarding the realization of purpose, which modern science has rendered obsolete. The ordinary teleologist deems himself under obligation to set an impassable barrier between the inorganic

and the organic world. So that in the legitimate inquiry of science for a natural origin and development of living organisms he sees something antagonistic to his belief in design. Just as the plain man wants a God who is separate in space and time, in essence and action from the only reality he knows anything about, so his faith in the intentionality of things would be surer if the field of organic nature were hedged about and separated from the inorganic, and the natural law that reigns inexorably in the latter held only dubious and accommodating sway in the former. Perhaps it is not too much to say that the generality of mankind emphasize the wonderful and unaccountable constitution of living organisms rather than the end or purpose it embodies. For this makes the postulate of a wonder-working creator all the more necessary. Thus beside the material world with its natural processes, conceived of vaguely as once non-existent though now self-subsistent, popular thought sets up a second principle as supernatural and ever-active ground of living beings which it mysteriously produces or creates.

This conception of the argument from

design has been outgrown by modern views of nature and irrevocably shattered by Darwinian biology. The scientist no longer believes in external interference with the order of nature. The formation of living organisms must be explained by processes as purely natural as the occurrences of the physical world. It is true that this ideal is as yet unrealized in the case of the first germs of life. But there is nothing absurd in the supposition that these should one day be derived from the elements of the material world. And, however that may be, the growth of germs can already be understood as a physico-chemical process. Hence even if conscious design is operative in the organic world, it realizes its ends in accordance with those laws of mechanism which in the popular estimation are exclusive of design. An end would be for us as good as non-existent which could not express itself through the regular sequences and co-existences of the natural world. And an end so expressing itself must be regarded as the necessary product of causal connections. It is not, as popular thought puts it, that an external designer brings

together at any given moment the means necessary for the realization of the end; but from moment to moment the status of the natural world as a whole and in every detail is precisely what it is determined to be by the condition of its own inherent powers and agencies. If, therefore, in the organic world ends are realized, as we believe they are, the ground must be sought not outside the realm of natural law, but within it—or rather in an intelligence whose purpose is expressed through the medium of natural law. In a word, the teleology of to-day must be perfectly compatible with the scientific postulate of universal and invariable causality.

It is at this point that the Darwinian theory of natural selection has come into such violent conflict with the popular view of design. Darwin maintained there was a natural cause for the development of life with all its organs, functions, and instincts; and that in any given case the finished organ, function, instinct, or entire organism was only one surviving form out of many possible forms, and owed its predominance over them to the greater benefits, as regards food, protection, and the

like, which it ensured to its survivor in the universal struggle for existence. The Darwinian view is no doubt destructive of the ordinary conception of design. In bringing the whole organic field under the rule of natural law it has taken a step which most teleologists still hesitate to follow. And in substituting for specially designed and sudden creations the idea of slowly differentiating organisms between which struggle for life is the only arbiter, it shocks common sense with the suggestion alike of a chance government of the world and of a reckless prodigality of material in the attainment of its final configuration. But no theory can gainsay this apparent wastefulness of life with the facts of biology before our eyes. And what is here called chance is really causation, but causation meandering through obscure and mazy paths where we had supposed that the direct way was the only possible line of advance. But it would be a mistake to regard Darwinism as a refutation of the doctrine of ends in nature. It is merely the refutation of a particular theory, though a venerable one, regarding the mode in which ends are realized in the

organic world. No doubt for the great majority who are unable to distinguish between the accidents and the essence of teleology, the collapse of the older biology is synonymous with the doom of the argument from design. But sober reflection will convince us that it only changes the location and mode of realizing ends. If everything in the universe were derived according to natural laws from a primordial arrangement of elements, we might be surprised that things had developed in one way rather than in another, but we could, nevertheless, entertain no doubt that if intention were manifest in the issue, it must already have been present at the beginning. And by a wonderful forecast of genius, Paley virtually accepted the modern theory of evolution.

“Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun.” The eye has supplied the teleologist with more examples of intention than any other organ. Suppose now that Darwin is correct in assuming that natural selection, by a successive consolidation of favorable variations, has converted the simple apparatus of an optic nerve, coated with pigment and

invested by transparent membrane, into the perfect human eye with its nerves and muscles, its lenses and humors, its retina and coatings, and all its innumerable contrivances for perfect adaptation to the function of seeing. Is then the eye the realization of no divine idea? Rather is not all this mechanism of variations, struggles, and inheritances in the organic world, which awaited so long the interpretation of Darwin, merely the preordained means for the realization of ideas eternally present to the supreme intelligence and in a manner already prefigured in the lowest germs of life from which otherwise they could never have been developed into actuality? Divine intention does not become an accidental result when you have described its manner of working, however surprising that manner may be.

It will be interesting and instructive to study Darwin's own views of the bearing of natural selection upon the teleological conception of the world. In his systematic works there is not infrequent allusion to the subject, but in the delightful volumes of *Life and Letters* recently given to the public, we have the inmost confessions of

a candid soul, unbarring itself to the view of trusted friends. Readers of Macaulay's biography will recall his remark that, if *Clarissa Harlowe* had been lost, he and his sisters could have reproduced it from memory. It was not a novel, but a classic treatise on teleology, that left a similarly indelible impress upon the mind of Macaulay's great scientific contemporary. On November 15, 1859, Darwin wrote to Sir John Lubbock: "I do not think I hardly ever admired a book more than Paley's 'Natural Theology.' I could almost formerly have said it by heart." That Paley's argument from design in nature was, however, invalidated by the discovery of natural selection, Darwin firmly believed. Nevertheless he refused to regard the universe as the product of blind necessity; but a satisfactory setting for his teleology in relation to his science he was never able to achieve. His attitude is best indicated in the correspondence with Asa Gray. Writing on May 22, 1860, he said: "I cannot anyhow be contented to view this wonderful universe, and especially the nature of man, and to conclude that everything is the result of brute force. I am

inclined to look at everything as resulting from designed laws, with the details, whether good or bad, left to the working out of what we may call chance. Not that this notion *at all* satisfies me." And again, on June 5, 1861: "I have been led to think more on this subject of late, and grieve to say that I come to differ more from you. It is not that designed variation makes, as it seems to me, my deity, 'natural selection,' superfluous; but rather from studying lately domestic variation, and seeing what an enormous field of undesigned variability there is ready for natural selection to appropriate for any purpose useful to each creature." And shortly after, on September 17, this answer to Gray's question what would convince him of design: "If I saw an angel come down to teach us good, and I was convinced from others seeing him that I was not mad, I should believe in design. If I could be convinced thoroughly that life and mind was, in an unknown way, a function of other imponderable force, I should be convinced. If man was made of brass or iron, and no way connected with any other organism which had ever lived, I should perhaps be convinced."

In the short but pathetic chapter on "Religion," the editor has brought together a number of Darwin's deliverances on the subject of design, especially in relation to the teleological argument for the existence of God. "In my most extreme fluctuations," he wrote, as late as 1879, "I have never been an atheist, in the sense of denying the existence of a God." He explicitly states what ought never to have been doubted, that the theory of evolution is "quite compatible with the belief in a God." And to several correspondents he repeats in substance what he wrote to a Dutch student in 1873: "The impossibility of conceiving that this grand and wondrous universe, with our conscious selves, arose through chance, seems to me the chief argument for the existence of God." It is true he is always haunted by the doubt that this argument may not be valid. To the Duke of Argyle's remark that some of the Darwinian writings themselves brought to light the obvious workings of mind in nature, he replied, "Well, that often comes over me with overwhelming force, but at other times," and he shook his head vaguely, "it seems to go away." Perhaps

his habitual mode of thought is most completely and precisely expressed in the following sentence from a letter to Miss Wedgwood: "The mind refuses to look at this universe, being what it is, without having been designed; yet, where one would most expect design, *viz.* in the structure of a sentient being, the more I think on the subject, the less I can see proof of design."

This is the heart of Darwin's teleological problem. He conceived that natural selection could produce the most exquisite structures, if attainable through gradations, as he knew in general they were; and finding nothing of design in the action of natural selection, which is simply struggle for life and survival of the fittest, he had no place for design in the organic world, where, if anywhere, it ought to have been present. But what of those variations which are the material upon which natural selection works? That they too were undesigned Darwin convinced himself by a very striking argument. If we are not to believe that the forms are preordained of the broken fragments of rock tumbled from a precipice, which are fitted together by

man to build his house, why should we believe that the variations of domestic animals or plants are preordained for the sake of the breeds? And if Providence did not design for man's amusement those variations in the rock pigeon, out of which man has yet made by his own selective accumulation the pouter or the fan-tail pigeon, why should it be imagined that the variations by which, through the action of natural selection, the beautifully adapted woodpecker has been formed, were providentially designed? Broken stones are not produced by nature in order that men may build houses out of them. Peculiarities of domestic animals are not produced by nature in order that breeders may consolidate them into new varieties. Why, then, are variations in living beings held to be designed, when, through the selective action of the struggle for life, those best adapted to the environment are consolidated and perpetuated in new forms? If the principle of design is given up in the one case, Darwin's conviction was that there was no shadow of reason for retaining it in the other; and to Asa Gray, who believed in designed variations, he wrote

(November 26, 1860): "I cannot believe this; and I think you would have to believe that the tail of the fan-tail was led to vary in the number and direction of its feathers in order to gratify the caprice of a few men." To the same effect he writes (April, 1860) to Lyell about the crop of the pouter, which pigeon-fanciers have produced: "It seems preposterous that a maker of a universe should care about the crop of a pigeon, solely to please man's silly fancies. But if you agree with me in thinking such an interposition of the Deity uncalled for, I can see no reason whatever for believing in such interpositions in the case of natural beings, in which strange and admirable peculiarities have been naturally selected for the creature's own benefit."

Forcible as this reasoning is — and Darwin wrote in his autobiography, in 1876, that he had never seen it answered — I cannot but think it gains much of its plausibility from a confusion between intrinsic and extrinsic ends. It must be freely acknowledged that neither the stones are there for the sake of the house-builder nor the extra tail-feathers for the sake of the pigeon-fancier. But being

there, they may be utilized for human ends, and that whether, considered in themselves, they are purposive or purposeless. But that men can accomplish their designs by means of existing objects, with properties and activities of their own, is a matter of course, and proves nothing further, certainly not the absence of ends inherent in the nature of those things which also happen to be serviceable to the plans of men. The intentionality that looks through the eye is not affected by the accidental circumstance that breeders may consolidate chance ocular peculiarities into some fixed habit. That is man's design, a design superimposed upon the realized end of nature. But suppose it is shown that the eye itself is the surviving summation of a series of variations of that sort, what then? I should answer that as the variations, after sifting through natural selection, have produced the eye, without interference on the part of man, it may be supposed their preordained goal. And as I find it impossible to believe that a blindly working nature should realize ends of which it has no knowledge, I conclude there is an intelligence working through

nature, with a preconception of this idea, just as it is the intelligence of the fancier, with his antecedent idea of a pouter or fantail, that enables him to utilize the means for calling them into existence. I admit that the means by which nature's designs are realized appear to us, under the Darwinian theory, to partake of wasteful and ridiculous excess. But it should be remembered that in the life of the eternal spirit, in whom and through whom are all beings, the forms that are quenched in the struggle for existence may fulfil ends just as truly as the more successful forms that gain a somewhat longer history.

There are ends everywhere in nature. We are not always able to describe them with so much certainty as in the case of the eye. These ends shape the nature and course of the variations — though through causal connections — out of which organisms and organs are consolidated. Over and above their own immanent ends, organisms also lend themselves to the extrinsic designs of man. These propositions, which seem to me to describe a tenable system of teleology in its relation to the Darwinian theory of natural selection,

are not in a single instance in conflict with that theory, or with the facts of conscious selection on the part of agriculturists and horticulturists. By this system it will be seen that the location of design is carried back from the existing to the earliest organisms and their variations; or if you choose to make a leap that science cannot yet take, to the molecular constitution of the so-called inorganic world. Here, in fact, with unerring instinct the most philosophical follower of Darwin has already domiciled it, though without recognition of the spirituality of that primordial reality to which must belong the purposes realized in the course of evolution. If without going so far we stop at the primitive germs of life, must we not think of them as endowed with a constitution capable of variation only along certain preordained lines of development? Such, at any rate, is the view of Professor Huxley. And from Darwin's own standpoint it seems to me the conception of design in the organic world should not have been thrown over until he had found an answer to that conundrum which on November 25, 1859, he somewhat profanely propounded to Mr.

Huxley. "You have," he says, "most cleverly hit on one point which has greatly troubled me; if, as I must think, external conditions produce little *direct* effect, what the devil determines each particular variation? What makes a tuft of feathers come on a cock's head, or moss on a moss-rose?" Until that query is answered, the proof that the eye has "come" by way of natural selection instead of having been "specially made," is no proof that its coming was unintentional. And when the query is answered, it will be seen that though we have in the eye a result which is brought about only in accordance with the inexorable laws of causation, it is a result that cannot be exhaustively explained on a merely mechanical or blind necessitarian theory of the universe.

Development does not negate design; it rather affirms it. When we say that anything develops, we mean that it undergoes changes which occur in a determinate manner and lead towards a definite end. Of this law of its development the organism is itself not aware. Nor can it have received the law from other individual beings, which are all in the same position.

To understand evolution, therefore, we must, as in the similar case of causation, trace it back to the real ground of the universe itself. And as causation proved to be immanent changes, self-determined and compensatory, in the life of the one absolute spirit, so in a last analysis evolution signifies besides such causation the self-positing order of divine ideas in accordance with which these changes actually occur. In their relation to his will these ideas of the Infinite Spirit must be regarded as ends. Man sees the causal mechanism by which they are realized, but to discern the ideas themselves is generally beyond his power. In the organic world he catches glimpses of them. And in the life of the human spirit they confront him in a self-conscious miniature.

But it is nature that brings to the birth not only living organisms, but also self-conscious minds. Yet they seem beyond the trick of nature as we have ordinarily understood her. Should some Polixenes remind us that

“ Even that art  
Which you say adds to nature, is an art  
That nature makes ” —

we shall not quarrel about names. But since what life and mind add to the world is something that mere blind mechanism could not of itself have produced, we are forced to see in nature a spiritual ground which, with an absolute self-consciousness of its own, may yet be said to sleep in the stone, dream in the animal, and again wake to life in man. The universe is a realized scheme of divine ideas; but, though they emerge to sight in organisms, we should never have suspected their presence but for our own self-conscious spirits, which are the chiefest product, and therefore the best interpretation, of the ultimate ground of things. Now as science cannot dispense with mechanical causes, neither can our own spirit, which originates science, allow us to regard the world as only mechanical. Darwin shows that if the idea of purpose be retained, we must not allow the arrangements of particular things to be made by a will external to them, since they can all be accounted for by means of causal actions and reactions. What remains, then, is to unite with causality a principle of immanent teleology. And this union, as it does not violate any of the postulates or facts of

science, is absolutely necessary for the interpretation of nature as the actual source of life and self-conscious intelligence. That such a synthesis of causality and teleology has already been made by many philosophical scientists, there seems good reason to believe. But so great is the current prejudice in scientific circles against spirit that, though reflection will convince any one that spirit is the only possible ground of this synthesis, these scientists continue to talk in materialistic language of a primordial molecular arrangement as the ultimate principle of their philosophy. For our own part, we must state explicitly our belief in the existence of one absolute spirit, of which all finite beings are the members or functions. And as the reality of finite things is but a mode of divine activity, so their development according to law and purpose is but the conformity of the divine will to ideas of the divine reason. In a last analysis cosmic force and intentionality alike converge in God.

It was precisely such a metaphysic that Darwin needed for escape from the haunting doubt of the reality of design in nature. "If I could be convinced thoroughly," he

said, in words already quoted, "that life and mind was in an unknown way a function of other imponderable force, I should be convinced." The real ground of doubt, you see, lies in the implied assumption that life and mind are the mere fortuitous products of a blind arrangement of material elements. But from such an unconscious materialism philosophical reflection is able to deliver us. And a sound metaphysic will show the very thing that Darwin deconsiderated, namely, that life and mind, and not only life and mind, but matter too, are functions of other imponderable force, of an absolute spiritual life in which all things have the root of their reality.

But while the teleological path may be thus made plain for those whose philosophy has already assured them of the existence of God, it is quite another question whether in itself it would conduct the doubt-driven wanderer to that primal ground of reality and truth. The difficulty is in establishing empirically the universal presence of design. How few are the cases in which we can find an intrinsic end and a combination of appropriate means for its realization! And even when

we seem to succeed, as for example in the development of plants, how seldom are the ends realized anything of absolute worth! The entire existence of plants is to themselves a matter of indifference, constructed though they obviously are with reference to the continuation of their kind. They subserve, it is true, the extrinsic end of maintaining sentient life, since, whatever be the intermediary chemical processes, all animal tribes ultimately depend for food upon vegetation. But that only provokes the further question, What, then, is the absolute value of animal existence? Man is the paragon of animals. And in man we feel there is something of absolute worth. But can we make this quintessence of dust the ultimate end of all existence? Does not anthropocentric teleology miss that true cosmic perspective which comes of remembering that the chief end of man, as of all finite things, is to glorify God?

But it is not merely that the ends we discern are few and comparatively unimportant. It is not merely that in the great majority of cases there seems to be a failure of ends. Worse than all, our picked instances of intentionality are largely neu-

tralized by nature's crop of misadjustment, uselessness, mischief, and disease. I do not mean that if we were quite certain of purposive activity in the favorable cases, we should yield that certainty when surrounded by so many exceptions of a contrary sort. But I mean that one who looked impartially at nature, on the fair side and on the foul, might on the whole doubt whether a principle of irrationality or blind chance might not as easily have produced certain semblances of design as an infinite reason and goodness that wealth of opposite instances.

This disaffection towards Nature is the inevitable result of endeavoring to read in her modes of behavior the impenetrable secrets of divine purpose. We know from our analysis of reality that there must be an infinite spirit, with self-consciousness and will. We know, therefore, there must be purpose and intention in the world, though it is scarcely given to us to discover it by observation. Yet though verifying vision fails, this is only what might have been expected from the nature of the case. And on no account, if we are to interpret the universe by a single prin-

ciple, as science, philosophy, and theology alike demand, can we forego our hypothesis of anthropocosmic theism.

But of this belief in God the argument from design, strictly estimated, could never supply the evidence. Its kernel of truth lies in the perception that the interpretation of the material is to be sought for in the living and the conscious, and that life and consciousness, though realizing themselves through mechanism, could not have been produced by it, and must indeed be considered functions of one all-embracing spirit. But when this truth assumes the form of a demonstration of the divine existence from the presence of design in the processes of nature, two defects appear in the argument, either of which is sufficient to break it. First, while the designed arrangements found in the world necessarily imply intelligence, it may be immanent in the organisms that exhibit its marks, or, since in some cases that cannot be the case, it may be found in a plurality of external creators. And this last assumption really accords well with the facts of the case. For, in the second place, the universality of design cannot, as we have

seen, be established by empirical observation. And the things that are designed may be set over against the things that are undesigned, and each sphere assigned, as in the Persian mythology, to one of two opposite creative principles. That this logically valid procedure is not generally thought of is due to the fact that those who use the argument from design are already convinced of the existence of God. They unconsciously shut their eyes to the instances of misadjustment and purposelessness. As in the temples were hung the votive offerings of those only who had *escaped* drowning, so in the argument from design it is rare to find any display of contrary facts. It is, as Bacon observed, the vice of the human mind to neglect negative instances. And that the argument from design fails at least to give them their due weight, we may realize if we put ourselves in the position of the sceptic, and inquire how we could overcome to *his* satisfaction the objections I have just urged against the conclusiveness of the teleological proof for the existence of God, as that proof is ordinarily understood.

Yet the fact remains that thought cannot

surrender the teleological view of the world. That existence has a meaning and a purpose is as certain to us as that existence is. Now, the supreme end of all things must be what theologians call the glory of God — the one absolute reality. But God glorifies himself in communicating himself. Hence we may say, with Plato and with Jonathan Edwards, the one last end of all things is that the infinite good might be communicated. But the Universal Spirit can reveal himself only in and through individual spirits, who have the power to know him and the capacity to enjoy him. And since we know of no other finite spirit than man, we may venture the inference, bold though it is, that man is indispensable for the attainment of God's glory. Thus man becomes implicated with the final cause of all creation. And here we have an answer to the question concerning anthropocentric teleology raised a few pages back. In its vulgar form that doctrine has been dislocated by the sciences, especially the heliocentric astronomy. But in its deepest thought, it has been reinstated by that theory of evolution which forms the culminating point of modern science. If man is no longer the spatial

centre of a universe that dances attendance upon him, he is the latest offspring of time in a universe that for vast geologic ages has groaned and travailed together with his birth. As Aristotle rightly saw, the end of nature is the production of man. All things are his. And unless the evolutionist's analogy between the course of the world and the growth of an organism is misleading, all things, in a certain sense, are for his sake. We cannot for a moment believe that man is merely an incident in a blind rush of mechanical changes. On the other hand, we do not, even in the case of man, expect to find the realization of a final purpose without causal connections. But it is certainly a very suggestive fact, as Darwin, but especially Wallace, has pointed out, that natural selection, which is the moving power of the organic world, and which was an active agent in the production of our species, ceases to operate in man, whose development goes on by means of self-conscious deliberation, choice, and effort. Man is to throw off his brutish heritage, and press on towards perfect life by his own free agency. And the goal of his endeavor is the actualization of those

spiritual potencies with which he feels himself charged. In the words of Pythagoras, man's aim is to be like God. In this God-likeness there is a communion with God, which is man's response to the ultimate end of all creation, — the communication of the goodness of God.

Here, then, along with the general doctrine of purpose, we have a specifically anthropic teleology. God has crowned man with glory and honor. Whether we visualize his regal position as the centre of cosmic space or the climax of cosmic time, the fact remains that the human spirit is the organ of that communication of God which is the end of the universe.

The nature of the communion between the Infinite and the finite spirit must be reserved for the following lecture.

## LECTURE VI.

### BELIEF IN GOD AS FATHER OF SPIRITS.

So far the hypothesis of the existence of one infinite spirit has presented itself as a philosophical principle for the explanation of the universe as a whole. We were led to it, you will remember, by an analysis of the fact of becoming or change. Or, more particularly, we found it impossible to understand how things should act upon one another, if, as is ordinarily supposed, they are in reality independent of one another. The fact of reciprocal action of things being given, however, there was no alternative but to regard things as functions of one all-inclusive reality which, while remaining identical with itself, yet underwent immanent changes in its states. And this postulate our own self-conscious experience enabled us to satisfy in determining the ground of all existence as spiritual. Ultimate reality, we said, must

know itself as one amid the multiplicity of its states. And as the source of changes in itself, this reality, we did not hesitate to declare, must be volitional as well as self-conscious. The infinite spirit is no mere sabbatic observer of changes that occur in the universe; it is itself the productive ground of them, and they are its states and apart from it have no existence. In the externalization of this spirit through what we call the material world, there must of course be marks of purpose. But it is so seldom human vision can discern them that were we confined to the empirical argument from design, there would be some excuse, at least in mutinous and atrabilious moods, for treating it as a disproof rather than a proof of the existence of God. Yet it by no means follows, as so many thinkers have hastily concluded, that modern science and Darwinism in particular oblige us to conceive the universe in its entirety and in all its details as the product of a blindly working mechanical necessity. For in that universe we find life and mind. And though science should ultimately succeed in reducing them to their material conditions, — a prospect that

is to-day only a dim expectancy, — their peculiar content and significance would not thereby be accounted for, and we should simply be constrained to re-interpret in other than material language the primordial elements which were capable of blossoming and ripening, under the fixed laws of mechanism, into the flower and fruit of living self-conscious spirit. Hence that teleological view of the world required by the results of our previous metaphysical analysis cannot be disannulled by science, either as science now stands or might ever conceivably stand in the future. As cosmic principle, therefore, the hypothesis of an infinite self-conscious and volitional being appears to stand on a quite solid basis.

Even this belief in God is anthropic as well as cosmic in its character. For if the universe as a whole supplies the facts for the explanation of which this hypothesis was needed, it is from man alone we borrow the content of the hypothesis. The self-conscious essence that is at home with us in the human microcosm we see to be the interpretative principle of the all-embracing macrocosm. But there is a second

sense in which this theism deserves to be called anthropic. Over and above the cosmic facts on which we have based the existence of God as a metaphysical being there are specifically human facts that shape and color the conception thus generically established. God is not merely the ground of all things. Not that I would disparage for a moment a metaphysical result short of which the comprehending intellect of man can never rest satisfied. But as the chief end of man is not knowledge, or, to express it more cautiously, as man is more than a knowing intelligence, so his interest in God must go much farther than the conception of Him as an ultimate principle for the interpretation of all existence. For our understanding of the universe, and for the universe itself so far as it is not spiritual, no other determination of the divine nature is necessary. But the complex nature of man forces us to consider other predicates of God. For man has a heart and a soul as well as a mind. And a conception of God that satisfies merely the intellect may crush the emotions and aspirations, paralyze the will, and tear from conscience all that is precious, en-

nobling, and supremely worthful in the life of humanity. That such ruthless intellectual tyranny is now the fashion in circles of higher thought I would neither conceal from myself nor from you. But the suggestion may be ventured that after all what is true in these matters must approve itself true to the whole man. Only the intellect, it is true, can trace the modes of procedure of reality, as science records them. But in determining the nature of reality itself, the whole being of man, which is the only part of reality we know immediately from the inside must be allowed to appear as witness. Whoever treats himself as the evanescent and worthless product of blind mechanical motions and percussions may of course reach a more or less consistent theory of the universe, but he has purchased it in violation of all the dearest rights and claims of personality. The question really is whether for the sake of completely realizing the scientific ideal of explaining everything by determinable mechanical processes, the self in whom and for whom and through whom all this scientific knowledge exists should itself be brought down to the level of the

categories through which it explains the world of objects; so that whatever spiritual content resisted such reduction should be declared illusory surplusage even though it included the beautiful and the good, the belief in freedom, and the hope of immortality. It is from its notion of the self, the inevitable centre of everybody's world, that every system of philosophy takes its origin and tone. And the mechanical philosophy will always be found irrefragable by the man who, as Schelling somewhere says, is himself able to realize it in practice; that is, who does not find unendurable the thought of working away at his own annihilation, surrendering the freedom of the will, and being merely the modification of a blind object in whose infinitude he finds sooner or later his own ethical destruction. Of course appeals to sentiment and prejudice would here be out of place. But the soberest reflection, I may be permitted to say, makes it impossible for me to accept this view of personality. Nor can I see any ground for it except an unreasoning prejudice in favor, exclusively, of the methods of objective science and a resolute determination to

carry them into the life of spirit (itself the author of all science) even though the first condition of success be the denial of everything that is essentially characteristic of spirit. Much as I admire the achievements of the scientific intellect, it is

“ Not for these I raise  
 The song of thanks and praise ;  
 But for those obstinate questionings  
 Of sense and outward things,  
 Fallings from us, vanishings ;  
 Blank misgivings of a Creature  
 Moving about in worlds not realised,  
 High instincts, before which our mortal Nature  
 Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised :  
 But for those first affections,  
 Those shadowy recollections,  
 Which, be they what they may,  
 Are yet the fountain light of all our day,  
 Are yet a master light of all our seeing ;  
 Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make  
 Our noisy years seem moments in the being  
 Of the eternal Silence : truths that wake,  
 To perish never ;  
 Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavor,  
 Nor Man nor Boy,  
 Nor all that is at enmity with joy,  
 Can utterly abolish or destroy ! ”

Now, if this priceless heritage of personality, these pure affections, high instincts, supersensuous cravings, and deep-seeing

intuitions, are to be kept inviolate, as they must be if we believe them to have an absolute worth, adequate provision must be made for them in any philosophy that is to approve itself true to the entire nature of man. Reality is vastly richer than human thought can compass. And speculation that escapes superficiality is almost certain to fall into the opposite vice of one-sidedness. There are more things, if not in the heavens and on the earth, assuredly in the self-conscious life of man, than are dreamt of in the mechanical philosophy; and if it is awakened to their presence, it can only explain them as illusions that accompany the functioning of those natural forces which it regards as sole reality. Personality is the rock on which such naturalistic theories always suffer shipwreck. We cannot believe ourselves to be the incidental and evanescent appearances they would make us. And for this reason, too, pantheism is an unsatisfactory philosophy. However superior to the mechanical theory in its conception of ultimate reality, in determining the relation of God to finite beings, it leaves no room for human personality. On this crucial point we must

examine also how the case stands with anthropocosmic theism.

We have held that the one eternal and ultimate reality is the absolute life of God. As self-conscious and volitional, we designate it spiritual life. Now, it is the nature of spirit to manifest itself. The material world, accordingly, we regard as the expression of the divine will. It is not, as the deist supposed, an instituted system of once created, though now self-subsisting realities, which might, as it were, go on to exist, though God should cease to be. It is the continuous efflux of the divine energy, and apart from God has absolutely no existence. Material things exist simply as modes of the divine activity; they have no existence for themselves. Spiritual things, on the other hand, exist at once in God and for themselves. They are in God; for as God is the underlying ground of all things, so philosophy must confess with Scripture that in him we too live and move and have our being. But the characteristic of spiritual beings is, that, like their divine source, they are also for themselves. That is to say, they know themselves as one amid a multiplicity of states which they

recognize as their own, and they know themselves as freely initiating action on a scene where all other actions are the determined issues of antecedent conditions. How beings can be self-contained persons and at the same time elements of the divine life, we can never perhaps precisely understand; but the planets of the solar system and the cells in the living organism may serve as rude analogies for the visualizing imagination. At any rate, there is no escape from the difficulty unless we deny one side of the contrast. But the immanence of all that exists in God is a result of philosophical analysis that can lead to no other conclusion. And the fact of our own personality is an inexpugnable deliverance of consciousness.

But these positions, be it observed, are not mutually contradictory. And, in fact, the main barriers to their union come altogether from the hard and fast delimitations of the popular understanding. If all things are in God, it is assumed that all things alike are without independence. Of course this is true to the extent that no finite things have originated their own existence, a point on which all are happily

agreed. But it is false if it means that spiritual and material beings, because all included in the one absolute life, are all on the same plane of reality or unreality. The one kind has risen to a consciousness of self and of freedom; the other has not. And whether they be in or out of the divine being, the difference between self and selfless stuff is the greatest we know or can imagine. Nor is there any reason why God should not manifest himself in and through degrees of reality, varying from zero to infinity.

So much truth, at least, it seems to me to lie in the Hegelian contention that identity and difference are both necessary to the being of the infinite spirit. But the difference above spoken of was rather a difference in the modes of its activity than a difference between those and the spirit itself. Hegel, however, does not oppose man and God. And for my own part, I am unable to see how we can believe in God without at the same time regarding the finite spirit, so far as its essential ground is concerned, as identical, within the limits of its range, with the infinite spirit. It is so because it is an *ego*. Whatever is not

an *ego* stands on a lower plane ; though *ego* and *non-ego* are both alike included in the divine life. But in the case of the *ego*, we have not merely a mode of the divine activity ; we have, as it were, a part of the divine essence. So that man's greater independence is in fact the result of man's greater dependence upon God. God's love to man is already metaphysically prefigured in the gift of himself for the creation of man. Or, if we choose to express this spiritual relationship in the utterly inadequate language of causality, we may say that while the infinite spirit is the first cause, finite spirits are the only second causes, — *causes* because they have the power of initiating action ; *second* causes because they derive it from the first cause, in relation to whom they are effects. The constituents of man's personality are of God, but they carry in their make and constitution the assurance that man does through their operations a portion of work which God has vacated on his behalf. As Dr. Martineau has expressed it: Man is included in what God *has caused*, though excepted from what he *is causing* ; so that while author of all our possibilities, God

is not responsible for our actualities. But Dr. Martineau's reference to time is somewhat misleading; for it might be taken to imply that God had set up finite spirits and then left them to themselves. But the fact is, that God is ever present and active in us, so that our existence would collapse were he to withdraw. But the things he causes are yet distinguishable from the things we cause, and that though in a last analysis our capacity of free initiation is also referable to the supreme cause. Man comes from God and is in God; but what distinguishes him from selfless things is that he exists for himself and acts of himself.

The immanence of both the world and man in God is not, therefore, inconsistent with a belief in the insubstantiality of soulless things and the free personality of the human spirit. But though our conception of God does not negate the self, it has not, so far as yet developed, provided for any special relation, as, for example, of affection or communion between man and God. Derived from reflection upon the universe, the absolute was endowed with spirituality solely because nothing else was able to

solve the cosmic problem. That is to say, if God was to be conceived merely as ground of all things, we found he must have the attributes of self-consciousness, power, and self-existence. Such a being is all that is needed by the metaphysician for the explanation of reality and its changes. Whether God is more than a self-conscious, active world-soul remains undecided; and it can be determined only on the basis of certain special facts of which neither the metaphysician nor the scientist is required to take account. These are the ideals of the human heart. Voicing what ought to be, they present a striking contrast to what is. Yet if God is in truth the ultimate ground of all things, there must be in his nature a principle of union even of the ideal and the real. Yet it is just at this point that scepticism, and honest scepticism, too, has always intervened most effectively to balk the aspirations of Christian faith, which can stop at no conception of God short of that of Holy Father. Even David Hume acknowledged the force of the theistic argument till it reached its concluding demonstration of the moral nature of God. We shall, therefore, find it

no easy task to establish the conviction that in the everlasting ground of things there is a heart of goodness that answers to the supreme ideals of the moral consciousness of mankind. Yet this is a matter of the most vital concern to every one of us. For if God be not Love, the Christian faith is vain.

Nevertheless I would not emphasize this aspect of truth, to which we must soon return, without mentioning another, which I am sure has been too much overlooked by theological thinkers. God has many attributes; and though goodness is the one that affects most deeply the human heart, creative power and wisdom are just as real and are much more manifest to the empirical observer. It may, therefore, be quite misleading to say, as is often done, that a God without moral character is no God at all. As a matter of fact, the first gods, as was shown in an earlier lecture, were probably non-moral beings. And even civilized peoples, like the Greeks and Romans, were wont in early times to trust in the gods, not because they were benevolent, but because they had been properly propitiated. Of this sort is the faith of the modern

scientist. In his imagination and feelings he cannot realize the universe, but he looks upon it with awe and wonder and a deep sense of mystery. Now this attitude towards the universe is a worthy and admirable one, and much more reverential than is too often found in those who have learned that the heart of things is also infinitely good and loving. Though moral ideals may be the highest, we strive not only after goodness, but also after truth, beauty, and fulness of life. And whosoever finds in the universe the realization of any one of his ideals will bow down and worship the eternal spirit that thus reveals itself to his soul. It matters not that we all see the Godhead from our own point of view. That is an inevitable consequence of our individuality. And it is surely no disparagement of any man's worship that it is awakened and exercised through the medium of that soul which God has given him. To the scientist God is the principle of order, to the artist the soul of beauty, to the man of virtue the will that is absolutely holy. In the Christian church the anthropic view of God has always predominated over the cosmic; and

this has led to an undue disparagement of beauty and truth as compared with virtue. Art and science have been treated as secular, if not positively irreligious. Now modern culture protests against the puritan enthronement of goodness above truth and beauty. It regards them as co-equal sister-graces, divine forms that haunt the mind of man and stimulate him to the realization of something absolutely worthful. For the decalogue it would substitute the wider new commandment of Goethe: Live resolutely in the Whole, in the Good, in the Beautiful. We all want more life, and it is the yearning for it that leads us to practical religion; that is, to communion with God. And what I understand Goethe to mean is that this fulness of life with God is best attained when we seek it in the knowledge of the universe, in the practice of moral disciplines, and in the admiration of every thing of beauty. This artistic aspect was especially conspicuous in the Greeks, whose religion was, as Hegel calls it, a religion of beauty. Of the remaining branches of Goethe's precept, life in the Whole is the ideal of the scientist, life in the Good of the ordinary

Christian. But the highest religion can be content with nothing short of the synthesis demanded by Goethe. And I expect it to emerge from the mutual attraction exercised upon each other by ecclesiastical Christianity and secular science. Religious thinkers will drop their exclusively anthropic idea of God. They will come to see that God is not merely the guarantee of those human hopes about which religion has in the past too exclusively turned, but also the sustaining ground of the universe, whose order is revealed by science. And scientific thinkers have already developed a natural theology, though in their zeal to destroy the old, they have almost lost sight of their own discovery. Has not the man of science an object of worship? He calls it Nature rather than God; but what's in a name? It is an object that inspires awe, and the scientist's most frequent complaint against popular Christianity is that it is too familiar with that Eternal Being before whom prophets of old hid their faces in the dust. Again, Nature inspires confidence as well as terror. To the man who obeys her laws she gives peace and even

joy. As the priests of old knew how to win the favor of the gods, so the scientist understands how to gain the co-operation of Nature. If, in its revolt against traditional Christianity, modern science has been forced to construct *de novo* a religion of its own, what it has attained is an object of worship resembling the God of Sinai, though conceived altogether in terms of cosmic science. And as the anthropic theism of ecclesiastical Christianity is destined to take on also a cosmic character, it seems not rash to predict that the cosmic theism of secular science will complete itself by taking account of human ideals, and so go on to add to the awe of Judaism the loving confidence of Christianity. In that event, the two theological tendencies of the day, the positive and negative (as generally regarded), would meet and coalesce in anthropocosmic theism. And as neither the one nor the other would have any quarrel with art, but rather both demand it as a complementary grace, perfect religion would coincide with Goethe's ideal of perfect culture: Life in the Whole, the Good, and the Beautiful.

But this prospect is not yet realized.

And though the drift of thought tends thitherward, it is obstructed, perhaps definitively, by the scientist's inability to believe that the universe at heart is moral, or concerns itself in any way with the ideals of man. The relation of the universe to human ideals is the question of questions for Christian theology. In a recent book entitled *Das Wesen der Religion*, which has gone through several editions in Germany, but seems to be unknown in this country, Dr. Bender, of Bonn University, has very ingeniously attempted to show that all religions, alike in their practical and their theoretical aspects, in their rituals and dogmas, as well as in their revelations, take their origin and content from an effort to protect and realize the ends and ideals of life, be these ideals sensuous or spiritual, individual or universal, naturalistic, æsthetic, or moral. According to Dr. Bender, the interests and aims of religion are the same as those of culture, though the mode of attaining them is different. In the one case, man is sufficient to himself; in the other, not. But in both cases the impulse is the same,—the instinct that moves us to preserve, enrich, perfect, and beautify

our own lives. Belief in God is merely an act of self-preservation in favor of our ideals. The central question of religion is not God, but man. The idea of God does not explain anything; it simply calms our fears when our ideals seem unrealizable in the world. Prayer is the means by which man in the struggle for existence calls to his aid higher powers, in order to maintain his aims when his own power is insufficient. Thus the organizing principle of all religions is the conception of an end or ideal of life and the belief in its realizability. From this source come all the supernatural beings of religion, the highest, of course, included. And the nature of these beings is also determined by the character of the ideals, in whose interest they have been originated.

This is an anthropic theology with a vengeance. The only proof of the existence of God is that man needs his help when the world bears hard on human ideals! Of course, this is not Dr. Bender's own theistic argument. He comes before us, not as a metaphysician, but as a psychologist whose aim is to trace the motives and processes that have led men everywhere to

a conception and worship of the Godhead. That mankind has been under a great illusion both as regards the datum from which and the transcendent object to which the inference has been made, appears to be Dr. Bender's own personal view. And we have already seen that there is no purely anthropic tenable argument for the existence of God. Where we take issue with Dr. Bender is in maintaining that there is a cosmic basis for our belief in God. And though religious thinking often ignores it, as our historical sketch made clear enough, it also at times gives it the fullest prominence. I question, therefore, the correctness of Dr. Bender's analyses, ingenious and fresh as they generally are. His book is another of the many brilliant volumes which have been written to explain how belief in God, *considered as devoid of objective foundation* actually came into existence. And though it might attract us by its exhaustive treatment of human ideals, we must leave it with the remark that it never raises the question which for us is all-important; namely, whether, as a matter of fact, universal reality concerns itself about human ideals.

Students of German philosophy will recognize in Dr. Bender's account of the psychological process of religion a universal application of Kant's moral argument for the existence of God. Certainly Kant's moral argument has more to recommend it than the illusory inferences which, according to Dr. Bender, mankind have made for the preservation of their interests and ends. For Kant, at any rate, believed in the absolute worth of the moral ideal. The misfortune, however, is that, instead of connecting with that doctrine the existence of God, he took the roundabout and dubious course of connecting it with the proportioning of happiness to virtue, which he declared a requirement of the practical reason. But Kant's whole ethical system is in irreconcilable opposition to this eudæmonism. And what is still more fatal, introspection and reflection fail to convince us of the necessary connection between goodness and happiness. Yet unless virtue and rewards are to be adjusted, Kant has no function for the deity, and no other proof of his existence.

The fact will have to be recognized sooner or later that there is no anthropic

proof of the existence of God. The moral ideal of man may throw some light upon the moral character of God, but it is powerless to prove the divine existence. More than this I cannot concede to Dr. Martineau, who maintains that conscience reveals to us God with the same directness and certainty as sense-perception reveals an external world. The true state of the case seems rather to be that, though conscience does not prove the existence of one infinite spirit, it yet obliges us to invest it, if existent, with the predicate of righteousness. If there be a God, moral laws seem best explained as expressions of his nature. It is difficult, if not impossible, to think that the everlasting ground of things should be indifferent to those virtues and graces of character that constitute for us the chief end of man.

Against this way of thinking Kant raised and emphasized the objection that moral law cannot be given to us from without. It must be imposed upon us by ourselves, since only such autonomous legislation is consistent with moral self-determination. This objection may be allowed as against the popular view that treats conscience as

a supernatural and unique endowment of the human spirit, a foreign addition to its own proper make-up. If a human being could exist without a consciousness of right and wrong and a sense of the authority of the one over the other, its free life would, as Kant insisted, be turned into bondage by obedience to a moral law imposed by some external lawgiver. But such an hypothesis does not answer to the nature of man. Man has a moral constitution, and, as Kant rightly saw, he imposes upon himself a law of unconditional obligation. Our problem begins where Kant's ends. How can we explain man's recognition of moral law apart from an innate endowment which is as distinctively characteristic of the human spirit as intelligence or will, and which, like these, must have its ground in the one infinite Spirit? It is not denied that the moral consciousness has its history, just like the intellect. And in the course of its development we can see its gradual purification and expansion. But though certain ethical institutions, like the family, for example, are differently regarded at different times and in various stages of civilization, the quintessence of morality is

as clearly discernible amongst savages as amongst ourselves, and when due allowance is made for a society whose normal condition is war, the difference either vanishes or remains such as is inevitable from the inequality of development in the intellectual faculties and in social organization. Now such a permanent and essential factor in man's make-up must have its ground in the eternal Spirit from which we derive our existence. God, therefore, is a God of righteousness.

This conclusion, it must now be admitted, is not inevitable for the man who can repudiate the absolute and self-attesting majesty of moral law. And various attempts have been made to explain it as an illusion incident to the circumstances of its origin. The most fashionable theory to-day is that mankind was moralized by fortuitous modes of conduct, among which the struggle for existence decided which was best. This theory of evolutionary morals is not so much false as incomplete. There can be little doubt that it was amid the warfare of life that man first awoke to a sense of the value of courage and all the sterner virtues, and even the gentler vir-

tues of honesty, truthfulness, fidelity, and compassion, may have been quickened by the same rude process. But the physical conditions under which any mental product (even a sensation) appears are a very different thing from the nature of that product itself, and they do not in the least touch the question of the innate constitution of the soul that enables it to make this response to those external stimulants. And what we have been maintaining is that our perception of right and wrong, and our recognition of the authority of the right, even if they have been quickened by natural selection, testify clearly to a moral capacity in the human spirit, which must have its ground in the one infinite Spirit. But should any one see in moral law merely a code of prudential maxims that had forgotten their selfish utilities and taken themselves for absolute goods, he might retort that though morality had its root in the soul, it was merely a self-seeking root, whose native ugliness had been overlaid by the casual products of natural selection. If the moral ideal, which we have believed something absolutely worthful, were only a form of selfishness

in disguise, it would of course cease to be an ideal for those who had seen into the illusion, and they would be left without any motive for postulating a moral character in God. In a last resort, our view of the moral character of God is conditioned by our interpretation of the moral nature and vocation of man.

I am not, however, disposed to believe that our ethical schools differ as much in this interpretation as they themselves suppose. No school would to-day assert that the essence of goodness is selfishness. All schools agree that a large part, if not the whole, of goodness consists in what in its various degrees we name benevolence, love, or self-sacrifice. This is the fundamental principle of Christian ethics, whether we regard the life or the teaching of its founder. But that love is the fulfilling of the law is also the doctrine of John Stuart Mill, the classic expounder of utilitarianism. And though the utilitarian theory has been modified in many ways by an infusion of Darwinism, the "absolute ethics" of Mr. Herbert Spencer still has for goal the Golden Rule of Jesus of Nazareth. More than this ought never to have been claimed

by the intuitional moralist. For all our moral codes and institutions are but empirical attempts to realize this transcendent ideal. That there is such a moral ideal no school denies, or can deny. But while the intuitional moralist has contented himself with the bald statement of the fact, his more scientific opponents have endeavored to discover the circumstances and processes of its realization. Some of their work has been valuable; but as for the most part it lay outside the ken of history, it has been made up of arbitrary and dogmatic conjecture. But discarding all this surplusage, we find the schools of derivative morality agreeing with the intuitionist in the recognition of an absolutely worthful moral ideal, — an ideal that is an end in itself, never a means to anything else. And this ideal is described, subjectively, as universal benevolence or love; objectively, as the well-being of mankind.

Of this ideal human morality is the realization. It is this ideal that shapes the relations and institutions that bind us to one another and condition our appropriation of external objects. It would of course forever remain a blank in the mind, were

there not a world of persons and things that presented material for its plastic operation. But given these, it realizes itself through differentiation; that is to say, it takes as many forms as the material provides for. Thus in relation to the datum of sex, it yields the institution of marriage and the virtue of chastity. In relation to the datum of labor, it yields the institution of property and the virtue of justice. Of course with deeper insight into the essential content of the ideal, we become dissatisfied with existent morality, and press forward to the mark of a higher calling. This is moral progress, which begins with individuals, and ultimately embraces nations. Though slow, it has already made several revolutions in the history of the family; and if I rightly read the signs of the times, it seems likely in our own generation to change our views of property and justice.

To come now to the application of this doctrine. I have maintained that though the basis of the theistic argument is cosmic, it is only our own self-conscious spirit that enables us to discover what the nature of the cosmic principle really is. But though an intelligent and volitional being would

account for the phenomena of the material world, it would supply no ground for the moral ideal of man, which is as real as any other fact in the universe. We must not, therefore, hesitate to carry our "anthropomorphism" so far as to conceive the Spirit of the universe as a God of love. It is true that this attribute of God is not so fully evidenced as the others. They are required both for the interpretation of nature and of humanity; this, only for the interpretation of the moral life of man. Still, it is highly improbable that the eternal Reality which has brought us forth, and charged us with the duty of loving one another, — so that love is the highest good and end in life, — should itself be a loveless Reality. And when we further remember that we have no experience of a Spirit in whom self-consciousness and will are divorced from goodness, we shall find ourselves obliged by sheer consistency, if we say, as we must say, that God is spirit, to acknowledge also that God is love. Indeed, did our metaphysics go far enough, it would have to confess that man has an ideal of goodness solely because the infinite spirit, of which the finite is a partial reve-

lation, is the perfect realization of goodness. I do not mean, of course, that God realizes in himself our differentiated morality, — our ethical precepts, laws, and institutions. For these have significance only for a finite spirit that has outside itself a world of co-equal spirits and of things, with which it holds external relations. But love, which is the underlying ground of all our morality, may be actualized in the divine nature. For love is precisely that which effaces distinction between ourselves and another. And God's love for man is the expression of his oneness with us. This oneness, however, was implied in our metaphysical theory of anthropocosmic theism, which is thus confirmed by the result of our ethical reflections. It only remains to add that if, as we acknowledged, man has communion with God through the avenues of the true and the beautiful, the deepest communion comes through the love that answers to our consciousness of God's love, since nothing else but love can abolish the distinction between its subject and its object.

We cannot attribute goodness to the eternal ground of things without feeling

painfully the contradictions of actual experience. At the breath of sin and suffering every theory of the universe grows sombre and unsteady. But that there is nevertheless a striving after a supreme end in the world is a belief we cannot be made to surrender. Good must in some way be the final cause of ill. Absolute evil — evil in itself, in its beginning, and in its issue — is an eternal devil we cannot brook to keep its state in the world. This is the motive to every theodicy. This is why we have a problem of evil, but no corresponding problem of good. Into such a deep subject we cannot plunge at the close of this series of lectures. But I may observe that as among lower animals the struggle for life has conduced to greater perfection, so men too are made perfect through suffering. And that not merely through chastening of character, which is a discipline that perhaps healthy men need as much as the sick, who, it must be acknowledged, sometimes miss it through extremity of suffering. But suffering induces men to look for remedies. And these are to be found only through a knowledge of natural laws. Without human needs primi-

tive man would not have undertaken the labor of investigation. And God, as ground of nature, would have remained unknown to mankind. In a very real sense, therefore, God could not have revealed himself to the race without human suffering. And the end being attained, man is using his knowledge of nature for the elimination of suffering, which has already proceeded at such a rate that it is scarcely optimistic to forecast its ultimate disappearance. Meanwhile the study of nature, to which need compelled mankind, will continue an end in itself. Even if we had a perfect science of medicine, the infinite complexity and immensity of nature would still be unexplored.

As suffering leads men to a knowledge of the cosmic manifestation of God, so also it is the indispensable condition of the emergence of sympathy and compassion in the heart of man. Without suffering and mutual needs there could be no human fellowship and love. The sociability of animals, which prefigures human love, is founded on the same basis. But as love is the cementing principle of human society, so it is love that unites us to God. It is

through love, as we have seen, that the infinite spirit reveals itself in a very especial way to the finite. Without some feeling of want, some suffering in a greater or less degree, man could not receive this revelation of the heart of God.

Nor is the problem of sin altogether insoluble from the point of view of the theism here advanced. At least we can understand how it originates and conjecture the function it subserves. That the possibility of sin is the correlative of the free initiative God has vacated on man's behalf is an old and not unsatisfactory explanation of its origin. Now the essence of sin, as mystics have always felt, is the enthronement of self. It is selfishness, self-isolation. Yet without such self-absorption there could be no sense of union with God. For consciousness is possible only through opposition. To know *A* we must know it through not-*A*. Alienation from God is the necessary condition of communion with God. And this is the meaning of the scripture that where sin abounded grace shall much more abound.

The movement of consciousness from the one pole to the other, or what we call con-

version, may also be understood, in a measure, from the standpoint of anthropocosmic theism. The change is very properly described as a new birth. For that man is made a new creature who has come to see that God and not self is the centre of reality. Still it must not be forgotten that a natural birth is only the emergence into light of a reality that already existed in a definite fashion. So in the new birth the soul simply actualizes in its life and experience what was metaphysically potential before; namely, its union with God. God and man were always one; God was always love: the new birth consists in man's recognition and appropriation of this fact.

The doctrine of the God-man is the natural consequence of our theory of universal being. God is the Father of spirits; men are the children of God. That the sons of the divine Father should be differently endowed is a matter that presents no difficulty. The great spirits of the race are the standard-bearers of its civilization; and we are all the richer for the artistic sense of Pheidias, the organizing power of Cæsar, the poetic genius of Shakespeare,

and the scientific intellect of Newton. Greater yet is our debt to those still higher spirits that have lived and died for the good. Nor among these choicest sons of the universal Father is there any metaphysical impropriety in supposing one to be in some pre-eminent sense the Son of God. I do not know, however, that any gain would come to our theology in describing this unique personality as "very God," much less as "mere man." For it is a false metaphysic that separates God and man, and entangles itself with its own one-sided abstractions. Personality cannot be rendered in terms of any abstract system, without omitting its essence. We can *be* persons, and feel the influence of persons, but personality is something other than any definition of it. That men are now giving up the search for barren formulæ to describe the Christ and insisting everywhere on the vitalizing power of his gracious personality, seems to me the most hopeful feature in the religious life of our day. Only in this way is it possible for the Son of Man to become the actual saviour of humanity.

Of that life and immortality brought to

light in the Gospel, our theistic theory supplies the metaphysical basis. Because man lives in God here and now, he shall live with God in the kingdom where time and space are not. This is a metaphysical insight that carries us far beyond all the materialistic objections to existence after death. But even on that lower plane it may not be out of place to remark that though physical and psychical changes co-exist, we are still as far as ever from seeing any necessary connection between them which might justify the belief that when the brain is out the man is dead. The difference between the *ego* and the brain is absolute. One is a thing, closely connected, it is true, with our life; the other is a self that is conscious of its existence and opposes itself to mere things. This selfhood it is also that forbids us to merge at death the individual into the universal life. Pantheistic disparagement of personality runs counter to our experience of its existence, our conviction that it is the highest fact in the universe, and our reflective insight into its indispensableness for the self-revelation of God, whom the pantheist mistakes for an infinite that ex-

cludes the finite. Not only is the self an inexpugnable reality, but its capacity of knowing and loving being of larger scope than can be satisfied by the measure of our earthly life, its very make and functions carry with them the postulate of eternity. And this postulate is accredited by a theory that conceives death as a mere change in things, while the *ego* continues to live in the embrace of the absolute life. Because we are one with God, the ground of our communion can never be broken. And in the development of the religious consciousness, it was this lively sense of present communion with God that first led men to conceive of an eternal continuance of it hereafter. Such, at any rate, is the forceful and aspiring logic of the earlier Psalmists and the writer of the book of Job. So, also, was it with the assurance that nothing evil could happen to the good man, that Socrates, after rehearsing all other arguments against annihilation, composed himself for death.

Of rewards and punishments which once played so prominent a part in natural theology, our metaphysical theory, strictly considered, has nothing to say. We have

given reasons for our faith in an intelligent and moral ground of the universe, whose life makes human life divine and immortal, whose love is of such incalculable reach, that even sin and suffering must be the media of its revelation. That God is Love was the good tidings of the Gospel of Christ. And love is the fulfilling of the whole law. It is superfluous, therefore, to predicate any other moral attribute of God. Popular theology, however, insists that the Deity must also be described as just. And in this instance it receives powerful support from Dr. Martineau, who contends that our moral nature compels us to conceive of God as invested with these three attributes: benevolence towards sentient beings; justice towards moral beings who are under probation; amity towards beings that have attained a moral harmony. In view of this contention, we must inquire what is meant by the justice of God, and especially its relation to the doctrine of rewards and punishments.

In this inquiry it is important to bear in mind two facts. First, in early times jural and ethical notions were not distinguishable. If in the course of ages they have,

at least to a considerable extent, become differentiated and taken on distinctive characteristics, their common source was unwritten custom. It need not surprise us, therefore, to find that at the present day the moral continues to be confounded with the legal. The penalties by which laws are enforced are transferred from crimes to evils; and the divine author of moral law becomes, like the earthly sovereign, a terror to evil-doers. Secondly, the triumphant faith in the love and goodness of God is, as we have shown in an earlier lecture, a late growth in the religious consciousness of mankind. It has not yet, even in Christendom, succeeded in displacing the older conception of the Deity as a God of wrath and terror. And a sort of compromise has silently established itself between the ethical religion of Christ and the earlier legal religions, whereby the essential features of both, contradictory though they are, have been perpetuated. It is to this source, and not to the deliverances of the moral consciousness, that I refer Dr. Martineau's list of the divine attributes. Justice is a civic virtue which has too narrow a meaning to predicate of

the Christian conception of God. Our courts of justice have too long furnished us with metaphorical descriptions of the divine government. From the primitive notion of the Deity as a judge or sovereign enforcing his arbitrary decrees, we must rise to the Christian thought of a loving Father bent on the education of the human race. And from this higher point of view, if any place were left for a divine punitive function, it could have no other end than the well-being of the sufferer.

It is to this higher standpoint that the moral and religious consciousness of our age is steadily advancing. To the economic and jural consciences of earlier generations there seemed a necessary connection between virtues and rewards and between vices and punishments. The conventional penalties attached by legislatures to the violation of laws seemed to belong to the nature of things; and God himself, to be just, was conceived as distributing felicity and suffering according to the deserts of the recipient. But it is no sense of justice that demands punishment for crime. The only possible justification for inflicting punishment upon a criminal is either the

protection of society or the improvement of the criminal, or both ends combined. But the Omnipotent needs no protection against evil doers. Neither does he, any more than the perfect human father, have to resort to punishment for the education of his children. External punishment, therefore, is unthinkable for human sins. Nor can there be any external reward for human goodness, the very essence of which consists in being for its own sake. The hope of rewards would transform virtue into prudence.

But the truth which this prudential and legal theory of external rewards and punishments fails to express is clear enough when we take a more philosophic view of the human soul. If we neither personify nor localize spiritual conditions, it yet remains true that in the divinely established order of things, every act or thought leaves its impress on our character and makes us either more godlike or more carnal. This inmanent natural causation popular theology takes for an external administration in another sphere of being. Here is the basis of those legal and penal ideas it associates with the future life. The truth,

of course, is that heaven and hell, as they will be, have begun here and are in us now.

“The mind is its own place, and in itself  
Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.”

Nothing requires us then to modify the conclusion already reached that love is the complete expression of the moral character of God. This also is the burden of the revelation through Christ as it is the one imperishable idea of every form of the Christian faith. I believe, therefore, that it is to the religion of Christ, as the absolute religion, that we shall find ourselves approximating, the deeper our soundings in the soul of man and of nature. But that religion is not to be confounded with any rigid and unprogressive creed that claims, in a formidable array of ancient articles, a monopoly of Christian truth. Not merely do we need, what Locke so earnestly demanded, a broadening of the bottom of religion; we need also a recognition of its constant progressiveness. For our knowledge of God must continue to grow with our knowledge of humanity and nature through which alone he reveals himself. The endless problem of religious thought

will therefore be the resetting of the religion of Christ in the framework of contemporary knowledge. When this is wanting, there arises a warfare, not indeed as the vulgar suppose of science with religion, but of later science with earlier science in terms of which religion is still expressed. Modern science is not antagonistic to the religion of Christ, but it is fatal to those confessions of the Christian religion which have been embodied in an antiquated psychology, anthropology, cosmology, and history. The process of readjustment is going on rapidly, and it is much more thorough in the actual beliefs of men than in the revised creeds that are supposed to represent them. Even the new biblical criticism has won a victory almost as complete as that of astronomy, geology, and zoölogy. The sober and cautious spirit of modern culture has once for all domiciled itself in the realm of theology also.

It is perhaps on the subject of miracles that the readjustment is slowest and most difficult. Nor is this astonishing, since, as Goethe put it,

*Das Wunder ist des Glaubens liebstes Kind.*<sup>1</sup>

Both the metaphysical possibility and the historical evidence of miracles have been canvassed with a great array of learning and philosophy. The *a priori* arguments are pretty nearly what they were in the time of Hume. But the problem has taken on a new complexion from the advance in critical and historical scholarship. Miracles can be accounted for, — at least, in the belief of those who describe them. And whether they actually happened or not is a question that is left to answer itself. It is, however, on the answer to this question, that many religious minds suppose their faith to depend. And on this point I will venture a couple of observations. The first is that whatever may be the final word regarding miraculous happenings in the realm of nature, every human soul in the present condition of our knowledge is a miracle — a miracle which is especially conspicuous in the great geniuses of our race. Such a miracle was the founder of Christianity whose marvellous personality still works wonders on the

<sup>1</sup> The Miracle is dearest Child of Faith.

souls of men. This is a fact of actual experience which every inquirer may verify for himself. And as it is not supported, neither is it invalidated by any views that may be entertained regarding a unique power exercised over nature two thousand years ago. My second observation is that in considering miracles we must always distinguish between the picture or symbol and the thing signified. For example, most religions, including the Christian, tell of the miraculous ascension of their founders to heaven. Now the thought which it is here attempted to picture before the eyes, is that the souls of the good, untouched by death, live eternally with God. With this thought philosophy and theology have alike made us familiar. And we are able to realize it without the aid of the visualizing imagination. But to the average Jew and Greek of the first Christian century, whose conception of the hereafter was that of a shadowy existence in the underworld of sheol or hades, the Christian doctrine of an actual and eternal life with God was novel, startling, and altogether unrealizable in abstract thought. But what understanding could not con-

ceive, imagination could symbolize in pictures of cosmic space. It is in fact a law of religious history that vision always comes to the aid of faith. And up to the time of the Copernican astronomy the visual picture of a flight above the stars served to realize and verify the belief in continued life with God. But in the restless march of mind, the aids of one generation become the obstacles of the next. And our heliocentric astronomy, with its conception of illimitable space and infinite worlds, with its delocalization of heaven and decentralization of earth, has made the once expressive picture of an ascension through the clouds altogether meaningless. The abstract doctrine of immortality has itself become perfectly intelligible to us. The symbol which once interpreted it now only obscures it. Meantime popular theology has taken the symbol for the substance. It is concerned to prove that the Christ actually disappeared in the upper air from the vision of his disciples. It ignores the one important question, what was the meaning or intention of this flight even if we suppose it to have taken place. To pre-Copernican thought it meant of course an

ascent to heaven. But in our theory of the universe it can have no such significance. It is in fact an obsolete picture of an eternal truth. That truth is the fact of continued life with God, uninterrupted even by death. Here is the real mystery, the miracle of miracles, in whose naked presence all symbols vanish away.

From symbol to essence, from picture to reality, from myth to fact, from the Christian religion to the religion of Christ: such is the movement which under the influence of scientific criticism is reshaping the theology of our day. The goal is no longer dogmas about the Messiah, but the actual content of the revelation made in and through the historic Christ. This, it is felt, is the imperishable essence of every form of Christianity. Now, though it is no doubt difficult to describe adequately a religion that was embodied in a personality, it will be admitted that the main constituent of the religion of Christ was a sense of filial relation to God conceived as universal Spirit and Father. The examination we have undertaken of the grounds for belief in God seemed, therefore, to be demanded by the movement and ten-

dency of contemporary Christian theology. What its value may be as a contribution to the question at issue, must be left to others to determine. But for my own part I think it has been shown that the phenomena both of the universe and of human life require the thinking mind to postulate a Supreme Ground of things which we are entitled to describe as self-conscious Spirit and loving Father.

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