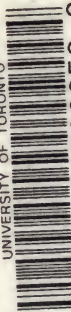


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MARTINEAU'S  
MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS.

VOL. II.



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ESSAYS,

PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEOLOGICAL.

By JAMES MARTINEAU.

VOL. II.



NEW YORK  
HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY  
1883



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## ADVERTISEMENT.



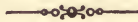
IN presenting another volume of Mr. Martineau's writings to the public, the Publisher would state that he has thought best to arrange them in the order of the subjects discussed, and, reserving the papers on Theological and Biographical subjects for future volumes, to give the papers relating to Philosophical themes first. The discussions in the present volume will be found to have a present and an abiding interest. They deal with the great questions which now most agitate the thinkers of the world; and, with an intellectual acuteness, dialectic skill, resource of scholarship, and precision of statement scarcely to be found elsewhere, each article throws a light, more or less intense, upon some aspect of the great controversy, or some angle of the truth, while

together they form a valuable and brilliant contribution to our best literature. The marked favor with which the first volume was received encourages the Publisher in the hope that this and the succeeding volumes will be welcomed by an appreciative public.

BOSTON, September 1, 1868.



ESSAYS,  
PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEOLOGICAL.



WHEWELL'S MORALITY.<sup>1</sup>

IN his inaugural Address at the last meeting of the British Association, Sir John Herschel said : —

“The fact is every year becoming more broadly manifest, by the successful application of scientific principles to subjects that had hitherto been only empirically treated (of which agriculture may be taken as perhaps the most conspicuous instance), that the great work of Bacon was not the completion, but as he himself foresaw and foretold, only the commencement of his own philosophy ; and that we are even yet only at the threshold of that palace of Truth which succeeding generations will range over as their own, — a world of scientific inquiry, in which not matter only and its properties, but the far more rich and complex relations of life and thought, of passion and motive, interest and action, will come to be regarded as its legitimate objects.”

<sup>1</sup> The Elements of Morality, including Polity. By William Whewell, D.D., Master of Trinity College, and Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Cambridge. In two volumes. Parker, 1845.

Prospective Review, Nov., 1845.

This distinct recognition of the moral sciences, by the representative of an association which refuses to notice their existence, is at once the sign and promise of an improved conception of Philosophy. Not that such a man as Sir John Herschel can ever have doubted the reality of natural laws, ruling among the phenomena of the human mind and life, just as among the objects of physical research. But so little progress has hitherto been made in ascertaining them, and so little positive inconvenience has been felt from our ignorance, that psychology has been put off with complimentary acknowledgments, or even narrowly escaped *ignoring* altogether: it has been allowed its title, but not its territory, in the domain of knowledge: it has been admitted among the sciences, possible or impossible, on condition of its making no pretension to anything actual, and has occupied a place on the intellectual map, not precisely like the Atlantis of Plato, but at least like the North-west passage, discoverable, perhaps, by adventurers who can find their way between a floor of ice and a roof of northern lights, but useless to men whose element is in the sunshine and the warm earth. A different feeling is now manifested, and is plainly demanded by the existing state of knowledge. In some of its departments, physical science—becoming, in its progress to greater refinement, more and more dependent on the *language* in which its abstractions are conveyed—has got entangled with its own phraseology and notation, and can advance no further till this is revised and its meaning analyzed. The proposal of M. Compte to expunge the word *Cause* from

the vocabulary of philosophy, — the increasing latitude given to the term *Law*, — the attempt of Dr. Whewell to impose new names on certain parts of the inductive process, have combined with other influences to draw attention to the grounds of human belief, and the procedure of the human understanding. This ill-explored region, condemned for its barrenness, contains, after all, the secret spot of polar attraction, to which the magnetic lines of science, wherever you examine its indications, are all found to point. And when one so capable as Sir John Herschel, of surveying and combining the results of almost every science, proclaims the *need* of a better logic and psychology, the announcement must be regarded as, in the natural course of things, the herald of their advent. It were to be wished that some philosopher, of mind as calm, and range of view as large, as may be traced in the writings of this distinguished man, might undertake the task which he has indicated; and forever set at rest the doubt, whether the phenomena of human nature are too complex for reduction by our established methods of research. Hitherto the moral sciences have had no fair chance. They have fallen into the hands either of men like the phrenologists, accustomed only to physiological inquiry, and carrying it with them as their type of all philosophy; or of metaphysicians, untrained in habits of cautious induction, unused to the ways of nature in other fields, and intent on pushing some one favorite principle, by the infinitely fine insinuations of analysis, through all the intricacies of thought and will. Hence, we suppose, the offensive dogmatism

and affected precision, often so disproportioned to the value of the results, by which works on mental and moral philosophy are distinguished from the modesty apparent in the great models of physical research. The habit of system-building, so tempting to self-reflecting minds, is unfavorable to docility; and while great metaphysicians — Hobbs, Spinoza, Des Cartes, Kant, Hegel, Mill — deliver themselves as if they were the legislators of nature, — great natural philosophers — Kepler, Newton, Herschel, Dalton — present themselves in the attitude of her pupils. On both sides there are doubtless exceptions; no reproach can lie against the noble names of Berkeley, Locke, and Hartley; and a living writer,<sup>1</sup> throughout a work which stands almost alone, certainly pre-eminent, among treatises on philosophical method, manifests a spirit worthy of the various masters of thought, whose excellences he unites and improves.

The reputation of Dr. Whewell for energy of understanding and variety of attainment led us to his work on morals with no little eagerness of hope. We forgot for the moment the questionable symptoms presented in his former works. We forgot his republication of Mackintosh's Essay, — an essay so pleasant in its gossip, so slender in its philosophy. We remembered only his position as Professor at Cambridge, and his judgment as an admirer of Butler: and expected to find the hints of that great writer worked out at length into a consistent theory of hu-

<sup>1</sup>J. S. Mill. *System of Logic*. The quietness with which this book has been received affords no test of its destined influence. We believe there are not half a dozen persons in England capable of reviewing it.

man duty. The expectation has been wholly disappointed; and that manifest chasm in our literature remains to be filled. The present work does not appear to be a true product of the philosophical spirit at all; but to be a premature result of an *aversion to the conclusions of Locke and Paley*, — an aversion more resembling a distaste than a conviction. Hence, to find a set of principles that might serve as prefixes to the opposite conclusions, seems to have been the author's problem. We are sure that neither he, nor any man in his senses, ever was convinced of a moral doctrine by the sort of process here called "rigorous reasoning." The assortment of confused definitions and misty abstractions at the beginning have the same sort of connection with the Church and State morals at the end, that the gourmand's "grace before meat" has with his dinner, — a decent preface to the turtle-soup and venison. It is painful to meet with men who are ashamed to state the real grounds on which their convictions rest, and must contrive some artificial logic "more rational than reason." They offer you the spectacles they did *not* use, and say nothing of the eyesight they *did*. In the present instance this propensity strikes us as particularly unfortunate. When Dr. Whewell forgets what is expected of him as a metaphysician, and writes out his unelaborated sentiments on the actual interests and pending questions of the world, — Slavery, Church Establishments, Public Education, — there is a vigor and directness in his treatment which, though sometimes vehement and overbearing, is never inefficient. But in our estimation there is something inexpressibly

ungainly in all his movements "on the *à priori* road." With constant exercise he makes no way; but after the boldest feats of verbal conjuring, in which energy of resolve is more remarkable than subtlety of execution, remains, so far as common eyes can measure, precisely where he was. Before proceeding to justify this general estimate by particular criticisms, we must say two or three things as to the proper mode of handling such subjects as are discussed in this book.

Morality is not a system of *truths*, but a system of *rules*. In other words, it is not a *science*, but an *art*. Every art is a method of accomplishing some *end*; the mechanical arts, some outward end of utility, as the building of a house, the weaving of a dress, the guidance of a ship; the fine arts, some inward end of feeling, consisting essentially, amid all accidental varieties of material and means, in satisfaction to the sense of beauty. It is plain that the end must be given, before the means can found; no method of doing can be laid down till we know what is to be done. There can be no art of tailoring for a man who never saw a coat; or of navigation for a people who never heard of the sea. To say then that the first requisite in a treatise on any art is a definition of its object is only to affirm that a problem must be *stated* in order to be *solved*.

A distinction may indeed be suggested, separating in this respect the useful from the fine arts. In the former, the end, as we have remarked, is some external product, which is necessarily fabricated according to a pattern or preconception. But in the latter, the

end is internal and subjective ; it is rather an unconscious *tendency* of the faculties, than an *aim* "aforethought" of the will. Creations of genius cannot — it may be urged — be "made to order," like the manufactures of industry : poetry spun by the line, painting worked off by the square yard, would be unlikely to result in an Iliad or a transfiguration. A certain spontaneity, a working from within outwards, a pushing forth of some appetency for beauty into a growth definite at last, but indeterminate at first, is essential to our idea of perfection in imaginative productions. And if so, the artist fulfils his office best, when he does *not* realize to himself the finished task to which he tends ; and in proportion as his skill is directed by a purpose and restrained by a model, he loses his proper character, and becomes the imitator and the journeyman.

Whatever truth there may be in this statement, it only proves that genius cannot work by rules, and that the precepts which may arise from the criticism of Taste are rather an incumbrance to it than a help. Still, whether these rules are useful or not, the person who frames them must know the end they are to serve ; and they must be constructed with constant reference to that end. It may be impossible to reduce the processes of nature and instinct under the control of the will : if so, art cannot exist. But to whatever extent it becomes practicable to mark out a voluntary method, it becomes indispensable to define the object at which it aims.

It is further evident, that the rules of every art arise from the truths of some science or combination

of sciences. Every end we can propose to ourselves is dependent upon a certain set of conditions, the observance of which is essential to its achievement. The materials we employ, the physical forces we command, the mental faculties we engage, have all their laws and limits; and in proportion to our knowledge of these will be the perfection of our rules of practice. Art without science is impossible: they necessarily advance *pari passu*: and though the man who invents practical methods may be unable to state the truths involved in them, he is really their discoverer, so far as they are yet known in relation to his particular art. Most of the mechanical crafts depend on several sciences; the æsthetic and moral arts, chiefly upon one. Navigation borrows its rules from astronomy, hydrostatics, pneumatics, magnetism, optics, and other departments of physical knowledge. Sculpture, while it implies a secondary reference to the properties of the minerals it employs, mainly rests upon the laws of beauty, whose seat is in our perceptive nature. And education and government have a still more predominant correspondence with the single science of psychology. A man may be trained in the *practice* of these arts, without any connected regard to the *rationale* of his procedure. But an author who should write a treatise upon their methods, with total omission of the theory which justifies his precepts, foregoes the title of philosopher, to enlist himself among compilers of receipt-books.

In fact, the main difference between a treatise on science and a treatise on art is a difference of



arrangement only. Truths and rules are found in both ; but the former follows the order of the truths, annexing the rules as they happen to arise ; the latter follows the order of the rules, referring each to the truths on which it depends.

In treating of systematic morality, there is not the least reason for abandoning these plain principles. An exposition of it which declines entering on the theory of morals, can have no value to the understanding, however monitory to the conscience. The first step required of the teacher is to lay down the definition of his subject ; and as this, which is the beginning of his teaching, is the end and result of his learning and reflection, it implies a previous survey, and for its vindication, a previous discussion, of the whole contents of ethical philosophy. Before we can define æsthetics, we must know that the phenomena included under the name are all referable to the particular *feeling of beauty*, and follow its laws. Before we can define political economy, we must be aware that the *desire of wealth* is the sole producing cause of all the effects which it reviews ; and that its business is to trace the influence of this desire on the production and partition of wealth. And before we can define ethics, we must find the *special quality* in human nature on which moral phenomena depend. Whoever cannot name this has no more title to draw up a code of precepts, than the empiric to prescribe for diseases of whose organic seat he has no idea. And whoever can, has a theory as to the grounds of moral obligation and the origin of the moral sentiments, which gives a vital connection to his system, and

saves it from being a mere congeries of arbitrary imperatives.

There would seem to be some extraordinary difficulty in naming the common characteristic of all moral phenomena, and separating the property or endowment of man to which they belong. That they are distinguished from *unmoral* phenomena, by their *voluntary* nature, is indeed universally admitted. But there is no concurrence among philosophers as to the feature which distinguishes them from *immoral* phenomena. Their tendency to happiness, their conformity with order, their agreement with reason, have been severally made the basis of their definition. According as we adopt one or another of these, we take a different view of the capacity which renders us liable to obligation. Assume the first; and then to qualify us for moral action, we have only to be susceptible of happiness. Assume the second, we must have a perception of order; the third, and we must have rational thought. Which of these, or whether any one of them, is really the quality that puts us under a law of duty, can only be ascertained by a course of experiment such as every man of common sense employs, and such as Bacon—the great analyzer of common sense—suggested, in order to detach, from a combination of agencies, the particular cause to which any set of effects is due. The experiments are not the less legitimate instruments of induction, because in this case they are necessarily experiments of inward reflection, not of outward observation. Among the various elements of human nature, put forth as claimants of its moral phe-

nomena, we must imagine each in turn to be excluded from the mind, and take notice whether it carries away with it the sentiments of right and wrong; and again, we must let in each in turn upon a nature empty of these sentiments, and observe whether they follow in its train.

Try by this test the moral claims of our *susceptibility to happiness*. Conceive this ingredient to be cancelled from our constitution. It is plain that none of the feelings which constitute *character* would remain. No act could longer be regarded with satisfaction or remorse, — pleasurable and painful emotion being shut out by the hypothesis. *Sensitive* indifference therefore comprehends and involves *ethical*.

Reverse the fancy. Into some unfeeling organism, some locomotive automaton, some Promethean clay, admit the sentient fire; and consider whether you thereby attain the characteristics of a responsible being. Manifestly you do not. The creature thus imagined would exist under similar conditions with the dog or the ape; possessing impulses, whose gratification gives enjoyment, — whose denial, uneasiness; capable of directing action towards the attainment of a desired end; susceptible even of discipline by hope and fear, yet remaining *unmoral* after all. Sensitive distinctions and the power of regulating activity by reference to them may therefore be present, in the absence of ethical differences. "Give us only," say the philosophers of the Hartley school, "give us only the capacity for pleasure and pain, and the law of association, and we will show you how the whole complex and noble man follows by necessary conse

quence." How strange and adventurous is this promise, — to account for whatever is special to man by causes which are common to the brutes!

If the "idea of order" — which Jouffroy espouses as the ground of all moral phenomena — is subjected to the same process, it falls under a like disqualification. It cannot indeed be banished without destruction to the sentiments of duty; for a good life must be a life according to rule. But it may be present without introducing any sense of obligation. Order exists wherever there is a disposition of objects or events according to a uniform law, or with a view to a determinate end; and there are innumerable laws and ends entirely destitute of moral character. There is order in the habits of the beaver and the bee; in the flight of migratory birds; in the composition of a geometrical treatise; nay, in uniformity even of *wrong doing*. The "idea of order" secures a reference to *some* rule; but whether rule of the moral sort remains still to be decided by other conditions co-existent with it.

The same things may be said as to the claims of "reason" to be admitted as our lawgiver. Words of this kind may of course be so defined as to make them include all that we want to explain. But in that case they give us no information; instead of helping us to a true cause, they put us off with a bad phraseology. We are persuaded that there is in the human mind no conception, no attribute, out of the circle of the moral sentiments, which can be justly regarded as their source; that they are phenomena *sui generis*, separated from the appetites and affec-

tions, no less than from the processes of reasoning, by an interval which no known transformation of feelings can serve to bridge over. Yet analysis need not be pronounced, in this case, altogether at fault. We are not compelled to retire in discomfiture and cover our retreat with verbal pretences; summing up the very facts which we are investigating under the general phrase "moral sense," and then pleading the phrase as an explanation. While, on the one hand, we cannot attribute the feelings of right and wrong to mental powers concerned at the same time in producing very different effects, and are ready to maintain that there is a distinct provision in our nature for their production, we object, on the other, to the language in which this distinct provision is habitually described. It is represented by all the writers who acknowledge its reality, as a separate faculty, performing its function in a way analogous to the procedure of our other faculties; some, after Butler, classing it with the *active* principles, making it monarch of the instincts, and assigning τὸ δίκαιον as its appropriate aim; others, with Shaftesbury, giving it a *perceptive* character, treating it as a supreme taste, and regarding τὸ καλὸν as its peculiar good; and not a few, like Price, comparing it with *intellectual intuition*, by which we have cognizance of good and evil, no less than of *number* or *possibility*, as absolute qualities of things, and discern τὸ ἀληθές as our proper end. If moral good were a quality resident in each action, as whiteness in snow, or sweetness in fruits; and if the moral faculty was our appointed instrument for detecting its presence; many consequences

would ensue which are at variance with fact. The wide range of differences observable in the ethical judgments of men would not exist; and even if they did, could no more be reduced and modified by discussion, than constitutional differences of hearing or of vision. And as the quality of moral good either must or must not exist in every important operation of the will, we should discern its presence or absence separately in each; and even though we never had the conception of more than one insulated action, we should be able to pronounce upon its character. This however we have plainly no power to do. Every moral judgment is relative, and involves a comparison of two terms. When we praise what *has been* done, it is with the coexistent conception of something *else* that *might have been* done; and when we resolve on a course as right, it is to the exclusion of some other that is wrong. This fact, that every ethical decision is in truth a *preference*, an election of one act as higher than another, appears to us of fundamental importance in the analysis of the moral sentiments. It prevents our speaking of conscience as a *sense*; for sense discerns its objects singly, conscience only in pairs. It forbids us to identify it with reason; for reason has only a twofold division of things into true and false, without any degrees of comparison; while this power distributes its good and evil along an ascending scale, and always thinks of a better and a worse. And it goes far towards sweeping away casuistical discussions, with all their mischievous subtleties; for they are raised on the assumption that every act which is not bad may be

pronounced good. It is no slight benefit to be rid of the large portion of these "cases," — the produce of jesuitry and the confessional, — which are not, as they are called, "cases of duty," but cases of speculative temptation, where a retaining fee is given to Satan, to say what he can for us in the court of conscience. The preferential character attaching to all moral judgments is implied, and yet, as it seems to us, very inaccurately represented, by Butler. It consists, in his view, of a uniform postponement of all sorts of natural good to one and the same moral good; and in the comparison from which we make our election, one of the terms is constant and invariable, — virtue rather than appetite, — virtue rather than resentment, — virtue rather than affection. In describing the constitution of our nature, he presents to us first of all, as springs of action, a system of "particular passions" and desires, such as the bodily appetencies, pity, anger, social affection, each pursuing an end appropriate to itself; and then, as a supplementary and crowning spring of action, conscience, having also its own separate end, namely, right voluntary dispositions and actions. The collection of ends embraced by the former constitutes *natural good*, of which each ingredient in its turn is equally eligible; so that thus far our nature is a republic of equal principles. The single additional end of conscience constitutes *moral good*, which has a natural right of supremacy over the other. The controversy, therefore, of a tempted life consists in the struggle of natural good against the rightful superiority of moral; and the subordination of a well-regulated

life, in the level subjection of the entire class of particular desires to the authority set over them.

Now, for our own part, after the most diligent search, we cannot find within us this autocratic faculty, having its own private and paramount end. We regret to say, that the forces that impel us to act are invariably to be found in the set of "particular desires," and that we never have succeeded in turning these out to clear the way for conscience; nay, the case is so bad with us, that when we have run over in fancy all the sorts of natural good, appropriate to the appetites, the understanding, the imagination, the affections, we come to a stop, and can form no notion of an extrinsic lot of good, over and above these, under the name of moral good. Between virtue and a good dinner, or virtue and a full purse, we never experienced a rivalry; and were such a controversy and Hercules-choice to be proposed, we much fear, looking to the phantom-like character of the other disputant, that the dinner and the purse would win the day. But we remember a boy who once went on a day's excursion among the lakes and hills, provided with an excellent luncheon, calculated for a mountain appetite. He had gone an hour or two beyond his reasonable time, and just unpacked his store beside a stream, when a little girl approached, half-leading, half-dragging an old man evidently collapsing from exhaustion. They had attempted a short cut over the ridge the day before, lost their way, and spent the night and noon without food or shelter on the hills. The boy divided the contents of his basket between them; the "particular



passion," pity, getting the better of the particular appetite," hunger, and making itself felt as having the higher claim. And we have seen a father punish a child, till the cries melted the man's heart, and he snatched up the lad and embraced him in a paroxysm of remorse, — a case in which resentment was overcome by compassion, and made to confess the nobler nature of its conqueror. Having regard to which things, we think that pity (for example) does not want a new power, called moral faculty, to speak for it, but, once confronted with appetite and passion, is perfectly able to speak for itself. If, indeed, it acted quite alone, without the presence and competition of any other principle, — if, for the time being, it occupied us wholly, like a solitary impulse possessing a wild creature, it would say nothing to us of its worth; but the instant it solicits us with a rival at its side, it reveals to us its relative excellence. And it is the irresistible sense we have, in this case, of its superiority that is properly denoted by the word *conscience*; the *knowledge with ourselves*, not only of the fact, but of the quality, of our inward springs of action. To state the matter in a more general way. We think that, in common with the inferior animals, we are created with certain determinate propensities to particular ends, or with provisions for the development of such propensities; that, in the lower animals, these operate singly and successively, each taking its turn for the command and guidance of the creature, and none of them becoming objects of reflection; that in us also this instinctive impulse is the original type of activity, and would become per-

manent in a solitary human being, or in a mind with only one propension at a time; but that with us, the same occasion calls up simultaneously two or more springs of action; that, immediately on their juxtaposition, we intuitively discern the higher quality of one than another, giving it a divine and authoritative right of preference; that, when the whole series of springs of action has been experienced, the feeling or "knowledge with ourselves" of their relative rank constitutes the individual conscience; that all human beings, when their consciousness is faithfully interpreted, as infallibly arrive at the same series of moral estimates as at the same set of rational truths; that it is no less correct therefore to speak of a universal conscience than of a universal reason in mankind; and that on this community of nature alone rests the possibility of ethical science. From these propositions it will be evident that the moral constitution of the mind presents itself to us under the image, not of an absolute monarchy over equal subjects, such as appears in Butler's scheme, but of a natural aristocracy or complete system of ranks, among our principles of conduct, on observance of which depends the worth and order of our life.

In this consciousness, then, we recognize the psychological fact which is the ground of all moral phenomena; and which should appear in any definition of the science which deals with them. That, by the award of a true analysis, it really holds this position, we feel no more doubt, than that the feeling of beauty is at the foundation of æsthetics, and the desire of wealth, of political economy. But our object

now is, not to establish this point, but merely to exemplify what we mean by the process of investigating the definition of moral science. It traces, at all events, the effects of *some* fact in our nature; if not of the one which we have selected, then of some other: and we must not ask, of *what* other, before we follow a writer, who proposes to lay down rules determining the perfect form of the moral phenomena. Either the mental law announced above, or some other deduced by more correct analysis, stands in the same relation to human sentiments and character, that the law of mutual attraction bears to the free movement and pressures of bodies; and a disquisition on morality which is silent of any such law is on par with a treatise on celestial mechanics which omits to mention the force of gravitation.

Suppose, however, this part of the work achieved; suppose the true source of the moral phenomena reached, and laid down in the definition; the remainder of the inquiry becomes comparatively easy to trace. It must follow an inverse order; and having, from experimental facts, arrived at a general law, must compute and classify the particular results of this law. Assume, for instance, the doctrine advanced above; let there be in men a self-consciousness of the comparative worth of their several springs of action. A being must be conceived, wholly and always under the influence of this consciousness, abstraction being made of every interfering agency; and the system of effects which would arise in such imaginary case be regularly deduced. For this purpose a table of the springs of action must be drawn

up, in the order of their natural ranks ; and once furnished with this, the obligatory value of every action is found by the following rule : " Every action is *right* which, in the presence of a lower principle, follows a higher ; every action is *wrong* which, in the presence of a higher principle, follows a lower." This, however, though of very wide application, will not serve for the solution of every problem. There are cases in which one and the same principle has the choice of several possible actions ; and among these the election must be made by the balance of pleasurable and painful effects. There is no question of duty which will not find its place under one or other of these two rules, of which the first might be called the canon of principles, and the other the canon of consequences ; the former being the true ethical criterion, determining the morality of an act ; the latter, the rational criterion, determining its wisdom.

The results of such a process have then only to be translated into the imperative mood, and the propositions of science become rules of art, and the required system of morality is constructed.

We have thus endeavored to give some idea of the *path* of investigation which alone promises success to the moral philosopher. On the particular doctrines to which the need of illustration has obliged us to refer, we lay no stress at present. But we think it undeniable that something like the *method* we have sketched — which is just what is followed in physical science — is the only rational one. The first part of it — the ascent to the definition — pursues an *à posteriori* course ; the latter part, an *à priori*, de-

ducing necessary consequences from an assumed law. Now Dr. Whewell precisely inverts this order of processes, and by this alone invalidates them both. He begins by laying down a set of axioms, or "elementary notions and definitions," of which we will only say here, that, so far from *giving certainty* to anything, they seem to us greatly to want it themselves. From these arbitrary data, he then professes to demonstrate the two following propositions; that "moral rules necessarily exist;" and that "rights must be realities in human society;" using the word *rights* in the narrow sense of *legal* rights, historically acted on. Now, supposing these two vague propositions to be proved, in any one of the several senses of which they admit, what is the next step to be taken by the philosopher? Having found in human nature a provision for morality, and a necessary source of law, would he not proceed to deduct what the rules and rights in the question must be, — to determine the proper effects of the cause so happily found? Whatever it be in us that "must have" rules, has, we presume, some preference for one kind of rule rather than another, and some voice in the enactment; it is not an impartial taste for regulation, careless whether it fit God's word or a devil's. Does then our author investigate the conditions imposed by our constitution on the license of action, and draw up the code of natural law? Far from it. He pronounces this to be impossible. "I have consulted nature and my definitions," he virtually says, "and I find we must have some rules and rights; but I really cannot tell you *what*; there seems nothing to settle

that; we may as well ask Tribonian." And so, turning the back on axioms and definitions and "rigorous reasoning," our author takes a sudden leap from the *à priori* ground of his two demonstrations to the pandects of Justinian. He gives the substance of Roman and English law; and on this historical basis avowedly erects his whole structure of human duty. All virtue is made to grow out of judges' decrees, and the will of Heaven is reached through the Institutes. And so insecure seem the steps of this strange ascent from the Basilica and Westminster Hall to the throne of God, that we are astonished at the intrepidity that trusts to them. We are afraid indeed that, if the stringency of our higher obligations depended on the cogency of Dr. Whewell's arguments, we should be in danger of never doing another duty. It has been usually imagined that the moral sentiments of mankind were the original source of law; and that a certain "sense of justice" found its expression in the usages and jurisprudence of nations. It is also generally believed, that it is not even *the whole* of men's natural morality which embodies itself in legal rules; but there is a more comprehensive feeling of right and wrong behind, contenting itself with opinion without insisting on enactment. This is all wrong, according to our author. Till there are positive laws, he maintains, there can be no duties; legal rights are prerequisites to moral obligations; a man for or against whom the legislature has done nothing is incapable of a conscience; and the code is the seed-vessel of all the virtues.

"Moral rules," says Dr. Whewell, "necessarily

depend on rights actually existing. Further, it has been stated that men's actual rights are determined by positive law; men's rights in each community are determined by the positive law of that community." § 95. Again, he affirms that "morality depends on the laws" (95); that "the morality of the individual depends on his not violating the law of his nation" (105); that "we are morally bound to conform our desires and intentions to the law" (229); that "we must conform our dispositions to the laws" (232).

Having laid down the principle that ethical relations and feelings wait upon *de facto* social arrangements, ere they can begin to exist, our author traces the ulterior steps thus: First, "the *existence* of rights gives rise to a *Sentiment of Rights* and a *Sentiment of Wrongs*" (98), which "operate powerfully in supporting rights when they are once established, and in maintaining that peace and order of society which are the proper atmosphere of man's moral nature" (100). And, "secondly, these, which may be called *Jural Sentiments*, are the germs of moral sentiments" (101). The manner in which this expansion of character from legality to duty is presented to us is perhaps one of the most curious pieces of philosophy in these two volumes. Finding ourselves in the midst of a number of legal obligations, we want a meaning for them. It cannot be supposed that they are to be construed literally; something "more than meets the ear" must be wrapped up in them. Not that those who defined them had anything in their minds beyond what is manifestly declared. But still we must *make them mean* what hitherto has not been

thought of: we "must give them a moral significance;" and "duties give a moral significance to (legal) obligations."<sup>1</sup> Thus I have obligations as a father, or as a son. And these obligations determine certain good offices which are to take place between the father and the son. But my duties as a father, or as a son, must give a moral significance to these good offices" (279). We have always supposed that, in the order of nature, the thing signified existed before the sign. And though quite accustomed to the notion of interpreting a symbol, or *finding out* its significance, this process of "*giving*" it a significance is new to us. The only analogy by which we can help our conception of it is that of the Cabalists and mystical interpreters of Scripture; who assumed that they "must give" a meaning to the words and elementary letters of the Bible more recondite than the writers had any purpose to convey; and who thus found a vehicle for any amount of their own nonsense under the shelter of prophets' and apostles' speech. With scarcely less disrespect is the inspiration of nature treated by Dr. Whewell's allegorical theory of morals.

This preposterous method of "establishing" the moral duties is not merely stated in general terms, so that we can suppose ourselves misled by our author's habitual want of precision in the use of language; but it is applied in detail to recommend the several classes of duties. They are all urged as indispensable contrivances for getting up a "moral

<sup>1</sup>The word "obligations" is used throughout Dr. W.'s work in the restricted sense of "*legal obligations.*"



significance" on behalf of family relations, or the structure of society. Thus, "reverence for superiors" "is requisite to invest with a moral significance the obligation of obedience to the governing authorities of the State. For such obedience must be a duty, as well as an obligation, *in order that it may be a moral character*" (283). And "filial affection" "gives a moral significance to the family relation. Such an affection in the child towards the parent, combined with parental affection on the other part, are ties of affection which must exist, *in order that the members of the family may have moral relations to each other, such as correspond to the obligation of obedience in the child, and support and care in the parent*" (284).

If our author were intending to build a house, we think he should reason in the following way: "By the law of England, windows are taxed. But in order to be taxed, they must exist; windows therefore are necessary. But windows by themselves are without significance; in order to give them illuminative significance, they must be apertures in walls which enclose space; hence such walls are necessarily to exist. But walls in the air cannot enclose space; moreover they are not realities; in order that they become realities, there must be terrestrial foundations. Hence, we must buy a field, as a condition implied in the window-tax."

Indeed we do not know that we can better state our impression of Dr. Whewell's manner of constructing his philosophy than by saying that he endeavors to build from the top downwards. Instances

of this inverted procedure are of continual recurrence. Thus, children are to love their parents, -- why, does the reader suppose? — because it is necessary for us to have the operative principle of universal benevolence, which is not to be had by any other means. The proof may be very convincing to celibates who, in default of family ties, have fitted up in their hearts a capacious nursery for the human race; but in our narrow domestic way of viewing things, it seems much plainer that good children should love good parents, than that they should set out on their way to universal philanthropy, and take up with filial affection as their first stage. Again, we have been accustomed to believe that “equal laws” were good for “the protection of property.” But we are now assured that *property is good for the sake of equal laws*; that no man can innocently take pleasure in his possessions, except as occasions of good government, and affording the legislature the privilege of protecting him. His passion for justice is to be so warm that he will disinterestedly acquiesce in being a possessor!

“Each ought to cling to his own, not from the love of riches, but from the love of justice. It is the love of equal and steady laws, not of possessions, which makes a good man appropriate what is his. This rule does not require us to abstain from the usual transactions respecting property; — buying and selling, getting and spending; for it is by being employed in such transactions, that property is an instrument of human action, — the means by which the charac-

ters and dispositions of man manifest themselves. A rich man may employ many men in his service by means of his wealth; nor does morality forbid this; but then, they must be employed for moral purposes." — (307.)

Thus, lest it should occur to "the good man," that even if he were to part with his possessions the laws would remain no less just and equal than before, our author reconciles him to the burthen of his riches by assuring him that they are an excellent disciplinary instrument for the formation of character; so that he really ought to submit to keep them. It is afflictive to meet with this style of argument in a work professing to guide the judgment of the student and the clergyman. It has the fatal stamp of moral affectation, that worst and standing vice of ecclesiastical teaching; and throws around momentous obligations an air of unreality and pretence. It is in part a consequence of the erroneous opinion before adverted to; that life has *separate moral ends, over and above the proportioned and regulated pursuit of its natural end*, and that duty, instead of being a *method* imposed upon our activity, and ordering its forces, is itself a substantive object and business. This error is not only implied by Dr. Whewell, but is embodied in a fundamental rule, called "the principle of moral purpose."

"The supreme law of human action requires us to consider moral good, as the object to which all other objects are subordinate, and from which they derive

their only moral value. Morality cannot allow us to desire external things, as wealth, power, or honor, for their own sake, but only as means to moral ends. And we may state this as a moral principle, that *things are to be sought only as means to moral ends.*' (271.)

No ascetic doctrine, propounded by the severest fanatic, has ever demanded an abnegation so impossible as this. The *mortification* of natural desires has often been claimed from the conscience; but never the absolute and universal *extermination*, here insisted on, of every feeling of affection or want, to make a desert where duty may reign alone. These moralists may well appear to common men to have neither body nor soul, when they can propound rules so wide of nature. Were they ever hungry? and did they make a point of "seeking the things" upon the table, "only as means to moral ends?"—and provided the end (say, of recruiting their strength) was accomplished, did they survey the dishes with ghostly impartiality, or reproach themselves with a sinful preference of roast mutton over gruel? Did they ever take a fancy to a fine picture? and did they succeed in desiring it exclusively with a view to encourage art, or educate the taste of the visitors to their drawing-room? Did they ever long for a bunch of grapes for a sick child, or a carriage for an invalid wife, and feel remorse because the wish had no "moral end," and came only of pure affection? Surely, this attempt to overrule and bind down all the primary springs of action has its source in a super-

stitious confusion, and its issue in hypocritical constraint. Morality fulfils its office, not when it has suppressed the natural ends, but when it has prevented any one from being disappointed of his natural ends, and awakened every one to seek them with earnestness proportioned to their worth.

Our author appears to have been drawn into this error by an ingenious argument adduced by him to prove that there must be a *summum bonum* in human life, and a supreme rule of human conduct for reaching it.

“It has been said also that we may have a series of actions, each of which is a means to the next as an end. A man labors, that he may gain money; he wishes to gain money, that he may educate his children; he would educate his children, in order that they may prosper in the world.

“In these cases the inferior ends lead to higher ones, and derive their value from these. Each subordinate action aims at the end next above it, as a good. In the series of actions just mentioned a man's gain is regarded as a good, because it tends to the education of his children. Education is considered as valuable, because it tends to prosperity.

“And the rules which prescribe such actions derive their imperative force and validity, each from the rule above it. The superior rule supplies a reason for the inferior. The rule, *to labor*, derives its force from the rule, *to seek gain*; this rule receives its force (in the case we are considering) from the

rule, *to educate our children*; this again has for its reason to forward the prosperity of our children.

“But besides such subordinate rules, there must be a *supreme rule of human action*. For the succession of means and ends, with the corresponding series of subordinate and superior rules, must somewhere terminate. And the inferior ends would have no value, as leading to the highest, except the highest end had a value of its own. The superior rules could give no validity to the subordinate ones, except there were a supreme rule from which the validity of all of these were ultimately derived. Therefore there is a supreme rule of human action. That which is conformable to the supreme rule is *absolutely right*; and is called *right*, simply, without relation to a special end. The opposite to right is *wrong*.

“The supreme rule of human action may also be described by its object.

“The object of the supreme rule of human action is spoken of as the *the true end of human action, the ultimate or supreme good, the summum bonum*.”—(71, 72, 73.)

Now, that there may be a series of actions, each of which derives its value from its agency in producing the next, until we reach a result which is *intrinsically good*, is perfectly true. But that there can be *only one* intrinsically good end is neither proved by this argument, nor probable in itself. In the passage just cited it is not even pretended that there exists but a single series of voluntary means and ends, along the line of which all possible human

actions find a place, and whose uppermost term legitimates all the rest. Nor is it shown that, in case of there being a plurality of such series, the authenticating extreme must be the same in all. Yet one of these two positions is manifestly requisite to sustain the conclusion of a *summum bonum*. That they are both false will readily appear, if we only ask ourselves what we mean by a thing *intrinsically good*. Surely we apply such terms to *whatever is the object of a natural desire, or gratifies a natural affection*. Nature has made such objects good to us, by establishing a relation of want and supply between ourselves and them. Water is "intrinsically good" to the thirsty; relief of suffering to the pitiful; caresses to the affectionate child. Whatever then be the number of our natural tendencies, the same number will there be of "things good in themselves;" and each of these will be a separate *summum bonum* in relation to the chain of instrumental actions by which it is reached. Thus, a man may open his cupboard that he may get a cup; he gets a cup, that he may fetch water; he fetches water that he may drink it; he drinks it because he is thirsty. Again, a man puts on his hat, that he may go into the wood; he goes into the wood to cut a stick; he cuts a stick, that he may beat his dog; he beats his dog, because he is angry. And, once more; a man runs to the shore that he may launch his boat; he launches his boat that he may go to the wreck; he goes to the wreck that he may help the crew; he helps the crew because he has pity. Here are three *summa bona*, at the head of so many inde-

pendent series of acts. Have they then no relation to one another, no order *inter se*? Assuredly they have; but it is a relation of inferior to superior, not of means to ends,—a subordination of excellence, not of causation; the higher surpassing the lower, but not including it. And this arrangement of rank does not come into operation till two of the *summa bona* present themselves for choice at the same instant. When this takes place, a new intrinsic good arises, namely, the voluntary preference of the higher of the two to the lower; for such preference is essential to satisfy the moral consciousness of the agent. If, for example, the man who might have saved a drowning crew, employed himself instead in beating a delinquent dog, he would have attained a “good in itself” at the expense of another immeasurably higher. Hence, the conception of a supreme good, terminating and authenticating all the series of subordinate ends, and constant for every system, appears to us a misrepresentation of nature. You may indeed frame a true general proposition, stating, that “the supreme good of a human being consists in his uniform obedience to the highest spring of action admitted by the external conditions around him.” But, in detail, this good will require the preference now of one natural end, now of another, according as the comparison which occasions it shifts with varying circumstances up and down the scale of impelling principles.

The supreme good and the supreme rule, which Dr. Whewell conceives himself to have demonstrated, perform a great part in the subsequent con-



struction of his system ; and as they seemed to promise, more distinctly than any other of his characteristic phrases, some insight into his theory as to the grounds of moral obligation, we have bestowed great pains on their interpretation. We can present our readers, however, with no consistent account of our author's doctrine on this point. Strange to say, the supreme rule, which is perpetually referred to, which necessarily exists, — which gives authority to everything, — from which all the propositions in the book are said to be “deduced,” — keeps entirely out of sight. It is our philosopher's Mrs. Harris, vouching for whatever he inclines to say, but leaving everything to him, and never condescending to a personal appearance. We were never more astonished than on learning from Dr. Whewell, at the end of his first volume, that we had been all the while deducing rules of action from a supreme rule of action.

Flattering as it was to think that we had been “deducing” at all, it was mortifying to have no recollection of the proposition which had imparted legitimacy to a whole system of morals. Whether it has appeared in the body to any other reader of these volumes, we cannot tell. If not, it is to be hoped that the author will serve it with a summons for his next work. So far, however, as we can penetrate this obscurity, the supreme rule is Dr. Whewell's name for the precept, “We ought to do what we ought.” We should decidedly say so from the passage last quoted, and its sequel ; and our only difficulty is, that we do not see how this proposition, which strikes us as of a barren kind, can be so pro-

life in deductions as our author's supreme rule appears to be. Happily, we are left in no doubt as to the supreme good : —

"Happiness is conceived as necessarily an *ultimate* object of action." "The desire of happiness is the supreme desire." "Happiness is our being's end and aim." (544.) "The supreme object of human action is happiness." (573.)

Moreover, the relation in which these two (rule and object) stand to one another is plainly stated to be that of means to end, the instrument deriving its value from the good to which it leads : —

"The supreme rule of human action may also be described by *its object*. The object of the supreme rule of human action is spoken of as the *rule end of human action*, the *ultimate or supreme good*, the *summum bonum*." (73.)

"Human action may be contemplated, not only as governed by rules, successively subordinate to each other, and ultimately, to a supreme rule ; but also, as directed to objects successively subordinate to each other, and ultimately to the supreme object. The supreme object of human action is happiness." (573.)

We must observe, in passing, that, in spite of the "*but also*," these two views are manifestly one and the same. The series of *rules* is not different from the series of *objects*, but identical with it ; that which

is a *rule* in relation to the term above being an *object* in reference to the term below ; it gains the former, and is gained by the latter. Take, for instance, our author's own illustration. "A man labors, that he may gain money ; he wishes to gain money, that he may educate his children ; he would educate his children, that they may prosper in the world." Here the "gaining money" is the *object* of the "labor," and the *rule* for getting "education for his children ;" and the "education of the children," again, is the *object* of the "gaining money," and the *rule* for obtaining their "prosperity in the world." When, therefore, it is said that "the rules derive their imperative force and validity each from the *rule* above it" (71), it would be more correct to say "each from the *object* above it ;" and in the case of the uppermost pair we can say nothing else, since the ultimate term, which gives validity to the penultimate, is from its position an object only, and never becomes a rule.

Let us now put together the fragments we have gathered of our author's doctrine. Supreme rule is the means to supreme object as end ; and the value of the end gives all its "imperative force and validity" to the means. Supreme rule, being interpreted, man's "duty" or "rightness ;" supreme object is happiness. It seems to follow, that duty is to be treated by the moralist as the means of happiness, and derives all its "imperative force" from its tendency to this end. Our author therefore entirely coincides with Bentham as to the foundation of morals ; and the renowned "happiness-principle"

could not find in the "Deontology" itself a more unqualified, though doubtless a clearer, announcement. Yet our author is entirely unaware of the banner under which his propositions do battle. Having dressed them in a loose livery of words most unlike the tight fit of Paley, he cannot doubt, when he looks at them, that they are on the opposite side, and will put the archdeacon's shabby dogmas to the rout. It is but too plain that they have gone over to the enemy. The arguments, however, are pretty impartially divided. There are some vigorous paragraphs of specific attack on the system to which, as we have shown, the fundamental principles give their support. On these it is not our intention to comment, — we should find it easier to answer than to commend them; but will leave the criticism to those who will rejoice at the inconclusive reasoning so grievously disappointing to us. How far Dr. Whewell succeeds in separating his scheme from the systems which find their ultimate obligation in happiness, may be judged by a few sentences in which he contrasts them. "They seek to deduce the rules of actions from a supreme *object of desire*; whereas we have deduced them from a supreme *rule of action*." Yes, but have you not yourself made the supreme rule of action a dependent term on the supreme object of desire? and is it any merit in a "deduction" to stop with the penultimate, instead of going back to the ultimate, premiss? "They direct men to aim at happiness; we direct them to aim at acting rightly." True; but you also assure them that the "rule of rightness *points to happiness*" (573), and

that if it did not, it would not be the right rule. Where is the difference between *aiming at happiness through a rule of action*, and *aiming at a rule of action which points to happiness*? "We deduce our rules from the constitution of man's nature; they, from the objects of his desires" (552). And how is there any contrariety in this? Sketch for us a "constitution of man's nature," without naming the "objects of his desires;" or make a list of the "objects of his desires," observing silence as to "the constitution of his nature;" and we will then admit your distinction. Meanwhile, we discern in it only this: you examine human feelings as craving the objects; they examine the objects as craved by the feelings. What would be thought of two rival schools of magnetic science, of which one, in its anxiety to disclaim all connection with "the house over the way," should announce, "They measure the force with which the loadstone attracts iron; we measure the force with which the iron tends to the loadstone"? Dr. Whewell, with every disposition, has found no better reason for quarrel with Dr. Paley.

We have now seen the way in which Dr. Whewell derives the moral sentiments from the jural sentiments; the jural sentiments from positive laws; and positive laws from—nothing or "necessary existence." We accompany him up the next step of his ascent with no increase of security; and fear that he has not succeeded in establishing a true connection between morals and religion. From the frequency and emphasis of his appeal to what is "absolutely right," or "right in itself," we were led to hope that

moral distinctions would be treated as *ultimate*, that all inquiry into their credentials would be foreclosed, and no parley be held with those who asked for something more right than rectitude. This hope seemed to derive encouragement from such passages as the following:—

“With regard to the supreme rule, the question *Why?* admits of no further answer. Why must I do what is right? Because it *is* right. Why should I do what I ought? Because I ought. The supreme rule supplies a reason for that which it commands, by *being* the supreme rule.” (75.)

We were mistaken, however; and the illusion was effectually dissipated by this short sentence,—the text of a great deal which follows in the fourth book:—

“The supreme rule of human action derives its real authority, and its actual force, from its being the law of God, the Creator of man. The reason for doing what is absolutely right, is, that it is the will of God, through which the condition and destination of man are what they are.” (344.)

The supreme rule then is not the supreme rule; and a reason is discovered for that which can have no reason. By what inscrutable process of mutual concession these dicta are brought to sit quietly side by side, and travel over the world in a vehicle of the same philosophy, we are unable to conjecture. There is, however, a kind of partition or local sepa-

ration, interposed between them. The former of them rules in the first volume, where an authority which must not be questioned is wanted for the author's morality; the latter has its way in the second volume, where a similar divine right is required for his religion; and it is only by an imprudent anticipation that this last prefers its claim, in the passage we have cited, before its antagonist has done its work and fallen asleep. In one point of view there is some consistency between Dr. Whewell's theories of obligation at the two ends of his ethical exposition. He rests every obligation upon positive law as its foundation. Nothing is right until it can get enacted. As the historical constitution of a community determines all human rights and duties, so the actual constitution of the world is the beginning of all moral distinctions. Social man finds the ultimate ground of his duties in human legislation; responsible man, in divine legislation. It is with great concern that we see this doctrine of "sovereign will" revived. We protest against the notion that a Being, by acting as our Creator, and putting us under a certain constitution of things, becomes morally entitled to our obedience. Were it so, any super-human force, capable of systematic agency, might equally command our conscience; and the only reason why men should not love and serve the devil is that he is not *strong enough* to substantiate his claim. If there are no moral distinctions *in rerum naturâ*, — if they date their origin from the creation of man, — if this recent and local act is the limit of their history and their range; they are entitled indeed to respect

as the municipal by-laws of the club in which I live, but I see beyond them on every side. Geology makes me familiar with immeasurable times, astronomy with infinite spaces, to which they are strange; every railway cutting takes me to an age, every telescope conveys me to some world, where they are not. They shrink within the sphere of my personal presence, and run down with the time-piece that measures mortal things. And if they cannot be affirmed of the pre-existent creation into which man was born, much less can they be referred to the nature of the creative God. Say that he caused them, and you deny that he followed them. Deduce justice from his will, and his will ceases to be just. Let him precede good and ill, and his eternal Spirit is exempt alike from the one and from the other, and recedes from our aspirations into perfect moral indifference. If wisdom and holiness are historical births from his volition, they are not inherent attributes of his being. On this theory, you forego all title to praise the system of things; for had it been quite different and even opposite, it would have been equally perfect, tried by the gauge of its own self-contained rule. He and his works, who by arbitrary choice can shift, or reverse, or destroy the separating lines of good and evil, must remain secure from estimates devoid of trust, and removed from veneration. It is therefore an utterly suicidal act of ambition on the part of religion to demand precedence of morals; and instead of proclaiming that the laws of the world are good because they are established, it must teach that they are established because they



are good. God must be presented to our faith, as having *recognized*, not as having *originated*, the moral distinctions, through which we love and worship, as well as fear and obey him.

The connection between the parts of Dr. Whewell's system becomes slighter and less secure as we proceed. So frail and slender is the thread by which he unites revealed religion with natural, that it is scarcely possible to speak of it without making a vibration to which it yields. Two elements are twined together to form it. Our natural resources leave us doubtful (1) how far repentance and amendment can restore the lapsed soul; (2) whether any supernatural aids are accorded to our honest but feeble will; and our defective knowledge in these respects it is the design of revelation to repair. On the second point, we will only observe, that it is with the work of the human will alone that the moralist has to do; that as any agency within nature or from beyond nature, which is extraneous to his voluntary powers, is no object of ethical consideration, so ignorance of it is no defect in ethical knowledge; that we are responsible only for the power which is our own, and can acquit ourselves of the responsibility, whether able or not, by analysis of consciousness, to disengage our personal activity from the co-operative agencies of God. As to the other point, our author, after Butler, in the most questionable part of his "Analogy," observes:—

"The moralist is thus led to teach, that after transgression, repentance and amendment are necessary

steps in our moral culture. But the moralist cannot pronounce how far these steps can avail as a remedy for the evil; how far they can repair the broken completeness of man's moral course; how far they can restore the health of man's moral life; how far they can finally, and upon the whole, avert the consequences of sin from man's condition and destination." (357.)

Now here we have, under a single description, *two* incapacities charged upon the moralist. He cannot pronounce upon the present moral health of penitents; and he cannot predict their lot of future recompense. *Why* can he not judge of their moral health? Is not this "moral health" an ascertainable spiritual *matter of fact*, indicating itself by perceptible symptoms, just as much as health of body; and like that, declaring itself to the conscious patient and the vigilant observer, quite as plainly after disease as before it? If wickedness were, as this doctrine assumes, a secret, impalpable poison, that could exist and give no sign, it might lurk unsuspected in the soul *before* transgression no less probably than *after*; and this anxious misgiving, in which morality cannot help us, would not attach peculiarly to the case of the repentant. But we hold this theological theory of sin to be an enervating superstition, the sure mark of a sickly unreality in morals, and an unloving fear in religion. Sin is nothing else than moral evil; and moral evil is a broad black fact, visible enough in shades of every hue on the life and the affections; whoever teaches that it is a ghostly mystery with

draws men in quest of a fiction from conflict with the dark reality. Whether the moralist can foretell the future destination of the penitent transgressor, we will not attempt to decide. We only say, that the grounds, such as they are, on which he may venture to judge of *any* man's futurity, do not fail him in this particular case. The state of the character *here* regulates, in every instance, our anticipations of the *hereafter*; and we conceive the character of the repentant offender to be as distinctly legible as that of any other being, — if indeed such other there can be. And at all events there is one thing which the moralist *can* affirm; namely, that penitence and amendment constitute the *only human* remedies. They exhaust our resources. Whatever portion of the evil these fail to repair is *irreparable* by our volition, and therefore the source of no further *duty*, but only of regretful sorrow.

We have now examined the several steps by which Dr. Whewell rises from his historical basis of Roman and English law to the highest sphere of human duty. We must turn back, before we conclude, to the portion of his work which introduces this series, and say a few words on its *à priori* reasonings. It contains, as we have stated, two fundamental propositions, besides the "elementary notions and definitions" assumed as *media* of proof; that "moral rules necessarily exist;" and that "rights must be realities." The first of these is demonstrated by the help of two definitions; one fixing upon *reason* as the *personal element* and *characteristic* of man (10); the other, proposing *power of applying rules* as the distinction

of reason (21). These things having been premised, the proof runs thus: without reason, man does not act as man; without rules, he does not use reason: therefore rules are necessary to his acting as man (66). If our readers can discover in this demonstration anything but a reprint of the definitions; or, in the definitions anything but an assumption of the point to be proved, they must transfer upon us the charge of confused thought which, meanwhile, we must leave at Dr. Whewell's door. He appends another proof of the same proposition; of which we will only say, that, with strict adherence to the author's own definitions, we have read it over, substituting throughout the word "magpie" for the word "man;" and it is pleasing to find that "moral rules necessarily exist" for magpies no less than for the human race. The other proposition reaches its conclusion by a more intricate process, of which we believe the following to be a faithful report. Moral rules, by the force of the terms, must *regulate action*, and must not have anything in their structure to unfit them for this end. Now this structure requires the use of general terms, and implies general conceptions. These conceptions are either of real things, or they are not. If they are not, they can have no force to regulate action, which has to do with real things; therefore they *are* conceptions of real things. Now the kind of conceptions which enter into moral rules are these, — *property, family, contracts*, etc., or, generally, "abstractions vested in persons;" these therefore are real things. But "abstractions vested in persons" are *rights*; therefore "rights

must be realities." Q. E. D. This demonstration we present simply as a natural history specimen of the *à priori* species of argument; into its physiology we do not propose to enter, as we question whether it ever performed, or was even intended to perform, a living function. One satisfactory assurance, however, comes out in the course of it, namely, that a thief is metaphysically impossible. It is the "conception of property" which "has power to suppress" the acts arising from "the desire of having." Now a thief must have the "conception of property," in order to steal *meum* or *tuum*; therefore the acts arising from "the desire of having" are suppressed in him; and thief as thief cannot exist.

All this sort of "rigorous reasoning" we cannot but regard as mere verbal legerdemain; a perversion of the genuine *à priori* method no less unhappy, than are the remaining books, of the *à posteriori*. In the one case, the *deductions*—besides starting from a system of first principles so loosely stated as to open questions of interpretation at every step—are only so many contortions of the original definitions. In the other, the *intuition* proceeds, not by analysis of a selected moral phenomenon into its elements, but by accumulations of unanalyzed experience, by a mere enumerative classification of the complex historical facts of Roman and English law,—facts, mixed throughout with matter not moral at all. And, if our view of the true procedure in the moral sciences be not entirely wrong, Dr. Whewell, besides mismanaging both methods, has destroyed their mutual relation by inverting their proper order.

The wide dissent from our author's system which we have been obliged to express, narrows itself to a single point in a criticism which we must briefly make upon his preface. He there disclaims any intention to enter upon the "philosophy of morality," that is, the psychological laws on which moral phenomena depend; and proposes merely to construct a body of morality, "in which moral propositions are deduced from axioms, by successive steps of reasoning, so as to form a connected system of moral truth." When this has been done, and not till then, he thinks we shall be prepared to examine the faculties which make us responsible agents, and the conditions under which they act. This postponement of the whole theory of the moral sentiments he justifies by the example of geometry. All inquiries into the laws of geometrical reasoning, and the mental powers and processes engaged in it, imply the previous existence of a body of geometry. As Euclid had to demonstrate before there could be a philosophy of geometry; so Dr. Whewell must moralize, before there can be a philosophy of morality.

Now the fallacious character of this analogy is evident from a remark already made, namely, that morality is not, like geometry, a *science*, but an *art*. It is not a system of *truths*, but a system of *rules*. To the *theory* of morals it stands related, as *mensuration* to geometry. To talk of framing a body of morality by "deduction from axioms" is not more absurd than to project an *à priori* treatise on land-surveying or barrel-gauging. The order wanted in

manuals of art is not the *logical* order of thought, but the *practical* order of execution. Hence Dr. Whewell's whole conception of the task before him, as resembling the procedure of Euclid in the composition of his elements, appears certain only to mislead him. If he has written the system of morality he intended, there *cannot be* the catenation of deductions he supposes; and if there be such catenation of deductions, then he has written, not the work of rules which he intended, but the work of philosophy he disclaims.

"Still," it may be said, "this only shows that he described his first step in terms of science, instead of the more applicable terms of art; and that, from this cause, he may have aimed at the wrong kind of arrangement of internal parts in this preliminary work. But is not his main idea of order well-founded? Must not art precede philosophy? and did not mensuration exist before geometry?" Yes; but not *books* on mensuration. The attempt to compute and compare spaces of different dimensions was certainly prior to any treatise on the properties of figure; the measurer's *act* to the geometer's thought; for in an analysis of this act did the said thought at first consist. And, in like manner, morality must exist *in fact*, deeds just and unjust must awaken their appropriate sentiments in men, before these sentiments can be made objects of self-consciousness, and be reflected on in relation to the causes that excite them. But, in either case, *verbal lists and descriptions* of the actions done, whether mensurative or moral, are by no means requisite to the origina-

tion and growth of science. It is the *life* of man as a voluntary agent, not any *treatise on that life*, which ethical philosophy undertakes to analyze.

One remark more will perhaps bring us to the source of suggestion, which supplied this unfortunate analogy. The "philosophy of geometry," that is, the theory of mathematical evidence, is a *psychological* study; it is an examination of the procedure of the human understanding, when making or when communicating discoveries about quantity. The "philosophy of morality," that is, the theory of the sentiments of right and wrong, is also a *psychological* study; it is an examination of the procedure of the human conscience, when judging the springs of action and their results. From this resemblance of the two "philosophies"—both dealing with the faculties of man—arose, no doubt, our author's impression that they must hold corresponding positions on the spheres of knowledge to which they respectively belong. And so in truth they do; only, let us observe, the thing studied by the first of these "philosophies" is, "*man geometrically thinking*;" the thing studied in the second is, "*man morally acting*." The prerequisite of the one is geometrical thought; the prerequisite of the other is moral action. These are the *human arts*,—the one intellectual, the other practical,—which supply materials to the analytic skill of the philosophers undertaking their investigation. But between these two arts there is this difference: the practical one is an art *simply*, going straight among external conditions, and at a single step putting the will in possession of its end. The



intellectual one, on the other hand, is the *art of constructing a science*; the art of geometric thought is not hand-work, but head-work; the head-work must have taken place, the science must be formed, before the art which has wrought it can be examined. A science, an organized system of truths, cannot be formed without registering the successive steps as they succeed each other, — in other words, without making a book; nor can we enable another person to examine our intellectual actions, to see how we perform them, if we do not record them in language. With practical processes it is evidently otherwise; they display themselves, and dispense with the medium of words. This is the reason why books on geometry are prerequisites to a "philosophy of geometry;" while books on morality are not necessary to a "philosophy of morality." For these reasons we think that the analogy which Dr. Whewell has adopted as the corner-stone of his system is entirely unsound.

In treating this work of an eminent and able man, we have deliberately avoided the course which would have been most easy to ourselves, and, we fear, most agreeable to our readers. We might have given ourselves no concern about the way in which he lays out his subject; have slurred over the loose junctures between the parts; have lightly sped across the slippery logic; and stopped our breath till we were clear of the metaphysic fogs. There would have remained room enough, and more than enough, for a critical ramble through the particular moral and political tenets which characterize the book. The author's

leaning towards the highest doctrines of authority, and the evident zest with which he propounds them, are remarkable even in a churchman. Not Wolsey himself could find more magnificent pleas for state prerogatives; and scarcely Innocent, had he lived now, make grander claims for an exclusive church. Passive obedience, or something which we cannot distinguish from it, is enjoined; no scope is allowed to individual conscience in resistance to any law, however iniquitous. The governors of a country are to select one church as the true one; to endow it with wealth and dignities; to entrust it with the education of the people; to limit all national offices to its members; to protect it by a law against "religious sedition." We should gladly have adverted to these symptomatic peculiarities of doctrine, and to some better things, equally earnest and hearty, especially the indignant severity with which slavery is everywhere treated. But we thought it our duty to look rather into the structure of the book, on which its pretensions mainly rest, than into the details, which, unless the method be good, become a collection of unauthorized opinions. We shall watch the destination of this work with some anxiety. The author has distinguished himself, with some other members of his university, by his strictures on the moral studies entering into the Cambridge course. He occupies a position likely to give effect to his opinions. We do not profess to think that Locke, much less Paley, presents the best guidance to the young men of the present age into the domain of intellectual and moral philosophy. But we should be sorry to hear

that the "Elements of Morality" had taken any portion of their place. The "Moral and Political Philosophy" at least starts courageously, and pursues with some freedom questions of civil right and religious liberty. And the "Essay on the Human Understanding" can never be read without giving clearer insight into the contents of the mental world within us, and a nobler ambition to devote the powers it reveals to the fearless pursuit of truth and the free service of God.

## WHEWELL'S SYSTEMATIC MORALITY.

AMONG various recent signs of a humane and thoughtful spirit extending in the upper ranks of English society, there is none more expressive, or of greater promise, than the increasing regard for moral and political studies in the old Universities. The change is not spontaneous and accidental; it is not one of those caprices of taste, which, especially in secluded societies, may be introduced by the ascendant genius of one or two men; it is manifestly concurrent with the rise of new questions and the growth of nobler sentiments, in the world around; and must be ascribed to causes social rather than academic. The legislator and the clergyman, educated in these retreats, and adorned with the accomplishments in highest favor there, found themselves afterwards thrown upon a life in which their attainments left them hopelessly at fault; whose problems of action no philology could interpret and no calculus solve; and in whose controversies they were overmatched by men of very inferior culture, only possessed of the right instruments of thought, and using them with more dexterous faculty. The whole range

<sup>1</sup> *Lectures on Systematic Morality, delivered in Lent Term, 1846.* By William Whewell, D. D., Master of Trinity College, and Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Cambridge. London: Parker, 1846.

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of modern interests, from the topics of political economy to the highest discussions of speculative religion, lies beyond the routine which makes the "senior wrangler" and the "double-first." The characteristic changes of the last half-century, the rapid increase of large towns, the augmented power of capital and labor, the growth of our colonial empire, the altered proportions of sects, have started a number of social questions respecting the functions of government, the rights of industry, the means of public education, and the proper office of a church; demanding for their treatment a combination of historical knowledge with habits of philosophical reflection. The new want has been felt even at Oxford and Cambridge, difficult as it is to penetrate their college walls with any influence from without: and the fact that the ancient learning of the one, and the modern science of the other, are used, no longer as the mere study of words and symbols, but as lessons in human nature and the Divine plan, as aids in the judging of living interests and duties, as no less rich in suggestions for the future than in treasures from the past, is an emphatic sign of progress in the new generation towards an earnest and manly mind.

The peculiar mental discipline of the Universities is very apparent in most of the metaphysical and ethical literature proceeding from their distinguished men. They apply Greek or mediæval doctrine directly to the exposure of existing fallacies and the correction of existing opinion. They leap down from Aristotle to Bentham, from Plato to Coleridge, with the fewest possible resting-places between. With

the exception of Hooker, Locke, Butler, and Paley (an exception far from constant), the series of great writers who have formed the methods of speculative thought in Protestant Europe is but little known to them. Hence, they rarely appear at home in the province of modern philosophy; they enter its fields as strangers and emigrants; and betray how difficult is the transition, for a mind trained, in the schools of Athens and of Rome, to the work of the Christian moralist and the Anglican ecclesiastic. There is an historical chasm manifest in their modes of thinking, — an anachronism of argument, — a mixture of the Peripatetic and the Churchman, which, we are persuaded, must produce an odd effect upon continental readers unfamiliar with the cause. How can it be otherwise? Two grand agencies, the growth of the Inductive Sciences, and the spread of a Pauline Christianity, have impressed the most marked characteristics on the mind of modern Europe. Hobbes, Descartes, Leibnitz, Spinoza, were present at the infancy of these powers, and preserve the traces of their earliest direction. Berkeley, Hume, Hartley, and Helvetius, display, in further advance, some of their main lines of tendency; Reid, Kant, Fichte, and Cousin, mark the reaction towards an opposite point; while Mill and Comte, on the one hand, Schleiermacher, and Coleridge, on the other, exhibit the extreme development of these influences at their negative and positive poles. These are the main links through which the light and force of philosophical reflection have been transmitted to our own times; and without familiarity with this series, it is

impossible to effect a communication between ancient wisdom and modern wants, or to apply an instrument of analysis powerful enough for the resolution of the problems that await us. The subordinate place assigned in the English Universities, when compared with the Scotch and Continental schools, to the study of philosophy and morals, may have the advantages claimed for it by Dr. Whewell.<sup>1</sup> But he ought not to be surprised if there be a price to pay for these advantages. The system may protect us, as he believes, from a race of conceited students; but it also lessens the chance that, in the teachers, we shall have eminent philosophers, and accounts for the fact that for the last century Cambridge and Oxford have produced no names that can be mentioned with Dugald Stewart, Thomas Brown, Jouffroy, Schelling, or Ritter.

It might be expected that the deficiency to which we refer would be least conspicuous in the University which is renowned for its *scientific* training; since mental science does not differ from physical in its methods, but only in its phenomena. The presumption however is disappointed by a countervailing advantage on the other side. The studies prevalent at Oxford are *human*, and keep the mind in communication, not with *nature*, but with *men*; — the literature which speaks their feeling for truth and beauty; the logic which analyzes their processes of thought; the history which records the aims of their social life and polity. The practical sympathy with the sentiments and affairs of mankind which is thus main-

<sup>1</sup> See his *English University Education*, p. 46, seq.

tained is, in our opinion, of far more importance for the purposes of psychological and moral investigation, than mere skill in the forms of scientific procedure. Accordingly, whatever recent contributions from churchmen to our philosophical literature contain the promise of enduring reputation, are the work of Oxford divines; at least the declamation of Sedgwick, and the ambitious confusion of Whewell, contrast unfavorably with the moral thoughtfulness of Coplestone, and the perspicuous good sense and scholastic precision of Whately.

The eight lectures referred to at the head of this article form a kind of appendix to the large work, by the same author.<sup>1</sup> With the exception of the last two (on International Law, and the Relation of Church and State), they are simply a defence of the treatise on the "Elements of Morality" from certain objections advanced against it. The first half of the defence is directed against some critic imbued with Mr. Carlyle's mode of thought, and sympathizing with his aversion to all systematic definitions of human duty. The remainder is a manifest reply to our review; unless, indeed, the very same series of strictures has been repeated in some other quarter unknown to us. The lecturer excuses himself from all distinct reference to the criticisms which provoke his defence by the following plea:—

"I have endeavored to remove some objections, which may be made to the *Elements of Morality*, but which are, I think, unfounded. Many of the objections thus noticed have appeared in print; but I have

<sup>1</sup> "Elements of Morality."



not thought it necessary to refer more particularly to the quarters from which they have been urged. It appears to me that, in all subjects, the more *impersonal* our controversies can be made, the better they will answer all good ends; and certainly controversies on morality are most likely in this way to be really moral." — *Preface*.

This plea reads very amiably; but it upholds a practice essentially unjust. An author, who takes upon him to represent in his own language the objections of an opponent, is surely bound to provide the check of an exact reference. Few writers can be trusted — wise men will hardly trust themselves — to state with force and fairness the arguments which bear against their favorite positions; and to attempt this on mere credit, in evasion of the recognized securities, appears an unwarrantable demand upon their readers' confidence. No high-minded person will take offence at the restraint we would impose. Honorable men do not wish their accounts to pass unaudited. The desire for a purely "impersonal" discussion looks very charitable, when stated in the abstract; and readers who suppose Dr. Whewell's reply to be directed against some namable man, may be tempted to praise his forbearance. But how a controversy could become *personal* by referring to an *anonymous* writer, is a thing obscure to us. Our author, commenting upon an invisible critic, was at all events safe from the danger and the charge of "personality;" and, as he has not concealed himself, he has done nothing to deliver *us* from such tempta-

tion to this fault as our infirmities of disposition may occasion. The scruples which have prevailed with the author of the "Elements of Morality" were unknown to the author of the "Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences;" who has replied (Book II. ch. 5) openly to an article in the "Edinburgh Review," citing chapter and verse; and if he has thus been tempted to a pungency of which, in the present case, we have no occasion to complain, he has also preserved a brevity for which, in these lectures, we vainly sigh.

In these animadversions, we do not impute to Dr. Whewell the slightest degree of conscious injustice. He has no doubt represented our objections as they appeared to him. That he has not represented them with invariable fidelity, may be the fault of the original, not of the version; only, while the original is kept out of sight, the translator plainly has the matter all his own way.

Nothing that appears in these lectures at all relieves the first and fundamental objection to our author's "Elements of Morality." He seems to us to misplace his whole subject upon the map of human knowledge; to exhibit it in false and fanciful relations; especially, to proceed upon its assumed analogy to geometry; and, in consequence, to force upon it a method of treatment of which it is entirely unsusceptible. Let us put before us the design which he wishes to realize; and examine it in relation to the method adopted for its accomplishment. What is our author's *proposition*? To construct a "body of morality," avoiding and postponing the

'theory of morality.' And how does he attempt this? By the geometrical course of deduction, beginning with certain so-called "axioms," and proceeding, by logical derivation from these, to draw up a complete system of precepts for the regulation of human life. And in what way does he describe the result supposed to be obtained by such process? As a "system of truths," analogous to the collection of propositions in which an optical treatise expounds and reasons out the laws of light; distinguished from this not by any peculiarity of *method*, but only by having to deal with a different subject-matter, with volitions not with rays. Now we do not hesitate to pronounce the whole undertaking impossible, and the author's conception of it absurd. He cannot construct a "body of morality," of any higher value than a catechism or book of proverbs, except as the result of a previous and complete "theory of morality." He cannot connect the parts of such a "body" together by logical filiation, or commence it with self-evident first principles. And when it is produced, it will not be a series of truths at all, and will differ from a scientific treatise, not less in its structure, than in the matter of which it treats. We will begin with the last point, and ascend to the first.

Let the supposed "body of morality," whether put together by Solomon or by Dr. Whewell, have been produced. What is it? How does it read? "Lie not. Lust not. Hate not. Train the children in thy house. Succor the wretches at thy door." Here is a set of precepts, a directory of action; but no truths. And such as the sample is, will the entire

assortment be. It will not contain a proposition susceptible of proof or of contradiction; but will be wholly made up of *rules* of conduct. Can it be necessary to insist upon the difference, — fundamental, in relation to the present argument, — between a system of instructions for the guidance of the will, and a series of beliefs recommended to the Understanding? Of the former, you cannot affirm, as of the latter, that they are *true or false*; but only that they are fit or unfit for a certain end. Except in relation to that end, no judgment of them can be formed; their validity being not logical, but practical. To collect and arrange them is the business, not of science, but of art; a distinction not arbitrary and verbal, but founded upon an essential difference of procedure in the two cases. If I attempt to exhibit a system of truths, what order shall I follow? — the order of demonstration, by which thought advances step by step in apprehension and discovery. But what, if I frame a body of rules? I shall follow the order of action, by which the will advances step by step in execution. Many of the truths in the former series afford reasons for the rules in the latter; and all the rules in the latter find their ground among the truths in the former. Pick out the rules, as they incidentally arise, from the first, or the truths from the second, and they will present an example of utter disorder, — practical confusion in the one case, logical incoherence in the other. The scientific elements that lie scattered along the path of art may be rudely compared to types disposed in alphabetic succession for the convenience of the printer's hand.

When presented in the order of knowledge, they are like the same types thrown into words and propositions, and suggesting a connected sense. Or the difference may be illustrated by the arrangement of articles in a cyclopedia of reference, contrasted with the exposition of the same materials in a systematic work of science. That the order of the *things to be done* for any end must be widely different from the order of the *reasons for doing them*, can hardly require proof or even illustration. Take the case of a treatise on land-surveying. It explains the instruments for measuring lines and angles, the chain, the theodolite, the repeating circle, the mode of using these for altitudes and for the horizontal plane; the formulas for the computation of triangles, the processes of verification, the correction for the spheroidal form of the earth. Gather together the principles on which these operations depend, and into how many sciences, remote from each other, are you obliged to dip? The plumb-line or the level bid you expound the law of terrestrial gravitation; your precautions in taking your base refer to the effects of heat; the observing instruments are constructed in adaptation to the properties of light; the trigonometrical equations are all a digression from the 4th proposition of Euclid's 6th Book, and the logarithmic tables from the principles of geometrical progression; the vertical heights go for their standard to the half-tide law, while latitudes and longitudes are determined by assuming the rotation, the shape, and the astronomical relations of the earth. The scheme of truths in which a body of *moral* rules find their scientific

ground, is not indeed so amorphous and heterogeneous as this; but is equally incapable, till entirely recast, of forming a logical whole. The classification of *precepts in a code* will follow the order of our external business and relations; a classification of the *reasons* for those precepts will follow the order of our internal moral constitution. The one will regulate its divisions by the *occasions* of action, the other by the *principles* of action. And since the same spring of volition, involving cases of moral choice perfectly similar in complexion, may manifestly run through all sorts of outward occasions, in the home, in the market, in the commonwealth, and on the theatre of nations, it is plain that the *objective* arrangement suitable for a body of rules cannot coincide with the *subjective* arrangement requisite for a system of truths.

Dr. Whewell then may take his choice, to give us a body of rules, or a system of truths; but he cannot give us *both* by one and the same operation. If this be allowed, then the next point clears itself without further trouble. Truths organize themselves into a "system" by being disposed in logical series. And since rules follow a different principle of arrangement, their order is *not* logical, and the claim to a nexus of ratiocination among them is an idle pretence. Precept is not deducible from precept, as truth is from truth. From the command, "Do not kill," I can no more infer (the very phrase is absurd), "Do not commit adultery," than from the rules of perspective I can learn how to mix colors. There is indeed a certain inferior department in the

business of art, into which deduction may enter. When I have learned the general rules of linear perspective, and am called upon to apply them to a particular drawing which I propose to make, it becomes necessary to translate the comprehensive terms of the rule into the special conditions of the present case, to look out the actual positions and directions of which these terms give the generic description. This exercise of fitting a mark of wide scope to the individual object, or subordinate group of objects qualified to receive it, is undoubtedly a process strictly logical. Nor do we deny that there is room for it in morals, when once we have secured a complete and inflexible set of precepts, requiring only verbal interpretation. This is the main business of the magistrate and the judge, when administering a statute law, and adapting it to cases brought into their court. This would be the main business of the Christian moralist and divine, if there were a verbal revelation, infallibly defining all possible positions of the human will and conscience. And no doubt it is the prevalence of this view of Scripture that has so completely pervaded the ethical theology of Christendom with exegetical acuteness and judicial logic, and left it so empty of the philosophical spirit. It is obvious that the moralist's work, so far as it consists of this operation, is concerned, not with the relations of things, but with the meaning of phrases; it simply determines whether this or that case does or does not come within the scope of a certain definition. If that definition was framed by some omniscient mind, whose intent must be an unerring guide,

and whose formulas can be neither too narrow nor too large for the cases they are designed to embrace, then will this process of legal construction yield us verdicts of absolute right and wrong. But the value of the subordinate decisions is entirely measured by that of the general rule; and if, instead of being the true expression of natural law, it is only a rough generalization of our own, picked up from common life, hitting off the majority of instances, but having no pretension to unimpeachable precision, what do we gain by finding that here it fits, and there it fails? We see something of the contents, but learn nothing of the merits, of our arbitrary rule; we judge by the datum of enacted law, instead of approaching the *quæsitum* of perfect and unwritten law. The great office of the moralist is antecedent to this, and bears analogy to the task, not of the magistrate, but of the legislator. He has far other work than to weigh expressions and analyze definitions; namely, to shape into language a code yet unformed, faithfully representing the moral sentiments that characterize and consecrate human nature, and embracing the problems of external action that can be foreseen in human life. We must get our rules before we can interpret them.

Now, incredible as it may seem, we believe that Dr. Whewell has no other idea of his function as a moralist than this of interpretation. He fancies himself not in the senate, but on the bench. In his circuit of human affairs he carries about with him certain ready-made formulas, into the origin and worth of which it is not his business to inquire; and



supposes that, by trying the measure of these upon every problem, all moral doubts must vanish. Several examples indeed are given in the fourth lecture of the manner in which he resolves knotty questions of duty; any one of which will sufficiently illustrate our meaning. He first states that he is furnished with *five rules*, about which we must ask no questions; "*I have found them*," — and that is enough. They are: "Be kind, be just, be true, be pure, be orderly." Once supplied with these, we have only "to discover their import in particular cases," to learn *what is just, what is true*, etc. (p. 92), and we get an infallible answer to every perplexity. Here is an example

"Of our mode of dealing with moral questions; and especially questions concerning duties of truth. For instance, take a common question: May I tell a lie to preserve my secret? I am the author of an anonymous work, — Junius, Waverley, an article in a review; — it is important to me to remain unknown as the author. I am asked if I am the author; or I am charged with being so. Am I compelled to confess; am I allowed to deny? To this I reply negatively to both inquiries. I am not compelled to confess; but I am not allowed to deny. I am not allowed, by the rules of morality, to say what is not true, because to tell the truth is inconvenient or disagreeable. The rule of truth, the conception of truth, admits of no such exception. The rule cannot be, never tell a lie except when to tell the truth is inconvenient or disagreeable to you. Such a rule

would destroy the very nature of truth. It is not what we mean by truth; it is a rejection of the universal understanding which prevails among mankind. It is using words in a sense in which I know mankind do not understand me to use them; I may not therefore deny; I may not say *no*, when they ask me if it is so." — (P. 95.)

We have no quarrel with our author's verdict in this matter; only with his mode of getting at it. "In the course of deduction by which we have been led so far" (p. 94), does our reader find any satisfactory answer to the original doubt? What does it all prove?—that if Sir Walter Scott denied the authorship of *Waverley*, he said what was not true. It needed no ghost,—and no professor to tell us that. Who ever doubted it? The question is not the ridiculous one, "whether a lie would, in such case, be *true?*" but "whether a lie would, in such case, be *right?*" Upon which our author laconically remarks, "Be true!" What possible help to the moral embarrassments of life can arise from this method of verbal equivalents? We do not want to have our rules construed, but shown to be trustworthy. Their meaning is usually plain; their obligation sometimes obscure. This obscurity is of a kind which no mere interpretation can clear up. It arises from the concurrent demand upon the same point of action of *two* rules, contradictory in their suggestions, but apparently equal in their obligation. Grotius is pursued by the officers of justice. His wife shuts him up in a box; and saves him by declar

ing it to be full of old books. Was she right? Dictionaries and deduction will hardly serve us here. Consuming the day in interpretations of "be kind," "be true," we make no progress; seeing that this adroit lady certainly *was* "kind;" certainly *was not* "true." There is nothing for it but to effect a choice between our "rules," for one of them, unhappily, must go to the wall; and it is the moralist's business to find some just ground of choice. It has entirely escaped Dr. Whewell (even while using the phrase "conflicting duties") that this is the real nature of all "cases of conscience." He treats them as arising from the obscurity of a single precept, instead of from the collision of two. Accordingly, while he labors hard at the *construing* of his "five rules," he makes no provision for *comparing* them, and assigning to them an internal order of precedence. Evading thus the major duty of the real moralist, to trifle amid the minor business of the verbal interpreter, he is hardly entitled to plead against us for the dignity of casuistry, and to rebuke us in the following terms for our estimate of its Jesuistical tendency. We have at least set it upon a more respectable foundation than our author.

"The moralist must have some method of solving cases of conscience. When a man, wishing to do right, and laboring in the agony of a struggle of apparently conflicting duties, asks the moralist, what he ought to do, it will not suffice that the moralist should tell him that cases of conscience are mischievous and corrupting things; that they arise out of some

sinister influence, some vicious propensity lurking in the heart. This may be so; but this, uttered in general terms, with whatever vivacity of imagery and vehemence of manner, does not help the poor inquirer in the particular case. He wants to learn *which* is the sinister side of the question; which is the worse, and which the better way. If the moralist cannot tell him this, how is he a moralist? or what is the value and application of his speculations?" — (P. 98.)

If the man in an agony were to carry his "case" to our author, we happily know — for the next page informs us — how conclusive an answer he would get.

"Our replies to questions as to what men must do, will necessarily take this aspect; *they must do that which will tend to make their moral being most truly moral!*" — (P. 99.)

If the moralist can tell them *this*, is he not a moralist?

Interpretation, then, will only distribute ethical precepts to their several cases; but will not enable us to deduce rule from rule. And if our "body of morality" have not the structure of a chain of reasoning, its primary elements cannot be related to the rest, as its supporting links. It does not take its commencement from "*axioms.*" There can be no axioms in art, for every rule has its reason. They belong exclusively to science, where *not every truth*

can have its reason, but some must stand at the fountain-head of evidence, and be assumed as possessing a maximum of certainty. Our author's account of axioms, in his "Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences," has always appeared to us open to conclusive objections; but we were not prepared to find, in a writer of such eminent attainment, the confused apprehension of their nature which these lectures betray. "Fulfil your promises;" "give to each man his own;" "love men as men," are here called *self-evident truths*. Why, they are not truths at all; they are injunctions, which an opponent might dispute as unsound advice, but could not contradict as false propositions. As well might we designate as an axiom the precept, "Do not build your house upon a swamp." The counsel is obviously good in all these instances; but it is good in reference to a certain end, readily conceived of by the mind, though suppressed in the exhortation. This peculiarity—the reference to a suppressed end—attaches to all *imperative* forms of speech, distinguishes them from the *indicative*, and makes it improper to treat them as statements of truth. Nor does a mere grammatical metamorphosis from mood to mood at all get rid of this impropriety, as Dr. Whewell seems to imagine. The precepts just enumerated do not acquire the character of axioms by being translated into the following categorical form: "Promises are to be performed;" "each is to have his own;" "man is to be loved as man;" "to build your house upon a swamp is stupid." The suppressed end is not shaken out into the light by

this change; nor is it cancelled; it still lurks in the expression, and detains it from being the assertion of a truth. As the word "stupid" denotes that the act to which it is applied secures the needless *failure* of certain ends assumed to be desirable; so the phrases, "*are to be performed*," — "*is to have*," — "*is to be loved*," — mark the *necessity* of the actions named, as conditions of some unquestionable good. In order to convert the precept of art into a proposition of science, this suppression must cease; the end must be named; and the relation to it of the prescribed act as its condition must be affirmed as a matter of fact. Thus we obtain truths, instead of rules, when we say: "To build your house upon a swamp is the way to loss of health;" "to perform your promises is a thing which you feel to be obligatory." It is not necessary that the implied *end* which is to be sought or avoided should be an external consequence of the act, like the loss of health caused by the pestilential site of a dwelling. It may be an internal accompaniment or character of the act, like the feeling of violated obligation attendant on a breach of promise. And this, we conceive, is the peculiarity which distinguishes from all others the two arts of æsthetics and morals. Their rules are good, as satisfying the feeling of beauty in the one case, the sense of authority or higher worth in the other. The *truths*, therefore, which supply the reasons of such rules, must be the stated laws of our imagination and conscience. If those laws are ascertained by *immediate* self-consciousness, so as to be recognized without any per

ceptible analysis and induction, then the propositions affirming them may be properly called axioms. But at all events, to possess this character, they must cease to be *precepts* and be *bonâ fide indicative* predications.

Do we then "deny that there can be moral axioms?" Not in the least. We only say that, if there be such, they are statements of *psychological facts*, belonging to the province of knowledge; and that the treatise at the head of which they stand, must either be a theory of moral sentiments, or a production anomalous and incoherent. Do we "deny that there can be a rationally connected system of moral truths?" Far from it; we only say, that whoever exhibits such a system does *not* give us a "body of morality," but a chapter from the science of human nature and society. What is the use then of our author's protracted labors, to prove "that there are moral truths;" and "that these should be definitely expressed and rationally connected?" Nobody questions it; but only whether "thou shalt not kill" is a moral truth; and whether it is logically connected with "thou shalt not steal." There may be plenty of deduction and demonstration possible; and yet it may be an instrument wholly unfit for constructing a code, with omission of a theory, of morals. It *cannot* do what Dr. Whewell would attempt with it; it *cannot help* doing what he has omitted.

The fifth lecture of the present series is intended to explain the author's views of the relation between law and morality. He complains of having been misapprehended upon this matter; disclaims any design to make law the basis of morality; and thinks

that he ought to have been safe from such a charge, because the second book of his Elements, though entirely devoted to an exposition of Roman and English law, is put to no use in the succeeding parts of this work of "rigorous reasoning." Without remarking upon this extraordinary ground of defence, we will proceed at once to the corrected account now given of the relation between moral duties and legal obligations. After the most careful attention to our author's statements, we find it extremely difficult to say precisely what he means; but the following three things do appear to be distinctly affirmed upon this subject: That the difference between law and morality is the difference between external action and internal principle; that the law must define men's outward rights and relations, and morality adopt these definitions in its rules; that law being compared to an inscription, morality may be said to give the interpretation.

The first of these positions lies at the foundation of a large portion of Dr. Whewell's system. Yet when we begin to point out its unsoundness, we are met by expressions indicative of an opinion less open to objection. We find this variance from himself a phenomenon of such frequent occurrence in our author's writings, that we have ceased to lay any stress upon particular phrases or even entire propositions, till we have tested them by comparison with the general currency of his thought. In the present instance, if he were to quote, in evidence of his opinion, the following sentence: "In our code, law is a *portion* of the letter, morality is *the whole* of the



spirit" (p. 113), we could only say, that if this happy statement had been steadily adhered to, the criticism we are about to make would have had no place. But we venture to affirm that our author habitually presents the matter before his mind in this way: "Law is the letter, morality is the spirit;" and that some important fallacies are introduced by this curtailed conception. Take the following passage, remembering that the word rights denotes only *legal rights*:—

"What guidance do we obtain from comparing the narrow range of rights [that is law], with the wide expanse of what is right [that is morality]? What is *the* reason of the great difference of compass in the terms?

"The reason is plainly this: that men in determining rights, have selected only such portions of the supreme rule as bear upon visible and tangible things; and upon such actions relative to these, as are of an external and obtrusive character, introducing evident disturbance into the system of which men are parts. Hence they forbid theft, but not covetousness; adultery, but not lust. They are content to keep men's material interest in tolerable balance; they do not deal with the heart and mind. They regulate the external conduct, but do not attempt to reach the internal principle of action.

"This satisfies *them*. It is well that it does so; for it is all that they can do. Human laws cannot do much, in the region of internal principle. But though this satisfies law, it does not satisfy morality.

*She* must go deeper than this. That she must do so, is evident from what I have said already, of the extent of her domain; everything which is or may be right or wrong belongs to her. Hence, she must have something to do with intentions, as well as acts; for those, too, may be right or wrong. It is wrong to intend to steal, though I do not;—to put my hand in a man's pocket for that purpose, though I find nothing there;—to watch him with that intent, though the eye of the policeman withholds me. Not only intentions, but desires and emotions, are wrong; it is wrong to grudge another man's happiness; to have a spite at him. There is a vast and varied field of desires, affections, sentiments, mental processes, all which must be subject to morality, for all may be right and may be wrong; and the supreme law must include all these; and must, according to the case, decide which of these two, right or wrong, each of these things is."—(P. 83.)

The same distinction is stated in the Elements of Morality:—

"Law deals with matters external and visible, such as objects of desire (things), and actions, and thus creates rights. Morality has to do with matters internal and invisible; with desires and intentions, as well as with laws and rights."— (§ 460.)

Once more:—

"We know that morality must go far beyond law, and must do this in an inward direction. It must go to virtues of the heart, as well as actions of the hand."—(P. 101.)

This is the only boundary ever drawn between the two provinces, that offer themselves for definition. It did not occur to Dr. Whewell to ask, If law is but a *portion* of the letter, what is *the rest* of that letter; and what separates the part *within* the law, from the residue *without*? These omitted portions of external conduct, which are not spoken of at the Inns of Court, are worth a little inquiry. It is unfortunate, we think, that our author, having indirectly recognized them in one transient expression, never approaches them again; for they spoil his whole project for marking out the field of human duty.

That the qualification for coming under the notice of law is *not* the "external and visible," or even the "obtrusive," and "disturbing" character of an action, must be evident on the slightest reflection. The very examples adduced do not support the assertion. All the *vices* of lust are equally overt acts, and sources of wide-spread and devastating wretchedness; why is adultery made the only *crime* of lust? The scolding of a vixen is of a highly "obtrusive character, introducing evident disturbance into the system of which men are parts;" yet, we lament to say, no law forbids it. Instances may be accumulated without end, of outward actions highly detrimental to the right order, the security, even "the material interests" of society, which legislation

passes by in silence. In primitive communities, there is undoubtedly a tendency in the lawgiver to provide enactments suitable to all these cases, and extend his cognizance over the whole of human life. But by degrees it is found that some offences evade definition; others are beyond detection; yet more are best encountered by the retribution of private sentiment; till in the codes of civilized nations a very large portion of conduct is entirely dropped from magisterial care. No classification, therefore, of existing legal obligations can give more than a *selection* from the table of contents which exhibits our *actual*, and perhaps once enacted, obligations.

Yet our author's whole scheme of duty is so framed as to cover only this narrow base, — indeed to grow up from it by the mere protrusion and parallel fluxion of its outline into higher regions. His morality is, in its very nature and by the necessity of its structure, a mere elongation of law, without the possibility of any widening of its compass. For it is raised by the following process: First, the analysis of law presents us with five classes of rights: of person, — of property, — of family, — of civil authority, — of contract; which are defended by a corresponding number of precepts: do no violence; do not steal; do not commit adultery; do not disobey authority; do not break a contract. Secondly, law being the police of action, morality, of intention, the five prohibited offences of the one must have, answering to them, five dispositions prohibited by the other; drawing these out, we have this set of moral precepts: bear no malice; do not seek what is

another's; do not deceive; do not lust; do not desire to break the law. Thirdly, these negative prohibitions, translated into positive injunctions of the contrary dispositions, present us with the five cardinal virtues: be benevolent; be just; be true; be pure; be orderly. These fill up the entire scope of "the supreme rule." (Pp. 87-90.)

Now what are the objects upon which, in this scheme, the ban of morality is set? *the mental springs of legal offences*. And what are the objects that lie within the circle of its approbation? *the mental states that indispose for legal offences*. Within the limits of the one is comprised all that is wrong; within the limits of the other, all that is right. Here then, undeniably, we have a morality precisely, and by its own gauge, coextensive with law; with background indeed *behind* the law, but with no margin *beyond* it. Extra-legal conduct, with its sources in the mind, contributes nothing to it, is wholly omitted from it, and might as well have no existence. For this would make no difference; the symmetry and proportions of our author's system would remain exactly as they are. He manifestly forgets, throughout this stratification of duty, within the framework of obligation, that "law is" but "a *portion* of the letter;" and that its projection can give but a portion "of the spirit." The shadow of a fragment cannot have the form of the whole.

Is, then, Dr. Whewell's morality of so low a cast, that a legal conduct, backed by a legal spirit, satisfies all its claims? Far from it. His bad method would make it so; but his better mind forbids it.

He gives you a beggarly account of his resources to begin with; and comes out very handsomely in the end. The narrow plot for the foundation gets covered by a capacious and disproportioned roof. He effects this, so as to evade the consequences of his false commencement, by stretching his terms at every stage, and making them take in more than they profess. Thus the mental source of adultery is first described as "desire of her who is another's;" for which, on the next page, is quietly substituted the far more comprehensive word "lust," — a word, however, still limited in its meaning to *one* passion. Then, when prohibition of the evil has to be turned round into command of the good, instead of naming the *right* state of this one passion as contrary to the *wrong*, our author slips in the word *purity*; thus stealthily widening his empire over *all* the bodily appetites; nay, over every desire that can be classed with "the lower parts of our nature;" for his own definition of purity is the "control of the lower parts of our nature by the higher." If all this can be made out from the prohibition of adultery, it is easy to see, how, by the stretching system, any magnitude of morality, however great, may be elicited from any quantity of law, however small. The fact is, no real and honest deduction has any place in all this system-building. That law serves in the capacity of guide to morality, and conducts our author to the provinces of duty, else undiscovered or inaccessible, is all a pretence. It is a piece of capital acting, we confess; still we never quite forget that the professor is on the boards. He

and jurisprudence put on the air of meeting for the first time; are in the charming excitement of a first acquaintance; he is in raptures at her hidden knowledge, and vows to resign himself to her direction. But all the while they understand one another very well. Affecting to be led, he is the real conductor of his guide. With all his solemn, blindfolded look, he has excellent peep-holes for seeing his way. Mesmerized by the Pandects, he passes, through curious attitudes of logical catalepsy, into a state of ethical clairvoyance; push a pin, shallow or deep, into the book of morals, and he will tell you the doctrine which it pricks; the sly Alexis possessing a certain private acquaintance with the volume, and having shuffled the leaves till he caught the page.

The next relation between law and morality on which these Lectures insist can be presented in a brief quotation:—

“Law supplies the definitions of some of the terms which morality employs, and without these definitions, moral rules would be indefinite, unmeaning, and inapplicable. Morality says, you shall not seek another man’s property; law defines what *is* another man’s property, and what is mine. Morality says, you shall not desire her who is another’s wife; law determines whether she be his wife. Morality says, willingly obey or wisely rule, according to your station in civil society; law determines what your station is. In this way, certainly, our moral precepts depend for their actual import upon law. But I do not see how we can have any moral precepts

which do not depend upon law in this sense. To what purpose does morality say to me, Do not desire the house, or the field, or the wife, or the authority, which is another's; if I am allowed to take out of the hands of the law the decision of the matter, what or who is another's, and to determine it for myself, in some other way? I certainly do not pretend to make morality independent of law to this extent. Our morality does not think it a degradation to listen to the voice of law, when law pronounces about matters which especially belong to her; — matters which no other voice can decide, and which must be decided. So far, we accept from law the determination of certain fixed points in the external world of things, in order that, in the internal world of thought and will, there may be something to determine the direction which thought and will must take." — (P. 103.)

Now, if to this extent morality *is*, in our author's view, dependent upon law, we should be curious to see the range of its *independence* defined; and to know what prerogatives it can ever acquire *against* the law, whose definitions it is obliged to accept. The way in which these definitions are mentioned, as if they merely named certain indifferent external objects, about which, as the physical materials of action, morality has occasion to speak, is altogether misleading. To say that law is the mere lexicographer, engaged prior to the formation of ethical rules, in preparing the terms which morality, on her entrance, must combine into rules, is to degrade *both*;



—law, by depriving it of its moral character;—morality, by binding it to legal interpretations. The definitions of law are nothing but so many moral rules complete, and not the mere vocabulary for their construction. When, for example, it “defines what is another man’s property, and what is mine,” it declares what *he is to have*, and what *I am to have*; and what is this but to prohibit our interference with each other, and the interference of any one else with us? From the very nature of the case, to define rights is to make rules; these are but different designations of the same real thing; views of the same human relation from its opposite ends. A *right* names something as an object of defence; a *rule* names the same thing as not to be an object of offence. If therefore the moralist is to wait for the definitions of jurists, he is entirely superseded; there is nothing remaining for him to do, unless he choose to repeat their words, and say Amen. If he is “to accept from the law the determination of certain *fixed points*,” what is left to him, within the province of jurisprudence, but to register its edicts? How can he pronounce a law *immoral*, adopting all the while its “definitions” and “accepting its points” as “fixed”? Try the question in the very cases adduced by Dr. Whewell as illustrations. “Morality says, you shall not seek another man’s property; law defines what *is* another man’s property.” A female captive from Dacia is given to a lady of fashion about Trajan’s Court, as her *ornatrix*, or lady’s maid. The lady is passionate, and particular about her head-dress; and day by day the poor maid is submitted

to the thong for the imperfection of a braid, or hanging up by the hair to be lashed for the scratching of a comb. The humanity of a Christian neighbor is excited by her cries; and he secures her escape and restores her to her country. Is he a thief? and have moralists nothing to say about him, except that, having interfered with what the "law defines to be the property of another," he has violated their rules? Terence, the poet, was a free Carthaginian; but was kidnapped and sold into slavery. By the Roman law, the offence of his kidnapper was precisely the same as that of Trajan's Christian neighbor; both were man-stealing, and came under the definition of *plagium*. Is morality "to accept the definition," and treat it as a "fixed point" that the two acts are on a level? Again, if a captive girl is sent into the harem of an oriental tyrant, and a noble-minded youth, knowing something of her history, and regarding her with pity and affection, rescues and marries her, is the moralist to accept the legal determination that she is another's wife, and to pronounce the young man guilty of adultery? If he is not, then jural definitions may be disregarded in ethical judgments, and are *not* "the fixed points by which moral positions must be determined." But if he *is* (and this certainly ought to be Dr. Whewell's decision), then how can it be denied that the morality expounded in this book *does* "substantially depend upon law"?

In reading the "Elements of Morality," no part of its peculiar phraseology and reasoning appeared to us more original and less admirable than that in which moral affections are shown to be indispensable,

because, without them, jural commands would be in the sad plight of having "no significance." This language is explained and defended at considerable length in the fifth lecture; with no result discoverable by us, except a new and ampler evidence of the author's inexactitude of thought and expression. With the familiar comparison evidently running in his mind, of "the letter and the spirit," he presents us with the following illustration of the relation between law and morality, — or, as they are here termed, obligations and duties; in which law is presented as an unintelligible inscription which we have found; morality, as the key discovered for its subsequent interpretation.

"To obligations there must be duties corresponding, though reaching much further into our being. The obligations are superficial, but they may serve to mark the direction and position of the duties; they are like buoys, which float on the surface, and mark the place of the anchor below. They are like some of the easiest words in an inscription which we are trying to decipher; the inscription speaks of things the most profound and abstract, but there are also terms which signify wood and stone, loaves and houses. If we succeed in discovering the key to this inscription, we probably find out, first, the meaning of these terms of common use; and these thus understood confirm us in our belief that the alphabet and vocabulary which we have adopted are the true ones. And thus we hold that our moral alphabet and vocabulary are true, because, according

to them, the laws which have universally prevailed among mankind have a moral meaning. Our duties I have said (*Elem.* 279), give significance—a moral significance—to our obligations; and we must have such duties as shall give meaning to our legal obligations. Our moral system must be such that the obligations between men, acknowledged as binding by the law of all societies, shall correspond to duties of the affections by which such men are bound according to their social relation.” — (P. 113.)

Whether our readers, more accustomed than we to “things the most profound and abstract,” more familiar, it may be, with our author’s hieratic style, can decipher this illustration in a way convincing to themselves, we cannot tell. But we must freely confess our own failure;—puzzled chiefly by this; that the key which promises the most satisfactory results at the beginning, leaves us quite at fault towards the end. First, the inscription is resolved into two groups of terms, namely: (1) certain “easiest words,” signifying “wood and stone, loaves and houses;” and (2) certain abstract words, denoting things “most profound.” Asking ourselves what these are to stand for, we find a direct answer as to the *first*: the “easy words” are the “obligations” of law. Nothing remains for the *second*, then, but the contrasted “duties” of morality; and this, undoubtedly, was the author’s meaning. The whole inscription has of course to be read off; so that the moral duties are here described as the more recondite *objects of interpretation*, remaining obscure *till after* we have

got at the meaning of the legal obligations. As *both* parts are successively submitted to study and explanation, *neither* can be treated as the *key* applied to the deciphering process; but if either *could* be loosely designated in this way, it would be the *easy part*, first read, and so assisting us through the darker portion that remains. That is to say, law helps us to the meaning of morality. Unhappily, however, this is just the opposite to the doctrine which was to be illustrated. The lecturer, having apparently some obscure sense of this, and feeling that the split inscription does not answer, shuffles it all together again into one, and adjusts his pair of types and antitypes after a fashion entirely new. And *now*, the words of the inscription as a whole are made to stand for legal obligations; and duties become the *key*—"the moral alphabet and vocabulary"—by whose tentative application the cipher gives a sense. Thus duties, which, six lines above, were the most *abstruse objects* of interpretation, suddenly turn out to be the *given instruments* of interpretation. A writer whose mind can thus slip about among images and relations, without consciousness of the incompatibility of their parts and the shifting of their terms,—and this at the very moment of elaborate vindication of his own precision,—betrays, in our opinion, a deficient command of the first requisites for successful philosophic thought.

Gathering together what Dr. Whewell has to say upon this part of his subject, we obtain the following luminous results:—

That law enjoins only *some* things that are right;

but the intention to do this part is coextensive with the intention to do the whole.

That morality must accept the moral determinations of law; yet law is not the basis of morality.

That we must get at our morality through law; yet law is without meaning till we have got our morality.

Since the days of the Sphinx, we have heard of no enigmas more perplexing than these, which harass the gates and intercept the paths of philosophy at Cambridge. We trust they may raise up some Œdipus to unriddle them. It is enough for us to have explained why we cannot solve them.

It is a favorite doctrine of Dr. Whewell's, that human life has a certain *summum bonum*, towards the attainment of which all our voluntary powers should be directed. He conceives it to be nothing else than *rectitude* or "*rightness*," and regards this as the positive and purposed object at which, in every department of our agency, we should deliberately aim. Thus morality is, in his view, not the RULE of life, presiding over our pursuit of natural good, and preventing the lower from encroaching on the claims of the higher; but the END of life, which insists on having all natural good as its instrument, and is jealous of anything but itself being loved for its own sake. Hence we are never to be let alone in our affection for the most innocent objects or the dearest and most unexceptionable persons. Not only is our clinging to them to give way, when they would detain us from objects of higher claim; but our ordinary and unoffending attachment to them is

not to remain simple and unanxious. It must be used and studied as a means of self-construction; instinct and affection are not merely to be restrained from transgressing their proper limits, but to be stiffened into the pedagogic character, and through life keep us locked up at school. "Things are to be desired as means to moral ends;" "property," for instance, "for the sake of equal laws;" and persons are to be loved *en passant*, as we proceed to universal benevolence.

Of this doctrine, which appears to us radically fallacious, Dr. Whewell renews his defence:—

"The possession of wealth may be a discipline of internal justice. Each man may have his own. Each man desires his own, by a natural desire, in which there is nothing moral, any more than there is in hunger or thirst. But each man may also desire to possess his own, because he desires that all men should possess their own; and thus, the desire acquires a moral character. And except the love of wealth and the use of wealth tend to its character, it cannot enter as an element into our moral education, as these, along with all other desires and actions, ought to do. The love of equal and steady laws, in the progress of man's moral culture, tends to supersede the love of the wealth which such laws give him. This is evident; for, in a moral man, if it once appear that such laws give a portion of his wealth to another, the love of justice at once overcomes the love of riches, and he resigns without a struggle what he so possesses. And in order that this may be

clearly brought into view, as a consequence of our principles, I would place, among those principles, this: that all external *things are to be desired as means to moral ends*; and this I would call the principle of moral purpose." — (P. 112.)

Surely the reasoning here fails to support the rule. The "moral man," throwing up the possessions in whose title he finds a flaw, gives no proof of loving his wealth as a *means* of just law; but only in *subserviency* to just law. There is no relation of *means to ends* in the case; but simply this, that, of two things good in themselves, — say (for shortness) property and justice, — the lower is not permitted to have preference over the higher. The error of the lecturer consists in the assumption that one thing cannot be *subordinate* to another, unless by being its *instrument*, — an error which we trace through his whole system, — a perpetual source of fallacy and paradox.

The instrumental position and culture of the *affections* is justified by similar and not more conclusive considerations: —

"To love our brethren is a step towards loving all mankind as brethren; a step which helps us to the next. We see then that family love, besides the recommendation of being natural, which, taken simply, is not a moral recommendation, has the recommendation of being capable of forming a part of the moral progress which leads us towards that universal love to which morality points as one of her cardinal



objects. To love well the members of our especial family is a good way of learning to love all the members of the great human family.

"In saying this, do I offer this universal benevolence as a consideration which is to lead us to the love of the members of our family; of father or of brother? Plainly not." — (P. 117.)

We should have said, "Plainly yes." Why offer us a consideration, showing the love to be a duty, *if not* "to lead us" to cultivate that love? What is the use of telling us that we must not be content with the natural feeling, because it is not moral, but must work at it deliberately, as the best way to philanthropy, unless you mean to present the affection to us as a proper object of quest and care?

It will be observed that our author's great anxiety is to impart to the affections a *moral* character, which, in their natural state, they do not possess. He proposes to effect this by making them instrumental to "the cardinal objects" of morality, and recommending them to us in that view. Good. Only, if this instrumentality can *moralize* a feeling, there is no sentiment in our nature which has not the same title to cultivation as a duty. Even resentment is put, by Dr. Whewell's own hand, on this precise ground of claim: —

"Resentful affections, I grant you, *have* a rightful office in man's nature. That office is to give energy to the love of justice. This is done, when such affections are no longer personal, but simply moral;

when our swelling heart no longer impels us to the revenge of our own injury, but to the redress of all wrong; when resentment for offences is absorbed in indignation against all injustice. This is the office of the angry affections; and in this direction they are to be permitted and confirmed." — (P. 117.)

Resentment then, it would seem, is to be cherished as leading to that love of justice, which is one of the "cardinal objects" of morality. The same plea will obviously avail for every component element of our constitution. There surely is *no* primitive affection of which it may not be said, that it "has a rightful office in man's nature," and that it must exist as an operative influence in a perfect character. If this be the test by which we recognize a moral quality in our springs of actions and emotion, they are all moral alike; and nothing can be more futile than the attempt, by such means, "to determine *which* of our natural affections may be recognized as being also duties, and which may not."

But while we deny that an affection is made moral by its "cardinal" tendency, we do not maintain that it becomes so by simply being natural. The philosopher, we conceive, might hunt forever among the different properties of an affection, taken by itself, without finding the source of the *approbation* it may receive; for this plain reason, — that *no one thing*, but only *one of two*, can be approved or disapproved; and a moral character can never be recognized in a propensity, till it comes into comparison with another, inferior to it, which vainly disputes with it for the

same point of action. A being with *one* instinct only could not be a moral being. A second being, with *another* and *higher* instinct, operating also alone, would lie under the same disqualification. But a third being, endowed with both, and able to feel their relative worth, is introduced, by their coexistence, into a responsible life; and comes under an obligation to confine the lower of the two within the range of action in which the other finds no field. The moment he fails to do this, the usurping affection becomes, simply by its usurpation, *immoral*. It is vain therefore to attempt a classification of our springs of action as moral and immoral. All, above the lowest, may be moral; and all, below the highest, may be immoral. But whenever they assume either the one character or the other, it is not in consequence of any permanent quality, but a result of relative place; it does not befall them taken singly, but in pairs. The attempt to give to certain affections a standard moral character, without any regard to the competing feelings which they exclude, seems to us to lead our author, in common with other writers of equal name, into much fallacious reasoning. In dismissing that which he has connected with the present topic, we have only to add, that we do not wish him to admit all natural affections, as such, to his approbation. They do not want to be approved. We would simply have them let alone, till a worse excludes a better, for then only do they become immoral, and want to be condemned. Moralists, like physicians, are too apt to push their prescriptions upon the healthy, instead of reserving themselves for disease; to invent

artificial reasons for what everybody, unless annoyed by exhortation, will do of his own accord; and to fancy themselves the improvers of nature, rather than her vindicators and interpreters.

We are obliged to leave unnoticed many topics touched upon in Dr. Whewell's explanations. His doctrine of the Supreme Rule—an incongruous agglutination of Aristotle and Butler—must pass without further analysis. Nor can we ask our reader's patience, while we unravel the tangled thread of reasoning in the sixth lecture on the connection between virtue and happiness. The particular relation of the Cambridge professor's system to that of Epicurus, we will leave it to the future historian to discuss; with the greater willingness, because not ambitious to appear as champions of the philosophy of the Garden. Enough perhaps has been said to sustain the positions which we deemed it right to take up in our former review; and only enough omitted, to prevent questions permanent for the philosopher disappearing in the transient interests of the polemic. The necessities of self-defence, and the peculiarities of our work have led us, more than we could desire, into criticism of expression, and animadversions upon method. To a superficial reader these things are apt to appear like a mere estimate of an author, rather than an examination of his doctrine. Even were it so, Dr. Whewell is a man whose pretensions are so well established in some walks of science, that his just place in others is a matter not indifferent to European literature. But every student in philosophy will admit, and no one more readily than our

author himself, that, in psychological questions, the sifting of language is the weighing of thoughts, and that judgment upon the method of a system may carry with it a verdict on the contents.

## HISTORY OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY.<sup>1</sup>

THIS is a very seasonable book. It gives information which every one, having any pretensions to a liberal culture, desired to possess, yet was puzzled to obtain. It discusses questions of metaphysics, which, even within the thick covering of the English cranium, are beginning to turn over from their long sleep. It opens the dream-land of German transcendentalism, shows that it is not without definite and habitable provinces of thought, and gives names to the strange shadows that move through it. Into these clouds, too, it lifts you, by an amusing transition, straight from the city-philosophy of Bentham, and the zoölogical ethics of Combe. And,—pleasant to tell, — it offers initiation into all these mysteries on the easiest terms. No awful conjurer takes you through dark labyrinths, with nothing in them but a subterranean chill; or along hair-bridges, suspending you by a thread of logic from annihilation; or through the trap-door of some hidden paradox into a depth where you may never light upon your feet. But a friendly and amiable guide takes you, through the open sunshine, along the grassy path of a clear and

<sup>1</sup> An Historical and Critical view of the Speculative Philosophy of Europe in the Nineteenth Century. By J. D. Morell, A. M. 2 vols. 8vo. London, 1846.

Prospective Review, Nov. 1846.

level style ; and manages, if not to remove difficulties from the way, at least to hide them smoothly over, and keep the road agreeable to the end. The service which he renders is precisely adapted to a very prevalent state of mind, — an awakened philosophical curiosity, with an unawakened philosophical capacity ; — and the work will exercise an important influence, by scattering the questions of higher thought among the middle class, from whose growing culture, amid a struggling but unexhausted faith, our next school of metaphysics is likely to arise.

We have never despaired of philosophy in England. Low as its condition has long been, and dependent as we mainly are upon our elder literature of this kind for what reputation we still enjoy among the schools of Europe, we yet believe that neither our national character, nor our social state, is unfitted to ripen the best fruits of reflective science. There is a large class of educated persons in this country who (to borrow the phraseology of Comte) have yet to make their transition from the theological to the metaphysical stage of mental development ; nor are we sure, in spite of his confident prediction,<sup>1</sup> that those who have passed on to his advanced point of positive philosophy will be content with it as their final rest ; and will not rather work their way round again to find a synthesis in the laws of human reason for the antithesis of faith and science. And much as our continental neighbors ridicule the practical tendency of the English understanding, it is not

<sup>1</sup>Cours de Philosophie Positive, 55<sup>e</sup> Leçon.

without its favorable auguries for the future, corresponding with its good effects in the past. It will secure to us a certain healthy veracity of thought which we sometimes miss in the foreign schools. It will protect us from *show-systems*, symmetrically disposing of the universe, and finally exhausting all the possibilities of knowledge. We shall have indeed no theories warmed into life by the atmosphere of brilliant and crowded lecture-rooms, and rewarded, at every pause of the "*improvisation*" by the "*applaudissements prolongés*" of two thousand hearers. Nor shall we profit, as Germany does, by a severe competition in the academic market, rendering the old wares of wisdom unsalable, and turning out new patterns of metaphysics from the kaleidoscope of the Teutonic brain, as fast as fresh calicoes from the print-works of Manchester. But whatever philosophy struggles into existence amongst us at all will be produced under conditions favorable to its soundness. The regard which is habitual among us for the practical ends of life imposes a salutary check on the over-production of ideas. Pure thinking, while pretending to be the very essence of reason, cannot, it would seem, prescribe rational limits to itself. Where it is relieved from all material boundary, it expands with endless, unwearied elasticity, soon becoming too thin for life and breath, and in its endeavor to occupy all things with its *plenum* tending fast to *vacuum*. Art, the original source of science, can never be spared wholly out of sight. Its presence, though not directly heeded, exercises the insensible influence of a wise companion, not by



imposing restraints upon genuine freedom, but by preventing the rise of erratic propensities. The religious temper of the people of this country, their love of truth and justice, their openness to all human interests, offer a fair guaranty for the continued study of questions affecting the ultimate foundations of faith and morals. That they must be studied without hearing of the ferment of active life, may perhaps secure for them a seriousness of application more conducive in the end to real success, than the trained acuteness and brilliancy of professional philosophy. It is curious to observe how large a number of the greatest names in the metaphysical literature of Europe are names of private persons, determined to speculative researches purely by the natural direction of their own intellect. There is scarcely a remarkable system of modern times which has not originated in the genius of such men; — witness the idealism of Spinoza, Descartes, Berkely; the experience philosophy of Hobbes, Locke, Hartley, and Mill; the scepticism of Hume; the monadology of Leibnitz; the ethical doctrines of Shaftesbury, of Butler, of Price. The schools of Paris, and the universities of Scotland and Germany, supply no doubt some names not less distinguished than even the greatest of these; yet in those seats of learning, the chief employment of the official lecturers has undeniably been, to criticise and amend, to unfold and complete, the theories of these unofficial masters of philosophy. These things encourage the hope, that although the academic life of Germany secures her the undisputed palm of dialectic skill, the social

life of England may afford us a less barren soil for the culture of intellectual science. Mr. Morell's work is itself an indication of the reviving interest felt in metaphysical pursuits. And by giving some account of what Europe has been about, while we have been *aliud agentes*, he brings up our arrears in a way more pleasant than we deserve, and puts us, according to his own eclectic doctrine, into the best position for independent thought. "Quî fieri posset," says a learned but forgotten philosopher, "ut quis methodo philosophandi eclecticâ recte utatur, qui, quid a philosophis inventum præceptumque sit, prorsus ignorat? Et quo pacto is doctrinas philosophorum cum rectæ rationis principiis contendet, qui, quid illi statuerint, et cur eas sententias adoptarint, scit juxta cum ignarissimis?"<sup>1</sup>

The means by which Mr. Morell has made his book easy to his readers often render it difficult to his reviewers. The smooth, unbroken page, over which the eye may glide without a check, and the unchallenged thought may move on without compunction, is highly conciliatory to the class of easy-chair philosophers. It is so clear and cheap a gain to them to know as much as our author can tell, that any nice inquiry as to his sources would, in their case, be a misplaced fastidiousness. But the critic is entitled to complain that he is left without the help of a reference; and must either take what is set before him on trust, or test it by a course of reading vastly more extensive than that from which this work

<sup>1</sup>J. G. Heineccii *Elementa Philosophiæ*. Amst. 1730, p. 14.

itself has sprung. Here is a literary history, extending over a period of nearly two centuries, and embracing productions in three living languages; classifying authors according to the alleged affinities of their speculative genius; professing to report their opinions and reasonings on matters of the utmost depth and nicety; giving judgment on their methods and conclusions, and pronouncing, sometimes with summary severity, on the *tendency* of their doctrines; and yet, through more than a thousand pages, scarcely a reference is to be found to any passage in their writings. You must make your choice between implicit faith in the statements of the volume, or the most troublesome confutation. If you are sceptical on any point, no evidence is offered; if you are studious, no guidance. The author indeed hands you lists of the works published by some of his philosophers; but he cites no page except the title-page; and, as if jealous of a divided attention, insists on keeping you all to himself. Had he sufficiently appreciated the difficulty of acting as general reporter, in language of his own, to the metaphysics of modern Europe, he would have been anxious, we think, to sustain himself by continual appeal to his originals; not disdaining the labor which such historians as Ritter and Hallam have esteemed due to their readers' curiosity and their own reputation. We trace in this, as in other features of these volumes, the inordinate influence of certain French examples, to which we shall have occasion to refer. But omissions, pardonable enough in public lectures, printed from the lips of Cousin or Jouffroy, may be

without excuse in a work elaborated by the hand of the author, and designed for the library of the reader.

The manner in which Mr. Morell lays out his subject immediately reveals the school to which he belongs, and even the master who may claim him as disciple. To find a basis for his classification of systems, he descends into the primary elements of human knowledge; enumerates the categories of Aristotle and Kant; approves of their reduction by Cousin to the two, of action and being; but proposes, as simpler and clearer, an enumeration of our fundamental conceptions under the three heads of the Self, the Not-self, and the Infinite. This arrangement, which forms the groundwork of his whole history, he substitutes for Cousin's in the following words:—

“Such is M. Cousin's ultimate reduction of the primary elements of all our knowledge. As, however, the category of causality (action) contains in it two very important and very distinct ideas, *it may be as well to give another and a simpler* deduction of the great fundamental conceptions of the human mind; one which may, perhaps, place the whole question in a somewhat clearer light.” (Vol. I. p. 57.)

Having thus pushed the French philosopher aside, our author proceeds to expound his own analysis. It is essential that our readers should understand it. We will therefore beg their attention to it. We shall

lay it before them, however, not in Mr. Morell's words, but in those of M. Cousin, who is the author of this improvement upon himself!

"In consciousness, I distinguish myself from everything which is not myself, and thereby I do two things; 1st, I affirm my own existence; 2d, I affirm the existence of that also from which I am distinguished. My own existence — my existence clear of everything foreign to itself — implies my perfect discrimination from everything else, which very discrimination implies the existence of something else. The discovery then of something which surrounds and limits him, reveals man to himself. Indeed, on reflection, you will discover that your *me* is limited in every direction by external objects. This *me* is then finite; nay, its very existence springs out of its limitation and finiteness. But if the external world bounds and altogether opposes the *me*, the *me* also produces some impression on the world; and imposes on it, in however slight a degree, a bound or limitation. Thus the world, which by its opposition presents limits to the *me*, — in other words becomes the *not-me*, — is in its turn opposed, modified, and limited by the *me*, which, consciously restricted as it is, yet in its turn impresses with the character of finiteness and limitation the external world, — the *not-me*, whence it is distinguished.

It is then through this mutual opposition that we apprehend ourselves; this opposition is permanent in the consciousness; and extends throughout it. But this opposition, observe, gentlemen, resolves

itself into one single idea, — that of the finite. This *me* that we are is finite; the *not-me* which limits it is itself finite, and limited by the *me*; they are both so, but in different degrees; we are then still in the sphere of the finite. Is there not something else in consciousness?

“Yes, gentlemen; while consciousness seizes upon the *me* as finite, in opposition to the *not-me* itself finite, it refers this finite, bounded, relative, contingent *me* and *not-me*, to a superior, absolute, and necessary unity, which contains and explains them, and which possesses all the characteristics opposed to those which the *me* finds in itself and in the correlative *not-me*. This unity is absolute, as the *me* and the *not-me* are relative. This unity is a substance, while the *me* and the *not-me*, though substantive by their relation to substance, are in themselves simple phenomena, mutable like phenomena, limited like phenomena, vanishing and reappearing like phenomena. Moreover, this superior unity is not only a substance, it is a cause also. In fact, the *me* detects itself only in its acts, as a cause acting upon the external world; and the external world awakens the knowledge of the *me* only by the impressions which it makes upon it; by the sensations which the *me* experiences without either causing or being able to destroy; — sensations which it cannot therefore refer to itself as cause, and accordingly refers to something foreign to itself. This foreign cause is the world, and as it is a finite cause, and the *me* also is a finite cause, the unity, the substance which contains

the *me* and the *not-me*, being a cause, must consequently be in its nature an infinite cause.”<sup>1</sup>

These three fundamental conceptions present the groundwork for just so many systems of philosophy. Whoever rests his primary faith on the consciousness of self, is apt to refer everything to the laws of his personal causality, and to treat the ideas of an outward universe, and of infinite existence, as mere apparitions of thought, that can never be made objects of legitimate reliance. This is the characteristic of *idealism*. He, on the other hand, who regards *nature*, given to us in perception, as the stable point of all knowledge, is apt to run out among external agencies for an explanation of everything; to resolve the mind into a product of foreign influences; and even to lose the notion of an absolute Being in the extending conception of physical power. This is the characteristic of the scheme commonly called *materialism*, but named by our author *sensationalism*. A thinker, again, who so dwells on the idea of the infinitude of *God*, as to absorb everything into his nature, and to leave no finite objects to stand in relation to him, abandons his confidence in self and nature, and deals with them as only the semblances of one sole reality. This is the characteristic of *pantheism*. This tripartite division of systems necessarily results from the resolution of our primary ideas into three; and cannot be abandoned without virtually throwing

<sup>1</sup> Histoire de la Philosophie, 5<sup>e</sup> Leçon.

away that analysis as unsound. If any two of the doctrines just enumerated can be identified as mere modifications of one and the same tendency, then the conceptions of which they are the development cannot be radically distinct, and are *not* "primary elements of human knowledge." Yet our author, with unaccountable simplicity, names the triple classification only to relinquish it; his proof, fetched from the inmost depths of our nature, that there cannot be less than three co-ordinate philosophies, issues in his quietly assuming *two*; and this he does with no other remark, than that pantheism may be treated as a kind of idealism, because concurring in its disparagement of the material world. By this rule, we might, with equal propriety, reduce pantheism to the denomination of materialism, because it denies the real causality of self; and as any two of the systems will agree in a joint suffrage against the third, each one may in this way be resolved into its own contrary.

Mr. Morell, however, is, in our opinion, quite right to escape, even at the expense of logical inconsistency, from the trammels of his triple analysis, and to slip into a dualistic classification. In selecting the term to be sacrificed for this end, he has also wisely judged. But in determining *which* of the remaining two shall absorb it, we think him not happy in his choice: in fact, he has lost the opportunity of correcting his original mistake, and has added to it by alighting upon a false dualism instead of the true. He sinks pantheism in idealism; distinguishing it, as *objective idealism* from the egoistic



philosophy, which is henceforth to be known as *subjective idealism*. The infinite — which never ought to have been admitted as a third term of our knowledge at all — is thus resolved into *the me*. Its proper association is with the *not-me*.

The reverence in which we hold the meditations of deep thinkers so fills us with self-distrust, that we often shrink from expressing a dissent, more probably due to our ignorance than to their mistake. But we must confess it to be strange news to us, that beyond the range of *the me* and the *not-me*, there is a third somewhat, under the designation of the *absolute*, or the *absolute cause*. We had always supposed that the sphere of a conception and that of its contradictory were all-comprehending; and that any object of thought absent from the one must be found in the other. Of anything, be it real or ideal, which is excluded both from the mind and from all else than the mind, we can form not the faintest notion; and whoever makes assertions about it, talks to us in an unknown tongue. We know well indeed the purpose which this metaphysical invention is intended to serve; that it is an attempt to rescue the mind from its relative position; to carry its knowledge beyond phenomena, and give it insight into things *per se*; to bridge over the supposed chasm between psychology and ontology. We know also the result in which it inevitably terminates; that this third term, once admitted, necessarily swallows up the other two, which, so long as they remain, dispute all its claims, and leave it no alternative but to annihilate them, or to go out itself; and that so,

it comes to reign alone, and establish the triumph of Pantheism. Mr. Morell, when at length he approaches the eclecticism of Paris, admits and laments this tendency of Cousin's system. He does not see that it is a direct consequence of the very "deduction of fundamental conceptions," which he has borrowed from the French philosopher. It is too late to complain of the fruit, whose seed your own hand had set; and too bad, we must say, to appropriate the premises, and abuse the conclusion.

Nothing has so much favored the attempt to find a source of *absolute* knowledge in the mind, as the existence of demonstrative sciences and necessary truths. Relative phenomena, it has been supposed, could never supply materials for these; and in order to account for them, it has been thought needful to sequester a particular faculty, and place it beyond the region of the mind in its experimental intercourse with nature. We cannot stop to remark on the futility of this device. But, with a view to render some account of this difficulty, we will endeavor to find a place, in a system of dualism, for the entrance of necessary truths.

The act of perception gives us simultaneous knowledge of a subject and an object, with perfect equipoise of reason for affirming the reality of the one and of the other.

Perception, however, cannot befall us by mere exposure to what may be delivered upon us from without. It is not the same as *reception*. It is not realized in a creature—say, an oyster—that lies flat and has *sensations*.

Neither could it arise from the exercise of an absolutely unobstructive activity, spontaneously developing itself in vacuo.

The concurrence then of passive consciousness with active consciousness is necessary to perception. The former we have in all *sensation*; the latter in all *volition*. It is not correct to refer to the *muscular feelings* as the seat of our consciousness of activity, the other senses supplying the passive element. We are no less *recipients* of the muscular sensations than of the others; only we receive them *from ourselves*, instead of from foreign sources; and know beforehand of their approach, instead of their coming unawares. In cases of intransitive action, we are ourselves both subject and object.

The concurrence required takes place only on the use of *effort* and the encounter of *resistance*. Such collision gives rise to the idea of *cause*; and to the distinction of personal causation and extra-personal causation.

The antithesis therefore of subject and object given in perception resolves itself into an antithesis of *causes*, reciprocally limited. And the active and passive elements, which meet to give the knowledge of subject and object, must co-exist also in the idea of cause. In perception, the passive element is the primary term in the relation; in volition, the active.

In the relation between *the me* and the *not-me*, when one term occupies the active focus, the other takes the passive. Power—be it here or there—cannot evince itself without something in which it may operate a change, and which would otherwise

remain without change. Each power therefore goes to the seat of the other to find a theatre for its display; and meets there with the requisite *datum*; which, in itself, is a passive, unchangeable groundwork, that would be eternally void, if let alone. Thus, each *cause* must have its *condition*. And the two poles of power must be able to exchange characters, and play the part of positive and negative in turns.

Hence, our original dualism comes to involve *four* ideas; namely, self, as *cause*; self, as *condition*; *not-self*, as *cause*; *not-self*, as *condition*. Of these,

Self, as *cause*, constitutes the notion of internal will, or the soul.

Not-self, as *cause*, constitutes the notion of external will, or God.

With both of these, from the very nature of the psychological type that furnishes them, are connected the ideas of *freedom* and *contingency*.

It is otherwise with the negative data which the mind lays as the ground for the manifestation of these powers. Serving only as the *receptacle* of the two orders of phenomena, they present themselves as *passive permanents*, ready for the first instance of activity, and unaffected by the last; indeed, accompanying the idea of *cause*, as its constant shadow, throughout the whole extent of its range. With them therefore we connect, and from them we derive, the notions of *necessity* and *absoluteness*; and the predications which they furnish are destitute of all contingent matter, and supply us with universal

and necessary truths. Can we then name these two data?

Self, as condition, involves self-consciousness as to our own states, successively received; the datum of which is TIME, the *subjective* sphere for phenomena.

Not-self, as condition, demands an *objective* sphere for phenomena; and it is provided under the name of SPACE.

The synthesis, in the self, of the ideas of time and will, gives the conception of the immortality of mind.

The synthesis, in the not-self, of the ideas of space and will, gives the conception of the infinity of God.

The sciences of *cause*, whether referring to self or not-self, can result only in *contingent* knowledge.

The sciences of *condition*, dealing with time, space, and their modes, alone admit of demonstrative and necessary truth.

With these brief hints we will relieve our readers from a discussion unavoidably dry and abstruse. It will now be evident, we hope, that there is no occasion to abandon our natural dualism, and introduce a third term into the primary elements of human knowledge, in order to effect an exhaustive classification of philosophies. The several systems are distinguished by the seat to which they refer the chief causality of phenomena. They have only the alternative of *the me* and the *not-me*. If they choose the former, we obtain a scheme of *subjectism*, like that of Fichte. If they choose the latter, we obtain a scheme of *objectism*; which may assume either of

two forms. If the external causality still appears, in the mind of the philosopher, in its original character of infinite will, we shall receive at his hands a *theistic* objectism, whose overbalance is *pantheism*. If, on the other hand, the belief of *voluntary power* in the sphere of nature has been reduced (by an abrasion which we cannot at present stop to trace) to the idea of *material force*, we shall be furnished with a *physical* objectism, whose goal is *atheism*. Truth is to be found only in the perfect balance of the two elements of consciousness; — an equal faith in what it tells us at either ear. Faithfulness to psychology is the real condition of success. The path of true philosophy is like the parabolic curve of a projectile. You cannot miss it, if it starts from the earth and to the earth returns. But once out among the transcendental spaces of ontology, and it becomes — not indeed of impossible attainment — but a “*via media*” most difficult to hit; an impulse, in the slightest degree too little, will give the ellipse of egoism ever returning into itself; or too much, the hyperbola of self-annihilation, with one leg running off into an infinite reality of fate, and the other into an infinite dream of God.

The names — sensationalism and idealism — by which Mr. Morell denotes the subjective and objective philosophies, do not happily bring out the nature of the opposition between the systems. We want to express the contrast between *external* and *internal* reality; but sensations and ideas are both internal; and it is only by a remove of thought from effect to cause, that the former conveys us to the outward

world. Sensation may be the fundamental fact in *human* experience, with the disciples of a certain school; but their worship is paid higher up, at the shrine of that outward nature, of whose power this is only the signal hung up within the mind. The phrase adopted by our author well describes the *psychological* doctrine of the school; but its unfitness for a wider use becomes apparent at once, when we find the "Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation" characterized as an effort of "*cosmological sensationalism!*" On the other hand, the word *idealism* becomes absurd when stretched to embrace such writers as Butler and Cumberland. The word, moreover, is preoccupied; and so familiarly denotes the representative theory of perception, that it is not expedient to wrest it to another sense. The mischiefs of the ambiguity are illustrated in the person of our author himself; who commits the vulgar mistake of supposing that Berkley denied all objective reality, and that his followers are consequentially bound to run their heads against a wall!—(Vol. I., 182, 358.)

Those who are acquainted with M. Cousin's fascinating lectures on the history of philosophy have learned how the extravagances of the two fundamental schools provoke into existence the two supplementary opposites of scepticism and mysticism. To the view adopted from those lectures by Mr. Morell, every competent person will yield, we think, a general assent. We do not see, however, any occasion to provide "an emotional faculty" for the particular use of the mystic; or indeed to admit a

larger element of feeling in his belief, than in the sceptic's unbelief. Both states of mind arise at the same conjuncture, namely, when the process of the understanding, in the acceptance of some supposed truth, has been thoroughly laid bare, and the ultimate grounds of belief have been disclosed within the constitution of the mind itself. At this point, all proof must evidently stop, the fountain-head of proof being reached. On one man this sudden disappearance of his familiar instrument of conviction operates as a *disappointing* surprise; he feels himself delivered over to emptiness; he thinks it very like a trick, that he cannot get any security for his conclusions except his own assumptions, and must stand bail for himself in the court of truth. He treats his own mind as an imposture, and becomes a sceptic. On another man, an introduction to this same condition operates as a *reverent* surprise; if he has reliance on the reasonings of his understanding, he has a firmer reliance on that which legitimates the procedure of the understanding itself; he feels that he has reached the margin where human reason floats out into the divine; and he deems himself delivered over to the inspiration of God. He becomes a mystic. The sceptic is like the hypochondriac, who, having looked into the internal structure of the human frame, can never believe in health again. The mystic also thinks it is but a poor care that we can take of so complex and delicate a mechanism; but esteems it cared for none the less; and only says, with fuller meaning and undiminished trust, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made." These two



personages, then, are distinguished by the different estimates they make of the same mental position, the one having no faith, the other all faith, in the veracity of human faculties in the last resort. For this repose on the primary reports of our nature, and contentment without a reason for them, we incline to think that a great understanding is quite as requisite as emotional susceptibility. It seems to have been a characteristic of Kant; and though petty critics have treated his defence on grounds of "practical reason," of beliefs which he had destroyed from the "speculative reason," as an insincere compromise, to propitiate the prevalent religion, we have no doubt that his philosophy was perfectly veracious throughout, and that his own faith confidently rested on the very base he found for others. We remember a sentence or two of his, which may render this more credible to those who know him only in his severest moods of logic.

"There are two things that fill the soul with a holy reverence, and an ever-growing wonder; — the spectacle of the starry sky that virtually annihilates us, as physical beings; and the moral law, that raises to infinitude our dignity, as intelligent agents."<sup>1</sup>

And again: —

"To a mind filled with thoughts like the foregoing, the sight of a starry heaven in a clear night, imparts

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from *Philosophie Transcendentale*, par L. F. Schön, p. 28.

a kind of joy that only noble souls can feel. In the universal stillness of nature, and the repose of sense, the secret oracles of the immortal spirit speak an ineffable language, and impart latent conceptions, that assure themselves to feeling, but deny themselves to words.”<sup>1</sup>

Under the several heads of sensationalism, idealism, scepticism, and mysticism, Mr. Morell gives an account of the antecedents of our modern philosophy, and of the actual manifestations of that philosophy; reserving to the end of his work, a sketch of the eclectic system, and an estimate of the tendencies of the several existing schools. To an undertaking so comprehensive it would be unjust perhaps to apply a test of severe minuteness. A guide who conducts us over a hemisphere cannot be expected to know every hamlet and every stream. The spirit of the work is candid and catholic; not without some approach even to the *cant* of liberality current among our modern eclectics. An author, who declares that “to sober and earnest minds *there is no such thing as positive error*,”<sup>2</sup> is not unlikely to lapse into a tone of professional compliment to every system, and miss the traces of principles radically wrong. On this ground we have a moral, as well as metaphysical, objection to eclecticism. At bottom, it is only scepticism grown polite; emerged from its dogmatic, brazen-faced, school-boy era, into larger knowledge

<sup>2</sup> Allgemeine Naturgeschichte und Theorie des Himmels. Werke: Rosenkranz und Schubert, VI. Th., p. 225.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. I. p. 17.

of the world, and a more willing temper of forbearance. For the paramount distinction of true and false, it substitutes the contrast of one-sided and many-sided. It adopts anything that can be brought out by induction from the natural history of human creeds; nothing that grows from the seed of to-day, unless dropped from the capsule of some old philosophy. It resolves to make no useless resistance to the tendencies which are sure to assert themselves; to recognize every strong belief as "un fait accompli." And so, as the kindly physician of the human race, it lets alone what cannot be helped, and humors the patient with a judicious concession to his fixed ideas. Its course is measured, not by the rule of reason, so much as by that of moderation, on the computation that in the see-saw of human opinion, the fulcrum must lie in the middle between opposite extravagances. It arises, we believe, on the exhaustion of the spontaneous tendencies of philosophical faith, and from the discovery that, after all, unbelief has no advantage over belief. These, however, are far from being the features which recommend the system to our author. He avows a faith in philosophy as hearty as in Christianity, and his conception of the relation in which these stand to one another is just and wise. But if his French predilections have not at all corrupted his faith, they have not absolutely perfected his justice. His notices of the series of sensationalist writers, and, still more, his criticism of the doctrine, are certainly prejudiced and indiscriminating; and become, in the latter half of the second volume, so harsh and declamatory, as to pro-

voke a feeling in behalf of a system thus oppressed. In the earlier historical notices, the charge of unfairness would have been entirely escaped, had Mr. Morell referred to Cousin, whose mistakes he has borrowed, and whose criticisms he has repeated. A severer study of the original sources of modern philosophy would indeed have qualified the author to impart a much higher value to his work; not only by preventing errors in his record of opinions, but by giving him a clearer insight into the doctrines of philosophical method. We should have had a less meagre and vague account of Bacon. We should not have had a sketch of Hobbes, without a word about his identification of memory and imagination (frequent with the writers of that age), his denial of all but *representative* ideas, his doctrine of rights, and, above all the extreme nominalism which led Leibnitz to say of him, "ut verum fatear, mihi plus quam nominalis videtur." And had our author been as familiar with M. Cousin's excellent edition of Descartes, as with his critique on that philosopher in his *Leçons*, we should not have been told that the father of French metaphysics denied "the possibility of our comprehending anything respecting material objects and their qualities, excepting so far as our perceptions, in some sense or other, *resemble those qualities.*" (Vol. I. p. 231.) This statement is not only erroneous in itself, but at variance with Mr. Morell's own report of Descartes' doctrine of "divine assistance." (p. 157.) To make this evident, it is only necessary to remark, that two hypotheses have been resorted to, in order to explain the action of

external bodies upon the percipient being. On the one hand, those who wished to conciliate the difference between matter and mind, and for this end to avail themselves of the animal organization as a middle term, have supposed that the mental affection is a *copy* or *representation* of the object presented to the senses; and is therefore not so entirely destitute of physical properties as to be incapable of comparison and similitude with a material prototype. On the other hand, those who were convinced of the absolute distinctness of body and spirit—the one being wholly incommunicative with the other—have bridged over the chasm between them, impassable to nature, by interposing the preternatural agency of God. This hypothesis is a manifest abandonment of the difficulty, a confession that the “*dignus vindice nodus*” had presented itself. The former as plainly denies that matters have come to any such pass, and prolongs the protest of science “*nec Deus intersit.*” It is impossible that both doctrines should be held by the same person; and whoever is aware that the hyperphysical theory was a cardinal point in the system of Descartes, has sufficient assurance that the physical explanation could have no place in it. To remove all doubt, however, we will adduce a few sentences from the *Meditations*:—

“Though I admit that my perceptions are occasioned by objects, it does not follow that they must be *like* those objects. On the contrary, I have noticed in many cases a great difference between the object and its idea. For instance, I find in myself

two ideas of the sun entirely different; the one takes its origin from the senses, and must be classed with the ideas communicated from without; this assures me that the sun is extremely small. The other is derived from astronomical considerations; that is, from certain notions born with me, or somehow creations of my own; and this makes the sun many times greater than the earth. Assuredly, these two ideas cannot both be like the same sun; and reason convinces me that that which proceeds immediately from the object has the inferior pretension to resemblance.”<sup>1</sup>

And lest this passage should be thought, from its early position in the Meditations, to be the mere statement of a doubt afterwards resolved, we will add another from the summary of positive conclusions near the end:—

“Nature moreover teaches me that other bodies exist besides my own, some of which I am to seek, and others to shun. And from the discriminating perception I have of different colors, odors, tastes, sounds, heat, hardness, etc., I no doubt rightly infer that the bodies occasioning all these different perceptions of sense have certain varieties *corresponding* to them, though, perhaps, *not in reality resembling them.*”<sup>2</sup>

Neglect of the original writings of Descartes, —

<sup>1</sup> Meditation Troisième. Œuvres complètes. V. Cousin. Tom. I. p. 271.

<sup>2</sup> Meditation Sixième. Œuvres, Tom. I. p. 336.

so clear and captivating, entails, almost of necessity, a very imperfect acquaintance with Spinoza; whose severe method, and philosophical dialect, sufficiently discouraging in themselves, present the most formidable difficulties to those who do not approach the disciple with the passport of the master. Of the celebrated system expounded in the "Ethics" of the Jewish philosopher, only a very faint and confused impression can be derived from Mr. Morell's account. The characteristic features of the scheme are indeed passed by in silence. The links are not supplied which connected it with Cartesian doctrine, namely, the metaphysical idea of *substance*, and the psychological admission of all "*clear and adequate ideas*" as therefore *true*. No notice is taken of the author's mode of proving the unity, the infinity, the causality, of the "substance whose essence it is to exist;" of the contrast he seeks to establish between that Being and man; of his much-controverted distinctions between the "*natura naturans*" and "*natura naturata*," and between "*immanent*" and "*transient*" causation; or of the grounds on which he denies intellect and will to a Being of infinite causality and thought. An account of Spinoza, with omission of these points, is little better than a sketch of Luther without a word about "faith," or of Calvin without allusion to "eternal decrees." Nor can we praise the report for correctness, as far as it goes. Mr. Morell opens his epitome of the *Ethics* thus:—

"Spinoza begins by a general investigation of the different methods by which we gain knowledge; the

result of which investigation is as follows: etc.'  
(Vol. I. p. 162.)

Now Spinoza does nothing of the sort; nor is it possible for any one to open the first page of the Ethics, or even to look through its table of contents, without perceiving the groundlessness of this statement, and its utter variance with the whole plan of the work to which it refers. His ontological method required that his doctrine "*De Deo*" should be fully constructed in his first book, before entering, in the second, "*De Mente*," on "the investigation" to which Mr. Morell refers. Its results will accordingly be found in their proper place, especially from the 25th to 47th propositions of the second book. Our historian's confidence in the logical chain of the great pantheist is somewhat excessive, when it tempts him to exhibit it thus, hung up from the bottom instead of from the top. This strange inappreciation of the relative position of premises and conclusion has led him to class together the doctrines of Spinoza and Dr. Samuel Clarke, upon the ground that they "both grasped the idea of the infinite" (Vol. I. p. 176). The logic of the one, however, is just the converse to that of the other; Spinoza reasoning from the infinite subsistence *down* to the attributes of extension and thought in their actual development; Clarke reasoning from the attributes of space and time *to* the infinite subsistence in which they inhere. Without regard to this distinction, it can never be understood why Spinoza is found on one side, Clarke on the other, in the controversy respecting the liberty of the



will. Spinoza's view, radiating over the universe from the initial point of Absolute Being, comprehended every object and event within the necessary law of His unfolding nature. Clarke, looking upwards through the external attributes of space and time, stood *outside the sphere of his own argument*; was not himself entangled in the Deity he discovered; but remained, without encroachment on his personality, a spectator of the relation he had established between God and the universe. Hence he was in a position to defend, on behalf of human nature, that free causality which, except in words, Spinoza had relinquished even from the divine.

The vast extent of Mr. Morell's subject may have rendered unavoidable a dependence on secondary sources of information respecting some of the continental writers. But it is less easy to excuse an Englishman's resort to the schools of Paris for his estimate of John Locke. Had our author been half as familiar with the *Essay on the Human Understanding* as with the "*Cours de Philosophie*," he could not have reproduced M. Cousin's critique on our great countryman, without some attempt to correct its misstatements and readjust its unequal verdicts. We are not at all blind to the great value of M. Cousin's review of Locke; and on most of the characteristic points of controversy between the old philosophy and the new, we think the modern doctrine makes good its ground. But all the more do we hold it bound to tell the exact truth about the earlier opinions, and to give them the most generous interpretation. And this measure Locke has not

received from the eclectic professor, and the eclectic historian.

“To maintain his theory satisfactorily,” says Mr. Morell, “Locke is constrained so to distort these conceptions, as often to become inconsistent with himself. Absolute *space* he confounds, for instance, in one place, with the universe; and then in another place, he clearly distinguishes the two, but makes the former a mere mental abstraction. *Time*, again, he confounds with the succession of our thoughts; that is, he makes duration identical with that which is merely the measure of it. *Infinity* he regards as a mere negation; and as to *personal identity*, it consists, according to Locke, entirely in our consciousness; so that if our consciousness ceases, we, of course, must cease to be the same persons that we were before; nay, it becomes very uncertain whether we rise in the morning the same persons that we were when we retired to rest the previous night. The idea of *causation*, moreover, being expressly confined by him within the limits of our sensations, can, in this case, be really nothing more than the universal precedence and subsequence of phenomena. The distinct idea of *substance* is again and again denied, except it be a kind of confused cluster of sensations; while the notions of *good* and *evil* are made to be the result, instead of being, as they are in fact, the foundation of our ideas of reward and punishment. In all these cases, thus briefly presented, there is the same error committed in principle, because in every instance the absolute idea is

represented as derivable from those allied sensations, which *may* indeed be their occasion, but which can never have been their logical cause or origin."— (Vol. I. p. 112.)

The crowd of corrections required and suggested by this passage is so considerable that we must break it down into its elementary topics, and content ourselves with selecting one or two for remark.

The charge of confounding absolute space with the universe is brought against Locke, by Cousin, on two grounds. First; Locke affirms that we get the idea of space by sight and touch; but he also affirms that the idea of body is the only thing we can get by sight and touch; therefore he took space and body to be the same. Secondly; he expressly declares that "to say that the world is somewhere, means no more than that it does exist." "That is" (so does Cousin sum up his charge), "the space of the universe is precisely equivalent to the universe itself; and as the idea of the universe is but the idea of body after all, to this does the idea of space reduce itself. Such is the origination which Locke's system necessarily assigns to the idea of space."<sup>1</sup>

Now as to the first plea. It is quite true that Locke does derive the idea of space from sight and touch. It is quite false that he concedes nothing to these senses beyond the idea of body. His doctrine evidently is to this effect: touch gives us *directly* the idea of *solidity*, by its encounter with physical obsta-

<sup>1</sup> Histoire de la Philosophie, 17<sup>e</sup> Leçon.

cles; it gives us *indirectly* the idea of *space*, by the contrasted cases in which it encounters *no* physical obstacles. Extension is thus the *negative*, solidity the *positive*, idea conjointly given by the touch. They arise from the experience and comparison of *resistance present* and *resistance absent*. Does Locke then "deduce from touch, nothing but the idea of solid?" He expressly teaches that the "idea of solid" carries with it the idea of *not-solid*. Does he confound and identify the notions of extension and resistance? He decides that they stand in direct antithesis. As well might Cousin say that philosophers identify the ideas of light and darkness, because they refer them both to the same sense of vision. The following sentences, taken from the very chapter on which Cousin founds his charge, will remove all doubt:—

"All the bodies in the world, pressing a drop of water on all sides, will never be able to overcome the resistance which it will make, soft as it is, to their approaching one another till it be removed out of their way; whereby our idea of solidity is distinguished both from pure space, which is capable neither of resistance nor motion, and from the ordinary idea of hardness. For a man may conceive two bodies at a distance, so as they may approach one another, without touching or displacing any solid thing; whereby, I think, we have the clear idea of space without solidity." . . . . "Cannot one have the idea of one body moved whilst others are at rest? And I think this no one will deny. If so, then the

place it deserted gives us the idea of pure space without solidity, whereinto any other body may enter, without either resistance or protrusion of anything."

But what will our readers think of the following passage, proceeding from a writer who could not distinguish body from space?—

"By this idea of solidity, is the extension of body distinguished from the extension of space; the extension of body being nothing but the cohesion or continuity of solid, separable, movable parts; and the extension of space, the continuity of unsolid, inseparable, and immovable parts. Upon the solidity of bodies also depend their mutual impulse, resistance, and protrusion. Of pure space then, and solidity, there are several (amongst which I confess myself one) who persuade themselves they have clear and distinct ideas; and that they can think on space, without anything in it that resists or is protruded by body. This is the idea of pure space, which they think they have as clear as any idea they can have of the extension of body; the idea of the distance between the opposite parts of a concave superficies being equally as clear without as with the idea of any solid parts between; and on the other side they persuade themselves, that they have, distinct from that of pure space, the idea of something that fills space, that can be protruded by the impulse of other bodies, or resist their motion. If there be others that have not these two ideas distinct, but confound them, and

make but one of them, I know not how men, who have the same idea under different names, or different ideas under the same name, can in that case talk with one another; any more than a man, who, not being blind or deaf, has distinct ideas of the color of scarlet, and the sound of a trumpet, could discourse concerning scarlet color with the blind man I mention in another place, who fancied that the idea of scarlet was like the sound of a trumpet.”<sup>1</sup>

For the second plea advanced by Cousin, a single remark will suffice. “To say that the world (that is, universe) is somewhere, means no more than that it does exist,” observes Locke. Upon which his reviewer puts the following construction: “To talk of the *space of the universe*, is to talk of *the universe itself*.” And certainly if this were the meaning of the sentence, it would be vain to deny that it identified the universe and its space. Locke, however, expressly guards himself, in a part of the sentence omitted by the critic, against any such construction; and says, that if any one insists on taking the words of locality (“place,” “somewhere,” etc.) in so “confused” a “sense,” then “the universe *is* in a place,” and what has been stated will no longer hold. He is not treating at all of the *space* of objects, but of their relative *place*; and he simply maintains that *position* cannot be predicated of that which has no external relations, not therefore of the universe, beyond which there are no physical points of comparison. The paragraph, which we subjoin entire,

<sup>1</sup> Locke's Essay, Book 2, Ch. IV. § 5.

will speak for itself. And it is followed by several sections in proof of the position that "*the idea of space is as distinct from that of body as it is from the idea of scarlet color.*"

"That our idea of place is nothing else but such a relative position of anything, as I have before mentioned, I think is plain, and will be easily admitted, when we consider that we can have no idea of the place of the universe, though we can of all the parts of it; because beyond that we have not the idea of any fixed, distinct, particular beings, in reference to which we can imagine it to have any relation of distance; but all beyond it is one uniform space or expansion, wherein the mind finds no variety, no marks. For to say that the world is somewhere, means no more than that it does exist; this, though a phrase borrowed from place, signifying only its existence, not location; and when one can find out and frame in his mind, clearly and distinctly, the place of the universe, he will be able to tell us whether it moves or stands still in the undistinguishable inane of infinite space: though it be true that the word place has sometimes a more confused sense, and stands for that space which anybody takes up; and so the universe is in a place. The idea therefore of place we have by the same means that we get the idea of space (whereof this is but a particular limited consideration), namely, by our sight and touch, by either of which we receive into our minds the ideas of extension or distance."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Locke's Essay, Book 2, Ch. XIII. § 10.

Failing all the proofs appealed to by M. Cousin, where, we would fain know from Mr. Morell, is the "one place" in which Locke "confounds absolute space with the universe"?

On no better foundation rests the next complaint, that Locke confounds time with the succession of our thoughts, making duration identical with that which is merely the measure of it. This statement, familiar to the admirers of Dr. Reid, makes a considerable figure in M. Cousin's review; but is entirely unsupported even by the passage he adduces in proof, and positively contradicted within the limits of the same page.

"He confounds," says M. Cousin, "succession with time. He does not simply say, the succession of our ideas is the condition of the conception of time; but he says, time is nothing but the succession of our ideas. (B. ii. ch. xiv. § 4.) 'That we have our notion of succession and duration from this original, namely, from reflection on the train of ideas which we find to appear one after another in our own minds, seems plain to me, in that we have no perception of duration, but by considering the train of ideas that take their turns in our understandings. When that succession of ideas ceases, our perception of duration ceases with it; which every one clearly experiments in himself, whilst he sleeps soundly, whether an hour or a day, a month or a year; of which duration of things, while he sleeps or thinks not, he has no perception at all, but it is quite lost to him; and the moment wherein he leaves off to think,



till the moment he begins to think again, seems to him to have no distance. And so I doubt not it would be to a waking man, if it were possible for him to keep only one idea in his mind, without variation and the succession of others.'”<sup>1</sup>

Now what is the doctrine of this passage? This only: that the “*perception* of duration” is conditional on the observed succession of our ideas; not that the *real existence* of duration depends on that succession, or is in any way affected by it. The lost sense of time in the sleeper is spoken of, not as a faithful report of the true state of the case, but plainly as a *delusion* to which we are liable, when deprived of our ordinary means of estimate. Yet see what entertaining doctrine can be extracted from the paragraph, when stretched upon the rack, and brought to confess its sins, before the high-priest of Eclecticism.

“If succession is not only the measure of time, but time itself, . . . . it follows, that time is just what the succession of our ideas may make it. The succession of our ideas is more or less rapid; time then is more or less short, not in appearance, but in reality. In deep sleep, in lethargy, all succession of ideas, all thought, ceases; then we, in such case, have come to a stop; nay, more; nothing has gone on: for not only our time, but time in itself, is but

<sup>1</sup> Cours de Philosophie, 18<sup>e</sup> Leçon.

the succession of our ideas. Ideas have no existence out of the view of consciousness; in lethargy, in sleep, there is no consciousness; consequently no time. It is in vain that the clock moved on: the clock was wrong; and the sun, as well as the clock, ought to have stopped.”<sup>1</sup>

A very glib and lively account, certainly, of what Locke *must have thought* about the tricks that time may play, when men are too sleepy to look after it. What he *did think* upon the matter is perhaps an insignificant consideration, with a critic who makes light of historical fact in comparison with logical necessity. Else, the following passage might have been esteemed pertinent. But when one is obliged to choose between the opinions which an opponent actually held, and those which he ought to have held, if he had been sufficiently acute, — what can a distressed critic, wishing to be complimentary, decide to do? Will he not hide a brother’s frailties, hold back the good sense to which the title was imperfect, and finish up the system with all the nonsense due to it by the ordination of nature and logic?

“A man having, from reflecting on the succession and number of his own thoughts, got the notion or idea of duration, he can apply that notion to things which exist while he does not think; as he that has got the idea of extension from bodies by his sight or touch, can apply it to distances where no body is seen or felt. And therefore though a man has no

<sup>1</sup> Cours de Philosophie, 13<sup>e</sup> Leçon.

perception of the length of duration, which passed while he slept or thought not, yet having observed the revolution of days and nights, and found the length of their duration to be in appearance regular and constant, he can, upon the supposition that that revolution has proceeded after the same manner whilst he was asleep, or thought not, as it used to do at other times; he can, I say, imagine and make allowance for the length of duration whilst he slept. But if Adam and Eve (when they were alone in the world), instead of their ordinary night's sleep, had passed the whole twenty-four hours in one continued sleep, the duration of that twenty-four hours had been irrecoverably lost to them, and been forever left out of *their account* of time."<sup>1</sup>

These specimens of M. Cousin's misrepresentations will suffice to show that, with all his acuteness and attainments, he is not a very safe guide. The indictment against Locke on which we are remarking, contains however one erroneous statement to which the French critique does not afford its sanction. Mr. Morell asserts, that "the idea of *causation*" is "*expressly confined by Locke within the limits of our sensations.*" We presume, therefore, that he never read the following sentences, though they occur in the most celebrated chapter of the work on which he is giving his report, — the chapter on "Power."

<sup>1</sup> Locke's Essay, B. 2, Ch. XIV. § 5 — *the very next section* to that commented on by M. Cousin.

“If we will consider it attentively, bodies, by our senses, do not afford us so clear and distinct an idea of active power as we have from reflection on the operations of our mind. For all power relating to action,—and there being but two sorts of action whereof we have any idea, namely, thinking and motion, let us consider whence we have the clearest ideas of the powers which produce these actions. 1. Of thinking, body affords us no idea at all; it is only from reflection that we have that. 2. Neither have we from body any idea of the beginning of motion. A body at rest affords us no idea of any active power to move; and when it is set in motion itself, that motion is rather a passion than an action in it.” —“It is but a very obscure idea of power, which reaches not the production of the action, but the continuation of the passion.” —“The idea of the beginning of motion we have only from reflection on what passes in ourselves, where we find, by experience, that barely by willing it, barely by a thought of the mind, we can move the parts of our bodies which were before at rest. So that, it seems to me, we have from the observation of the operation of bodies by our senses, but a very imperfect, obscure idea of active power, since they afford us not any idea in themselves of the power to begin any action, either motion or thought. But if, from the impulse bodies are observed to make upon one another, any one thinks he has a clear idea of power, it serves as well to my purpose, sensation being one of those ways whereby the mind comes by its ideas; only I thought it worth while to consider here, by the way, whether

the mind doth not receive its idea of active power clearer from reflection on its own operations, than it doth from any external sensations."<sup>1</sup>

The task of reviewing M. Cousin, through the interposed medium of Mr. Morell, is so little agreeable, that we must pass without notice the remarks, reproduced from the *Cours de Philosophie*, on the general design and theory of the "Essay on the Human Understanding." Mr. Locke has put us on many a right path, not adequately opened in his day to the footsteps of philosophy; and it would be most unjust to try him by the standard which, after a century and a half, the example and influence of his profound and original speculations have enabled us to conceive. But criticism, indulgent to the literature, is rarely just to the science, of the past. It is clear that every productive thinker ought to be estimated with regard to his historical position; the affluence he created cannot be measured without reference to the poverty into which he was born. The littleness of his predecessors, and the greatness of his successors, ought both to reckon to his credit; but out of each an ungrateful posterity contrives to extract matter for complaint: he is condemned by the posthumous truth he has created, for the antecedent errors he could not wholly escape. We forget that these very errors would have remained invisible but for the enduring light that broke out in their midst, intersecting and contracting them; and that, exhib-

<sup>1</sup> Locke's *Essay*, B. 2, Ch. XXI. § 4.

ited as they now are in the brilliant setting of genius, they may be detected with the naked eye of any man who will look that way. We cannot, however, admit that Locke was so ignorant of the true method of philosophical investigation as his critics contend; in fact, we suspect he saw the way before him more clearly than our historians see the way behind them. The complaint, that he had no business to tell us his opinion about the *origin* of ideas, till he had let us see him make an *induction* of them, appears to us altogether unreasonable. May a man, then, never write a synthetical treatise, in which the *thesis* is announced first, and the facts are brought up in evidence afterwards? Is he obliged to give us all his gropings of discovery, through which he has arrived at his generalizations? And are we to be discontented, because he has cleared away all neutral and insignificant phenomena, and gone apart with well-selected instances, fitted to afford crucial experiments for the verification or correction of his theory? No one can affirm that Locke's cases were chosen with unfairness or unskilfulness; for they, and no others, — the ideas of time, space, and infinity, of cause, of identity, — are still resorted to by all writers as the real battle-ground on which his philosophy must be discomfited or triumph. Yet Mr. Morell thinks Locke's method so vicious, that the example, if followed, would be fatal to all science.

“Suppose, for example, that the illustrious astronomer of the same age had investigated the architecture of the heavens on the same principle as Lockè

did the construction and powers of the human understanding; suppose that, instead of commencing by a diligent induction of the phenomena of the heavens, he had first applied all his energies to search into the *origin* of those few, which presented themselves confusedly and in the aggregate to his mind, — what, we ask, would have been the result? He must, in that case, necessarily have formed hypotheses unwarranted, or, at least, unproved, by facts; and, instead of casting a lustre upon his name, his age, and his country, would have probably taken his rank amongst those ingenious speculators who had before him beaten the path to oblivion. The method which Newton followed taught him, before he sought the origin of any phenomena, to examine what they really were, what characteristics they bore, and how many of a similar nature might be ranged side by side to throw light upon each other. He knew that, to neglect *one* fact, or to imagine *one*, were both fatal errors in inductive science, which might lead us in the end far away from the truth.” — (Vol. I. p. 96.)

A more unfortunate illustration could hardly have been chosen. By “induction” the author means the collection and classification of phenomena. Now where, we would know, has Newton given us this induction? What register of observations, what accumulation of facts, can be produced as his distinction, and the personal source of his success as an interpreter of the celestial mechanics? For every single astronomical fact referred to in the *Principia*, there are a hundred psychological facts adduced in

the Essay on the Human Understanding : and this very difference is a proof, not of the inferiority, but of the vast superiority, of physical over mental science, as represented in these great works. The "diligent induction of the phenomena of the heavens," for which Newton is praised, consisted in reading Kepler's well-known laws, and learning from them just *two* facts ; the proportion between the squares of the planetary periods and the cubes of the distances ; and the elliptical movement of Mars round the sun for a focus, over equal areas in equal times. On these facts alone, — notorious and commonplace to every educated man of that day, — did Newton proceed to work out his grand physical discovery ; he *did* "first apply all his energies to search into the origin of these few, presenting themselves" (not indeed "confusedly," for a *pair* of things can hardly get up a confusion, but) "in the aggregate to his mind." The orbit of a planet, drawn by the pencil of Kepler, lay before him as his diagram ; and, with a skill like that of the geometrical analyst, he traced up its peculiarities to the acknowledged principles of mechanics. His merit had nothing to do with either the fact on which he began, or the axioms on which it landed him ; but solely with the intellectual manner of dealing with the one, so as to connect it with the other ; and with the geometrical medium and language of exposition, by which, inverting the order of discovery, he led the world from the point at which it stood, to that which he had gained. In what respects, except such as are involved in the difference between physics and psychology, Locke



deviated from the spirit of this method, his critics have altogether failed to show. He selected, with undoubted skill, the unreduced phenomena on which to try the resources of his analysis. He assumed as data no processes but such as were admitted to be real, — sensation and reflection. In attempting to resolve the given facts into the given powers, he used, faithfully and with unexampled success, the genuine instruments of psychological investigation. And, if he did not leave a result as rounded and finished as we have in the *Principia*, he made a vast and positive advance; and, by a singular candor and truthfulness which *never* “distorted a conception,” rendered so conspicuous the still unreduced elements of his phenomena, that successors, very imperfectly aware of what he did achieve, find no difficulty in reporting what he did not. We must protest then against the light, loose, talk of his “departure from true Baconian principles;” against the false contrast between the scientific genius of Newton and Locke; especially from a writer who himself has so little apprehension of the inductive method, as to treat *analysis* and *synthesis* in philosophy as equivalent respectively to *observation* and *classification*.<sup>1</sup>

In his history of scepticism and mysticism, in the 17th century,<sup>2</sup> Mr. Morell follows in the steps of M. Cousin, still more closely than in his account of sen-

<sup>1</sup> Vol. I. 81 seq. This radical error is fruitful of results which we cannot stop to collect. Mr. Morell's criticism, on which we have been remarking, will be found in Cousin, *Histoire de la Phil.*, 16<sup>e</sup> Leçon; and the other criticisms, on which we cannot remark, in the 17<sup>e</sup> and 18<sup>e</sup> Leçons.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. I. p. 249-271.

sationalism and idealism. From him is adopted the distinction between the two kinds of scepticism; the revolt of reason against theology, and the taunts of theology against the weakness of reason. In him we find precisely the same series of writers noticed, in precisely the same way; except that M. Cousin confesses, as Mr. Morell never does, to having never seen one or two of the rarer works of which he speaks. And when we mention that the series includes, not only Pascal, Bayle, Swedenbourg, and More, but Hernhaim, Sorbierre, Foucher, Van Helmont, Marcus Marci, Poiret, Joseph Glanvil, Fludd, Gale, and Pordage, it will be seen that the selection is peculiar.<sup>1</sup> Some of the works, moreover, are so rare, that if *two* contemporary writers have been fortunate enough to make themselves acquainted with their contents, we cannot but regret the coincidence by which we have obtained only *one* report. Mr. Hallam avows his belief, that not six living persons had seen Glanvil's "*Scepsis scientifica*;" and we have to express our gratitude to him that, as he was among that small number, he used his advantage for his readers, and supplied some curious extracts and comments; regretting only that, from so rich a source, his limits forbade him to draw copiously.<sup>2</sup> Our author's attention seems to have been attracted exclusively to the same feature of Glanvil's doctrine, which had been previously brought out in the *Histoire de la Philosophie*. We had marked for quota-

<sup>1</sup> *Histoire de la Phil.*, 10<sup>e</sup> and 12<sup>e</sup> Leçons.

<sup>2</sup> *Lit. of Eur*, Vol. IV. p. 180, 263.

tion a highly interesting notice of the character of Pascal's mind ; but the passage awakened dim recollections that interfered with its fresh force ; and we reserve it, lest we should find future occasion to notice the earlier partner in its production.

Reverence for the genius, and jealousy for the honor, of the fathers of modern philosophy, have led us into so copious a criticism of the earlier portion of these volumes, that we must refrain from giving more than a general estimate of Mr. Morell's account of the German metaphysics. The task of translating the foreign systems into the media of English intelligence is one of extreme difficulty ; and the attempt has every claim to an indulgent and grateful reception. We believe, however, that the ontological scheme of thought is so remote from all our intellectual habits, that no re-casting which may be given to it for purposes of exposition, can adapt it to our psychological methods of reflection ; that nothing short of a long-continued discipline, as severe as that by which a peasant boy might be brought to read *La Place*, would suffice to open, for the educated Englishman, an access to the schools of Königsberg and Berlin ; and that the proposal to call down these speculations, by popular clearness and familiarity of statement, within the sphere of general apprehension, is the sure indication of ambitious sciolism or inconsiderate enthusiasm. Mr. Morell's effort to overcome the difficulty possesses a higher character than this. His evident acquaintance with *Damiron*,<sup>1</sup> with

<sup>1</sup> *Essai sur l'Histoire de la Philosophie en France au 19<sup>e</sup> Siècle*: to which Mr. Morell imperfectly acknowledges his obligations.

Michelet,<sup>1</sup> as well as with Cousin, secures to his readers the benefit of the best secondary sources of knowledge respecting the recent course of philosophy in France and Germany. And though, in our opinion, his intimacy with the original writers is too slight to render him ripe for the office of their expounder, we are not sure that a greater exactness might not have discouraged him from the prosecution of his general design; and so deprived us of a work undoubtedly rich in interest, and demanded by the temper of the age. But, with all his clearness and ease of style, we doubt whether his readers will be conscious of much fresh light breaking on them, as they proceed, through the clouds of German thought. The treatment of Kant strikes us as by far the least skilful element in his review of the transcendental philosophy. The very title of the "Kritik der reinen Vernunft" is erroneously rendered, "A critical research instituted *by means of* our pure reason, etc." The "pure reason" is announced by Kant, not as the *instrument*, but as the *object*, of the philosopher's *κρισις*, estimate or valuation. It is surprising that the titles of his subsequent works, in which he investigated the place and worth of the "practical reason,"<sup>2</sup> and the "judgment," did not correct our author's misapprehension. We should fall under our own reproach, were we to enter with our author into the topics comprised within the Kantian system. We fully concur in the objection

<sup>1</sup> Geschichte der letzten Systeme der Philosophie in Deutschland von Kant bis Hegel.

<sup>2</sup> Kritik der praktischen Vernunft; and Kritik der Urtheilskraft.

to its arbitrary separation of the speculative and practical reason, and its denial of all scientific value to the notions given by the latter. The tendency of such distinction to Pyrrhonism is manifest enough. Indeed, the difference is little more than verbal, which separates Kant's "subjective ideas," "empty forms of thought," from Hume's "figments of the imagination:" the notions we have of substance, of God, of the soul, are no more securely lodged under the one class of names than under the other. What matters it whether we owe certain groundless beliefs to the hypostatizing propensities of our natural faculties; or pick them up, as common prejudices, from the accidents of language and the play of fancy; the grand thing remaining the same,—that they *are* groundless? We wish it had occurred to our author, in his review of Kant's system, to look closely into the distinction which pervades it; between the *matter* and the *form* of thought. So long as this fundamental point is assumed on the one hand, conceded on the other, without any adequate inquiry into its validity, or accurate explanation of its meaning, all discussion of the results of the critical philosophy is entirely vain. It has been taken for granted that "the form"—which is only the *constant* element—is to be attributed to the *subject*; "the matter," or *inconstant* element, to the *object*; that whatever comes under the first head—substance, space, time, etc.—is but an internal appearance, while the phenomena which fall under the latter are our only reports from without. We do not think it has been shown, that, where an effect arises from the mutual

agency of two concurrent things, it is possible thus to make partition of the effect between them. The temptation to argue the matter here must be resisted : but whoever has yet to sound its depths can scarcely give to the German philosophy a rational assent or dissent.

The sketch, in these volumes, of Fichte's subjective idealism, we regard as their most successful exposition. The author has evidently a strong tendency towards the mode of thought from which that system sprung ; and his personal sympathy with it, though not specially expressed, makes us feel that his account has more of reflection, and less of memory, than his other analyses. We do not indeed escape altogether the looseness which we have had occasion to regret ; and the following passage contains a curious example of the tricks sometimes played off upon the author by his own words. He is aiming to show that the primary assumption of philosophy should not be the existence of outward objects, as sources of our sensations ; but the existence of our sensations, as suggestions of external objects :—

“Philosophers have first *assumed* an external world, and then from that assumption have explained all those facts of our consciousness which come within the limits of sensation. The true scientific procedure, however, is undoubtedly this : I am conscious of certain feelings, certain representations, certain inward pictures, so to say ; and, in order to account for them, I *infer* the existence of external

things. To say first that the objects exist, and then that our sensations come from them, just reverses the chronological order of the process, and is no other than involving ourselves in a vicious circle, by reasoning, first, that our sensations exist because there are objects present to cause them, and then, that real objects must be present *because* we have the sensations. Two realities cannot be mutually generative of each other; the one must be the antecedent, the other the consequent; and in this case there can be no hesitation in assigning the fact of consciousness, as the antecedent, since it is only through it that we could ever come to have the slightest idea of any objective reality."

There is no "vicious circle" here at all; and the *two* propositions, which our author treats as giving a *reciprocal* solution of the problem, are nothing but *one* proposition, stating the *same* solution twice over. He has suffered himself to be misled by the double meaning of the word "*because*," to denote the *cause of a real fact*, and the *reason for a mental judgment*. When it is said, "our sensations exist, *because* there are objects present to cause them," the relation affirmed is that of *natural cause and effect*; when it is said, "real objects are present, *because* we have sensations," the relation is that of *logical premiss and conclusion*; and the existence of the effect is adduced as a *proof* of the presence of the cause. There is, therefore, no assertion here that "*two realities* are mutually generative of each other;" but only that one being generative of the other, that

other is an evidence of the first; it is plain that sensations are not named as the cause of external objects being present, but simply as the cause of our *assurance* of this.<sup>1</sup> Such is the reasoning on which our author rests his adoption of the first principle of the idealistic philosophy!

We must deny ourselves the pleasure, and save our readers the weariness, of any further rambling down the stream of German metaphysics, under the guidance of our author. And we stop here with the more willingness, on account of an impression, — it may be a prejudice, — which we will make bold to confess. We have no confidence in the honesty and good faith of the two philosophies of more recent origin. With Fichte appears to us to close the series of absolutely sincere, truth-loving philosophers, who were themselves wrestling with the doubts and difficulties they endeavored to resolve: his successors, instead of intently taking in hand the tangled thread of reason and the knotted chain of fate, seem to us to have cunningly tied in their study the complexities which were to vanish under their skill in the lecture-room. The extent to which the intellectual activity of Germany, pent up except in the scholastic direction, may carry a man of genius into speculative self-delusion, we will not venture to decide; but we cannot put ourselves down before the systems of Schelling and Hegel, without being on guard as against a tradesman in thought, instead of in reliance on a guide to the sources of truth; we

<sup>1</sup> The reader may see this frequent source of fallacy illustrated in Whately's Logic, B. I. § 2; and Appendix, v., "Reason."



feel ourselves practised upon; we listen for the shrewd book to titter in our ears. If anything were wanting to justify this impression, we should find it in the theosophic portions of these schemes; the want of honesty of understanding is conspicuous in their juggling with the Christian creeds; and we do not wonder that serious men esteem themselves insulted with the empty parodies on their hearty faith, offered in exchange for its living spirit. To listen with forbearance to their overtures would be to compound for falsehood and impiety. We cannot concur in our author's high, though far from unqualified, admiration of these writers. Kant, we believe, will always be recognized as making and marking an era in philosophy. But we cannot persuade ourselves that any lasting influence will be propagated by the writings of Schelling and Hegel.<sup>1</sup>

We would fain have said something of Mr. Morell's own philosophy, and his opinions respecting the tendencies of existing systems. But the length to which our observations have extended obliges us to abstain. We have thought it of primary moment to vindicate historical truth and literary equity; in

<sup>1</sup> Our limits forbidding any farther review of Mr. Morell's sketch of foreign writers, we will point out an error or two of fact, admitting of easy correction. The first introduction of the word *Apodictical* into English usage is attributed to the influence of Bouterwek's *Apodiktik*. What can this mean? If it came through Germany at all, why not rather, from the earlier and far greater example of Kant? — Vol. ii. p. 320.

The name of Schultz should be spelled Sculze. — Vol. ii. p. 261.

Jouffroy is unaccountably spoken of as still living. He died in March, 1842, leaving behind him a manuscript work, whose treatment by M. Cousin occasioned an excitement not unknown, we had thought, to any of his disciples.

comparison, it matters not what may be Mr. Morell's metaphysical belief, or ours. It is our hope to meet him hereafter again; when perhaps his creed may be more susceptible of estimate than in the present wide and somewhat perplexing distribution of his sympathies. There is a certain style, too, both of panegyric and of censure, which the severer judgment consequent on philosophical pursuits will perhaps amend: at present, we must confess, the eulogy sometimes reminds us too much of the auction-room, and the scolding of the conventicle. The perpetual disparagement of "sensationalism," and running applause of "spiritualism," most often tempt these offences against good taste. Our partial agreement with him makes us the more lament that he should seem to transgress the bounds of justice. But with all their faults we heartily welcome his volumes as a valuable contribution to our stores of literary history, and a pledge of reviving concern for studies not far removed from the highest interests of mankind.

## THE SOUL IN NATURE.<sup>1</sup>

AN accomplished and thoughtful observer of nature — Hugh Miller, the geologist — has somewhere remarked, that Religion has lost its dependence on metaphysical theories, and must henceforth maintain itself upon the domain of physical science. He accordingly exhorts the guardians of sacred truth to prepare themselves for the approaching crisis in its history, by exchanging the study of thoughts for the apprehension of things, and carefully cultivating the habit of inductive research. The advice is excellent, and proceeds from one whose own example has amply proved its worth; and unless the clergy qualify themselves to take part in the discussions which open themselves with the advance of natural knowledge, they will assuredly be neither secure in their personal convictions nor faithful to their public trust. The only fault to be found with this counsel is, that in recommending one kind of knowledge it disparages another, and betrays that limited intellectual sympathy which is the bane of all noble culture. Geology, astronomy, chemistry, so far from succeeding to the inheritance of metaphysics, do but enrich its prob-

<sup>1</sup> The Soul in Nature; with Supplementary Contributions. By Hans Christian Oersted. Translated from the German by Leonora and Joanna B. Horner. London: 1852.

lems with new conceptions and give a larger outline to its range; and should they, in the wantonness of their young ascendancy, persuade men to its neglect, they will pay the penalties of their contempt by the appearance of confusion in their own doctrine. The advance of any one line of human thought demands — especially for the security of faith — the parallel movement of all the rest; and the attempt to substitute one intellectual reliance for another mistakes for progress of knowledge what may be only an exchange of ignorance. In particular, the study of external nature must proceed *pari passu* with the study of the human mind; and the errors of an age too exclusively reflective will not be remedied, but only reversed, by mere reaction into sciences of outward fact and observation. These physical pursuits, followed into their further haunts, rapidly run up into a series of notions common to them all, — expressed by such words as *Law, Cause, Force*, — which at once transfer the jurisdiction from the provincial courts of the special sciences to the high chancery of universal philosophy. To conduct the pleadings — still more to pronounce the judgment — there, other habits of mind are needed than are required in the museum and the observatory; and the history of knowledge, past and present, abounds with instances of men who with the highest merit in particular walks of science have combined a curious incompetency of survey over the whole. Hence, very few natural philosophers, however eminent for great discoveries and dreaded by the priesthood of their day, have made any deep and durable impression on the relig

ious conception of the universe, as the product and expression of an Infinite Mind; and in tracing the eras of human faith, the deep thinker comes more prominently into view than the skilful interrogator of nature. In the history of religion, Plato is a greater figure than Archimedes; Spinoza than Newton; Hume and Kant than Volta and La Place; even Thomas Carlyle than Justus Liebig. Our picture indeed of the system of things is immensely enlarged, both in space and duration, by the progress of descriptive science; and the grouping of its objects and events is materially changed. But the altered scene carries with it the same expression to the soul; speaks the same language as to its origin; renews its ancient glance with an auguster beauty; and, in spite of all dynamic theories, reproduces the very modes of faith and doubt which belonged to the age both of the old Organon and of the new. How complete may be the transfusion into the most modern Baconian science, of the ancient Aristotelian theology, the present volume of essays, by a distinguished Danish savant, curiously shows.

Professor Oersted's European fame rests, it is needless to say, on his discovery, in the year 1820, of the connection, which he had long suspected, between the voltaic and the magnetic phenomena. By ascertaining at once the fact and the law of the needle's deviations in the vicinity of a galvanic current, he called into existence the science of electro-magnetism. In his own country he had already won, previously to this brilliant achievement, a position and repute amply sufficient for the moderate ambition of a bal-

anced and philosophic mind. From the inheritance of a poor provincial apothecary, he had raised himself, by his personal merits, to the rank of Professor of Physics in the University of Copenhagen, and to intimacy with the most distinguished men of letters and science in the northern capitals. An early study of Kant and Fichte, the friendship of the poet Oehlenschläger, the influence of the Schlegels and the excitement of romanticism in Germany, awakened in Oersted sympathies and sentiments not often found in the apparatus-room, and widened his intellectual horizon far beyond the range of his professional studies. He was fond of quitting, on public occasions, his own particular pursuits, and discussing, in essays or lectures, the principles of Art, the doctrine of Beauty, the essence of Religion. The volume before us is a miscellaneous collection of such papers, prepared at different times between 1814 and 1849; and having no further unity than they derive from the application to several subjects of the same manner of thought, and especially of the same theory of human nature in relation to the objects of knowledge, admiration, and belief. Notwithstanding an admirable variety of attainment and breadth of view, he is too deeply committed to the logical formulas of physical science ever to trust himself beyond them: he lives and moves in them; he regards them as coextensive with the universe of actual and possible thought; and is intent on finding room within them for poetry, morals, and religion. To apprehend the laws and forces of nature constitutes with him the entire perfection of man. Imagination, intellect, conscience,

and faith, are only different modes of reaching this apprehension, which completes itself only in the reason of the philosopher, holding conscious communion with the ideas embodied in the universe. Around this doctrine all Oersted's opinions revolve; and its constant reappearance in his treatment of the most opposite subjects imparts a certain degree of sameness to his disquisitions. It matters little whether you read an essay on matter and spirit, or on the sources of delight in natural beauty, or on superstition and unbelief, or on Protestant reformation, or on the unity of reason in all worlds; you will find the outline of his philosophy traced in each; and with expression so similar, that, notwithstanding much ingenuity of illustration and charm of style, the book affects you like an air played with variations. However pleasant and profitable at first to find how much may be made of some neat little inspiration of the muse, in the end you begin to regret the limited nature of the *afflatus*, and to long for some of the divine surprises of free thought. Like most writers of kindred pursuits, Oersted moreover treats the topics most interesting to human affections with a cold serenity, that makes indeed benign allowance for natural faith and love and finds a hidden sense in them, but is still above sympathy with them and remains ashamed of them till they have been *rationalized*. Living in the contemplation of inexorable laws, and of eternal forces that use up individual existences as the mere fuel of their self-subsistence; regarding them too as identical with the Divine Reason; he seems to aspire to a passionless perfection, and to

have brought the living pulses of his soul to beat time with the relentless chronometry of the universe. We speak here, it will be clearly understood, only of his system of abstract thought. The concrete man himself, in the relations of practical life, appears to have been eminently friendly, simple, faithful; richer every way in the humanities than the ideal philosopher whom he nominated to the royal observatory of creation, or the God whom he fancied developing himself into planetary geologies and polarized light.

By far the most striking and original of Oersted's speculations will be found in the Essay entitled, "The whole Universe a single intellectual Realm." His aim in it is to establish, that throughout all worlds are beings fundamentally similar, in their rational faculties, both to each other and to the eternal living reason of God. This conception is not indeed new; the sayings, that "all minds are of one family;" that "the Principia of Newton would be true upon the planet Saturn;" nay, the maxim of Plato that "God geometrizes,"—express the same doctrine. But in Oersted's hands it has received, for the first time we suppose, a careful and systematic treatment on scientific grounds, and been distinctly claimed as a legitimate theorem of natural philosophy. The argument consists of two parts; one of which seeks to identify our human reason in its laws and methods, with the Supreme Creative thought; while the other proves the collateral affinity of all created intelligences scattered throughout the provinces of space. The former, though presenting incomparably the greater



difficulty, is treated very slightly, and is inadequately protected against the objections of a consistent experience-philosophy; but would probably be accepted as conclusive by most continental metaphysicians. To the great body of our deductive science, mixed as well as pure, Oersted attributes an *à priori* character: its propositions are true, not contingently, like assertions of fact, but necessarily, by the inherent decree of thought; they express laws which reason, so far from picking up from the theatre of its exercise, would have to impose upon all objects given for it to deal with. The physical rules, of quantity, of proportion, of motion, equilibrium, and force, which we think out and register in our books of demonstrative science, are found, however, to be everywhere in action in the external world, and to have prevailed there countless ages, before we were present to detect their consonance with the requirements of pure intelligence. What we know *à priori* from ourselves reappears *à posteriori* in the actual system of things: how then can it be denied, that the universe is but the realized legislation of thought? If nature fulfils the logical promise of demonstrative science, her methods of operation concur with ours of reasoning; the problems proposed to us but yesterday she has solved from the old eternity; and we could not be thus anticipated, did not one common type of mind pervade the universe and ourselves. Our author carries this argument into some detail. A straight line, generated in thought by the unvarying flowing of a point, is self-evidently the simplest product of motion, and the appropriate result of a single impulse.

Without will a body cannot change the velocity or direction of its movement; and the occurrence of such change is a manifest sign of external force, composite or continuous or both. A continued force in one direction adds, during each successive instant, as much velocity as was acquired during the first; so that the final velocities must be as the time. In like manner it may be mathematically shown that all energies issuing from a point distribute themselves, if intercepted, over planes whose dimensions are as the square of the distance; so that the energy, after each interval of emanation, is inversely as the square of the distance. Oersted appears even to think, like Kant, that the universal existence of Attraction, diminishing by the foregoing rule of emanating forces, is susceptible of *à priori* demonstration; and that consequently there is no dependence nor inductive support in our belief, that, if bodies be impelled within the sphere of a central attraction, their path must be some one of the conic sections. Furnished, actually or potentially, with these vaticinations of reason, we open the eye of observation; and *there* are bodies falling with the proper amount of accelerated motion; the earth bulging and weights diminishing at the equator with the true centrifugal fraction; terrestrial projectiles flying in parabolas; and planetary bodies conforming to the ellipse. The system of things therefore is nothing but science turned into reality; and is the eternal embodiment of a thinking faculty like our own. It is evident, throughout his writings, that our author not only assumes the *à priori* basis of the deductive sciences, but regards those sciences

as the ultimate type of all our knowledge; so that our defective power of intellectual combination is alone to blame, if we are now as little able to forecast the entire programme of nature, as the ancients were to deduce the ground-plan of the solar system. The vision floats before him of a time when the outlying domains of the universe, at present abandoned to the gropings of empirical method, shall be embraced within the luminous circle of demonstrative truth. As soon as you conceive correctly, and state in definition, the essence of light, all the laws of reflection, refraction, polarization, inevitably follow, and conduct you to phenomena never guessed before, yet always present. And if man could rightly seize the primary idea, not of this or that particular existence, but of nature in general, he would obtain a genetic definition, whence the phenomena of all worlds and ages would be consequentially evolved. That thought, in proportion to its perfection, thus puts us on the traces of fact, is proof, conversely, that fact is generated by ever-living thought; that the universe is but the thinking aloud of an eternal reason, consciously reflected in our own. The mind in us and the mind in nature are thus of congenial faculty.

The divine thought, however, thus established in unison with the human, is no terrestrial affair, but is impartially immanent in the remotest spaces to which science can track the vestiges of law. It is manifestly the intellectual key-note of the universe, in relation to which all intelligences must be constituted. The inhabitants of Jupiter are implicated, no less than we, in the local effects of the laws of motion. They have peri-

odie times analogous to ours : a day with its alternation of light and darkness ; a year with its successive seasons. Their neighboring skies are fitted up with moons, in whose phenomena we recognize the same laws of weight that here prevail. The velocities of falling bodies there are different from ours, but, in an unresisting medium, the same among themselves ; and the mathematical series which represents for us the differences, moment after moment, of accelerated motion, might stand in *their* manuals of elementary physics. Do they set their ordnance officers to ball-practice? — it is still the parabola with which they have to do under every variety of range. Or to measure an arc of a meridian? — the ratio of the polar and equatorial diameters is still what the theoretic conditions of equilibrium require. Unless, therefore, the inhabitants of Jupiter are incapable of reading off the scene in which they live, they must have an intellect fundamentally akin to ours ; for their settlement lies within the compass of the same physical jurisdiction ; and the natural laws stand as a middle term of objective knowledge common to them and us. Were it otherwise, either their faculties must be unvaracious, or ours, — suppositions intrinsically inadmissible, and, so far as we are concerned, practically confuted by the countless successful predictions which establish the authority of our science. Nor is their unity of nature with ourselves limited to the pure intellect. Every apprehension, even of a simple geometrical law, such as the relation of the abscissa and ordinate in a curve, involves, with the act of reason, an actual perception or an inward representation of

sense ; and beings competent to understand such an object of thought must resemble each other in both these powers. They may differ indefinitely in susceptibility and intensity of faculty. Our planetary kindred may be able to discern, for instance, all the properties of the conic sections with the easy glance which shows us the equality of a circle's radii. But still, if they are cognizant of the path they travel, their geometry, be it quick or slow, must, like their orbit, be the same as ours.

Our philosopher, however, once set out on the business of "visiting his relations," puts up at Jupiter, only as a first easy stage. He commits himself to a new element to carry him to more foreign parts. *Light* is ever traversing immeasurable spaces, and bringing in reports thence, to which science has the certain key. Oersted wisely makes no reference, in his argument, to his own peculiar theory, that light is but a succession of electric sparks. He merely insists on the identity of character found in all luminous rays, celestial and terrestrial. Proceeding from the remotest fixed star, they are refracted, reflected, polarized, colored, like ours ; and the correction required for aberration shows their velocity to be the same. Within the limits of the solar system, the planetary moons give evidence that the projection of shadows is universal and uniform. The prismatic series of colors is everywhere constant ; inclosed, as a whole, between the system of chemical rays above the violet in swiftness, and that of calorific, below the red ; and determined, in its several hues, by the breadth of the luminiferous wave, which is never less

than the three hundred millionth (in the violet), or more than the hundred and seventy-five millionth (in the red), part of a line. It is indeed quite conceivable that, in beings of another race, the visual scale may be much larger than ours, exceeding it not less than the whole gamut exceeds an octave. It needs but a slightly altered sensibility to introduce within the range of sight the rays at present known by their chemical or their calorific effects. Under the varied conditions attaching to different stations there must be a free play for such modifications of faculty. We cannot but suppose, for instance, that the inhabitant of Jupiter, living as he does amid only a twenty-fifth part of our terrestrial illumination, is endowed with a greater sensitiveness to light than we : —

“This higher susceptibility he brings with him to the contemplation of the heavens. His atmosphere being little less transparent than ours, the spectacle of the starry sky will be to him more copious and brilliant. Observation of it, too, will teach him more, and with much less trouble place within his reach a comprehensive cognizance of the universe. The rotation of his native sphere with more than twice the speed of ours, gives a proportionate velocity to the apparent revolution of his heavens, and so contributes a new element to the impression of this phenomenon. Indeed, we may go so far as to conjecture that the quick alternation of day and night must be connected with a corresponding quick alternation of action and repose ; and this again with a quicker and more lively reception of impressions, and a quicker

vanishing of them away. And finally, the inhabitant of Jupiter will be able, on account of the vast plane of its orbit, to see also far more of the system of the world, and much more easily to effect the measurements which are necessary for determining the distances of the fixed stars."— (P. 147.)

From the mechanism and optics of the universe, Oersted advances to its chemistry; and shows that there is the same unity in its materials and in the laws of their combination, which has already been traced in its astronomical dynamics. Since the time when Franklin furnished the clue to the interpretation of electrical phenomena by his happy suggestion of the two electricities, there has been a rapid convergence of many doctrines, — of elective affinity, galvanism, crystallography, magnetism, — towards a point of higher unity in which they will separately merge. No sooner had galvanism been recognized as a mere mode of electricity, than the decomposition of water by the voltaic wires drew chemical phenomena into the same sphere; the magnetic were afterwards added by our author's own researches; and the discoveries of Dalton and Mitscherlich supplied the first elements for mathematical laws of composition, and of forms as dependent on composition. Whenever this large group of laws shall fall under one category, as they assuredly will, the problem of the constitution of matter will be brought much nearer to its solution; atoms will probably be resolved into points of space endowed with force; and the ultimate law of that force will appear not only constant for all worlds,

but alone persistent through all time, the one abiding thought out of which the materials and the form of everything are evolved. Meanwhile, it is already evident, not only that the general properties of matter — size, form, weight, inertia, mobility, etc. — are everywhere the same, but that the more special phenomena of *heat*, — differing from light only in velocity of vibration, and announcing itself by the presence of solids, liquids and airs, — of *electricity*, evolved as it is by differences of heat, — of *chemical action*, the consequence of electricity — must be no less universal; all the conditions and many of the traces of their development being noticeable on the planets. In the meteoric stone we have a strange witness to the prevalence, in regions beyond our world, of the materials, the combinations, the crystalline forms, with which we are familiar. And while the spheroidal figure of the planets refers us back to a period when they were fluid, their analogy in this respect to our earth, whose history since that era the geologist can trace, irresistibly suggests the probability of a similar course of development. If so, we must imagine there, what is in clear evidence here, — namely, the successive appearance of organisms in an ascending scale, till they culminate in a self-conscious race, capable of knowing as well as embodying the producing laws of nature. Thus rational beings are everywhere the product of nature in the same sense in which we are; they are crowning organisms, — the efflorescence of animalization, — whose knowledge is bound up with a corporeal constitution, and cannot be fundamentally different from ours : —



"In this statement," says Oersted, "I only announce respecting man an unquestionable fact, without committing myself to the deeps of inquiry as to the mode of connection between body and spirit. Just to obviate, however, every appearance of materialism, I would refer to the following double antithesis as containing the principle of a solution, — that Nature, having Man on the one hand as its undeniable product, must itself, on the other, be admitted as a product of the ever-creating spirit; so that the divine origin of our spirit is in no way compromised by recognition of the rights of Nature. In other words: our notion of the universe is imperfect, unless we conceive of it as the invariably continued work of the ever-creating spirit. The creative principle in it is the spiritual; of this the material is the product; and it would cease to exist, could the producing function cease. Regarded as a work of nature in this sense, the spiritual element in man must contain within it the natural laws; — only potentially, however, so that the influence of nature is indispensable to their being called forth into consciousness. And without any agency of his, nature around him cannot but exercise an influence in accordance with his intellectual faculty; though it is not perhaps till after thousands of years that his intellect can at length attain perception of this harmony. It is easy to see that the grounds on which we rest this conviction hold good for the entire universe. Throughout the universe beings are distributed, with intellectual faculty to catch the sparks of the divine light. To these beings God reveals himself through the world around, awakening

the reason dormant in themselves by the reason dominant in everything which affects them with an impression; and, *vice versâ*, the more their own mind is awakened, the deeper is the glance he gives them into material existence: so that they are involved in a ceaseless living development, which, on reaching a certain stage, carries them ever further from the fancy that palpable matter is the basis of existence, and impels them on the discovery that they are to view themselves — body and mind — as members of an infinite organism of indwelling Reason (*Vernunftorganismus*). Thus then do the truths of Natural Science ever more and more fall in with those of Religion, so that they must lapse at length into the most intimate combination." — (P. 155.)

With this remarkable passage, we believe, the essay originally closed. At least, the author's first design went no farther than to prove the position which he here quits as sufficiently established, — that the *intellectual* faculty has a common type throughout the universe. "But if the intellectual," said Frederika Bremer, to whose friendly admiration Oersted was opening his train of thought, "then also the *moral*, and the *sense of beauty*, in short all the great characteristics of a spiritual nature." Upon this hint the author enlarged his thesis, and added the chapters in which he claims for all worlds imagination and conscience, as well as understanding. It is difficult, however, to work out the suggestions of another; and though the painter of life could tell her thought to the philosopher of nature, she could not transfuse

into his soul the peculiar coloring of affection and feminine piety with which it glorified itself in her own. Hence, perhaps, the manifest inferiority of the succeeding chapters, especially of that which treats of the *moral* constitution of the universe. The argument is essentially the same as before: the inner faculties are dependent for their awakening on the action of the outward universe; this action consists in a touch of sympathy, by which like responds to like; whatever, therefore, breaks out of sleep in us and rises into permanent consciousness has its counterpart in nature, and exists there as a realized idea of the eternal reason; this realized idea, having in nature a permanent and universal objective embodiment, cannot but be read off by all minds placed before it, seeing that those minds are nothing but its subjective reflection. Thus our faculties attest the presence of corresponding living prototypes in the laws of the universe, which may be called the thoughts of God; and those laws, being coextensive with space, supply the conditions and therefore attest the presence everywhere, of other faculties constituted like our own. The application of this doctrine to the imaginative feeling of man is more plausible than to the moral. Our inner sense, secretly constituted according to the same laws of reason as the outward scene and objects on which it gazes, feels satisfied, it knows not why, when presented with things that have the stamp of reason and do not fall short of their own idea. By a kind of filial instinct and yearning of a nature born of thought, it embraces whatever has the features of a purely realized con-

ception, and disowns all spoiled, confused, and spurious things. It is inconceivable that any being involved, like the inhabitant of Jupiter, in the same geometry with ourselves, should not share in our annoyance at seeing a distorted circle instead of a true one; and sympathize with our pleasure in symmetry, as the balance and unity of opposites; and among objects of this feeling, esteem that the *most* beautiful which, like the human form on earth, expresses the highest idea. As from the omnipresence of geometry Oersted thus concludes to a universal beauty of form; so from the boundless diffusion of light and its interior chemistry in relation to warmth and life, does he infer the universal beauty of color; and from the acoustic laws again, which would assuredly repeat the vibrating phenomena of stretched strings wherever the experiment was tried, he is convinced that we have no monopoly of sweet sounds, and makes us curious about the Mozarts and Mendelsohns of Jupiter and the operas on Saturn's ring.

If Oersted is less successful in fastening upon foreign spheres the thread of ethical than of æsthetic and intellectual affinity with our own, it is not because the analogy between our position and theirs breaks in his hand; but because, in his theory, *this human world* is not really the seat of *moral* phenomena at all, and therefore he has nothing of this kind to carry to any other. He uses indeed the *language* current among men for marking the facts and distinctions of character; but with explanations that withdraw the essence of its meaning, and set us in the midst of mere *quasi*-moral phenomena. His psy-

chology — not founded on reflective self-knowledge, but a mere application of physical doctrine to the mind — leaves no room for any but a verbal difference between the intellect and the conscience, — between constitutional gifts and achieved virtues, — between unhindered development and free personality. The consequence is that his whole chapter on this subject is engaged with raising ethical questions and apparently assuming ethical notions, and then resolving them into the *unethical*. The only character really left, to save the moral powers and laws from falling into perfect coalescence with the intellectual, is simply this, — that the latter are wakened into consciousness and progress chiefly by the spectacle of nature, the former by the presence of men. This, however, is a distinction which, at best, detaches into view not the moral, but the social elements of the mind. Our author indeed, at the very outset, pushes aside, by a false definition, all idea of proper obligation. “All natural effects being effects of God, *natural endowments*,” he says, “may not improperly be described as a *divine trust* ;” — as a *divine effect*, assuredly ; but not on that account as a *divine trust* ; for this is more than the reasoning will cover, and requires, not only derivation from God, but in ourselves a discretionary power of use or abuse. If such a power *bonâ fide* exist, then, and then only, are the conditions of a trust complete and without illusion. If otherwise, if the power be but a semblance, determined at a few removes by the necessary march of natural law, then is the putative “trust” construed back into a bespoken “effect,” and mere causation by God will no longer

morally distinguish it from the height of the human stature or the greenness of nature's grass. How then does it stand with Oersted in respect to this second condition of human responsibility? Does he allow to us this determining power? In words, he does ; in reality, he does not. He constantly speaks of men as "free beings ;" but his conception of freedom betrays itself in his brief phrase, "Men are *free* beings, in so far as they are *thinking* beings." Is it so? If a creature be only self-conscious, and become the theatre across which trains of thought pass, not without his inspection, though quite beyond his control, is he on that account "*free*"? Whether the thoughts succeed each other like the disjointed images of a dream, or with the unity of a poetical creation, or with the coherence of philosophical discovery, makes no difference to the point at issue ; so long as they follow each other by laws of necessary sequence and suggestion, they are similarly related to the thinker, who gains no *liberty* from being the subject of any of them. All the phenomena of our mental life — the conceptions and emotions and inclinations that rise within us — are but the *data*, the assigned conditions, of the problems which our freedom is invoked to solve ; and if they all moved in a linear stream through us, — as they often do when we simply *think*, — without our ever stepping in from behind our phenomena to settle an alternative and arbitrate between competing possibilities, we should be indeed intellectual organisms, but by no means moral agents ; and it would be not less a superstition that man could have a duty, than that there is malignancy in planets

or a spirit of frolic in the dancing leaves. The modern German philosophy, like the ancient Greek, is pervaded by this inadequate idea of freedom, as a mere locked-up force, condensed into an individualized existence, and left for awhile, with the key turned upon it, to build its nest and spin its history. Such a power might as well be called imprisoned as free. Regarded from within, it has indeed scope enough for its action and the evolution of its appropriate effects, until it presses against the limits which inclose its individual field. But so have all forces; which, in their very idea and definition, are dynamical through a certain range, till, by encounter with adequate resistance, they become statical. If the stage in their action prior to the attainment of equilibrium is to be called *free*, then must freedom exist wherever there is *motion*, and necessity be found only in the state of *rest*. The absurdity of this result is not escaped by merely shutting up the force within the outline of some object insulated in space,—as a plant or an animal; or by introducing *sensation* in correspondence with every physical change; or by adding even *self-consciousness* of what is going on. All that is thus effected is to substitute the notion of vital development of a more or less complex kind for that of mechanical operation; and man is still definable as a mere *intellectual endogen*,—without the least approach to the exercise of that *preferential* power,—of giving determination to the indeterminate,—which is the essence of his freedom and the condition of his duty.

On the peculiar path of thought taken by Oersted,

no such power as this presents itself to his notice. By missing it, he evades the only check to his enterprise, of erasing the boundary between the free and the subject provinces of the world, and enthroning Necessity as the autocrat of all. Nothing is easier than to reconcile individual freedom with the sway of universal law, if that freedom be nothing but universal law itself converged into an individual, and kindling the phenomena that radiate from his particular being. There remains indeed nothing to *be* reconciled; the contradiction ceases to exist: flung by the force of a definition into the realm of predetermined nature, man offers no further opposition to the powers which are there omnipotent: and we are only surprised that our author can address himself at all to a difficulty which the premisses of his philosophy hinder from ever appearing. The only sense in which his individual "free beings" could take any liberties with universal law, is that in which a tree, whose proper attitude is vertical, takes the liberty of growing crooked; or a musical box, rebellious against the rules of melody, goes out of tune; or an intellect, in spite of the spontaneous affinity of thought for truth, is deflected by the attractions of some error. These are merely cases of deviation from an average type of action, in consequence of the presence of special conditions. Such conditions not belonging to the group of causes by which the type is permanently moulded, but being imported from the momentary combinations of time and place, are little liable to recur; and in the long run their traces are obliterated and their influence overruled by the persevering agen-



cies that never absent themselves. It is precisely and only in this manner that Oersted conceives of the moral aberrations of mankind ; which are not therefore *violations* of any dominant law, but *varieties* on it, cancelling each other by their opposite tendencies, and leaving the mean direction of reason and right secure of its ultimate vindication.

Had our author admitted the conscience as a source of ethical knowledge, on equal terms with perception as a source of physical, and the understanding of logical, he might have transported our laws of rectitude and holiness to other planets in the same vehicle of proof by which he has carried thither our optics and our geometry. With no other assumption than that which is indispensable in all reasoning, — that the primary testimony of our faculties is veracious, — he might have passed out from the moral constitution of man to the moral perfection of God, and thence have dropped on star after star to see the divine image multiplied ; with precisely the certainty attending his belief that the elliptic path of Jupiter is a thought original with God and common to its inhabitants with ourselves. The free element in the human soul is not less surely a valid type of the free sentiments of God and the free powers of all spirits, than are its law-bound elements of the legislation regulating the conditions of all thought. As in the latter we have a clue to the whole realm of nature, — to whatever, that is, lies subject to impassable rules ; — so in the former are we introduced to the realm beyond nature, — the supernatural, — the spiritual beings, that is, which are detained out of the range

of necessity and left with a portion of divine determining power. Oersted, however, recognizing no such antithesis, has no separate and direct source of moral knowledge. With the unitary and exclusive logic of the physical philosopher, he draws everything into the all-absorbing vortex of homogeneous law. Regarding man, even in his highest relations, simply as an object of natural history, he is at a loss for evidence to show that the physiology of human society must be repeated among the races peopling foreign worlds. He is obliged to resort to an indirect and circuitous method: first, resolving the conscience into a mere phase of the intellect, which has already been proved to be universal; and then, insisting that the development which at one of its stages turns up the moral phenomena, depends with us upon external conditions present also in other worlds. In his view of the progress of man from the savage to the social and moral stage, there is much which reminds us of Hobbes. He does not indeed so completely insulate individual men, in his picture of the "state of nature;" he assumes, on the contrary, an instinctive sympathy of like with like, which makes all creatures of rational perception fundamentally social, and even disposes them to recognize in the physical world around them the stirrings of a life and will like their own. But this instinct is at first driven back and repressed by dread of each other's passions and experience of mutual injuries. By the reciprocal advance and retreat of this sympathy and fear, is occasioned the first idea of good and evil, of just and unjust; till some tribe advances far enough to unite for com-

mon help, and conceive of an order and law needful for the general good. This is the birth-point of the notion and feeling of duty among them; which from that moment becomes ever clearer, especially through the influence of highly-gifted individuals endowed with an insight which, not being their own work, is regarded as an inspiration of the gods. Nor is this to be treated as a mere superstition. The affluent power and depth of such souls, enabling them to bring the moral ideas into clear consciousness, is really the divine energy in nature, and chiefly in human nature, — an energy, however, acting according to the necessary laws which rule the development of human thought and insight. The conceptions of God which accompany this progress present us with three stages of theology. For a vast period nothing appears but a mere nature-worship, a homage to beings supposed to haunt the scenes and command the changes of the visible world. Next, man is taken as the type of Deity, to whom therefore something of a moral character is ascribed among other anthropomorphic elements. Myths, the produce of this stage, are often framed in ages of passion and ignorance: handed down without change through a changing civilization, they offend the knowledge and conscience of later times, and are rejected, first by the learned, then by the people. Hence room is made for the third and final faith, — the faith of natural philosophy. Science may at first, from its necessarily destructive action on previous beliefs, seem inimical to religion. It takes out of the rank of free beings, and subjugates to laws of nature, objects — like the sun and stars — which had been

regarded as gods : and periods of great scientific advance, snatching away with relentless rapidity one centre of reverence after another, may be attended with wanton rejection of spiritual truths. But thought always compensates its own evils, and recovers the disturbance of its balance. It is found in the end that the free beings cancelled by science from the fields of existence are replaced, not by the blind forces of a groping fate, but by the laws and order of eternal reason. With the enactments of that reason every one will find himself in harmony, the more he conforms with the precepts of ethical doctrine. Indeed, so completely do all moral laws resolve themselves into an injunction to live according to reason, and so intimate is their secret connection with each other through this common tie, that whoever will fairly follow out the favorite rule of *any* ethical system — even the rule of self-interest — will find himself carried through the entire circuit of duty, not excluding the point of remotest antithesis to his first thought. Thus the moral element in man is only, under another guise, the same rational power which governs the universe ; and unfolds itself in us by our action on each other, and in response to the appeal of an everlasting reason interfused through nature.

Hence, our author concludes, moral and intellectual laws are coextensive. In respect to both, our earth is but a province of a wider realm, in every part of which a similar ascending growth towards more perfect forms of life may be presumed. The inhabitants of other planets are formed according to the same laws of omnipresent reason, and under

many momentous conditions visibly analogous to ours. They *begin* to exist at a certain time and place, from the influence of which they cannot be exempt. They are also perishable, and must have their period of rise and of decline. They feel the presence and action of the world around them, and are therefore creatures of sense, susceptible of pleasure and pain. As free and thinking beings, yet finite, they must fall into conflict with each other, and with nature; yet must be conquered and reclaimed by the irresistible perseverance of nature's laws; and therefore they must advance and more and more reflect the real course of things. In these and other respects, though amid vast differences, they must be our counterparts. Nowhere in the universe should we find ourselves wholly strangers; or reach the limits of the One Intellectual Realm.

We have selected this interesting and suggestive essay for particular analysis, because it presents within a small compass a view of Oersted's mode of thought on the several subjects of art, morals, and religion, which felt the interpenetration of his philosophy. What now is the value of his argument, as a whole? We must confess that it leaves on us the same unsatisfying impression as all physical reasonings in demonstration of religious truth; giving some grandeur and richness to the conception of truth, but not really contributing to it any new evidence. Reserving for separate consideration his doctrine of God, we may pause for a moment on his proof of the affinity of all created minds. It depends mainly on one consideration,—the omnipresence of natural agencies and

laws, considered as objects of science. The space, without which there were no geometry, the light which furnishes us with optics, the satellites so instructive as to the laws of motion, are not left behind by removal to Jupiter; and *where the things to be known are the same, the knowers cannot be different.* But how much is postulated! (1.) That knowers are *there*; (2.) that, if there, they must have their knowledge directed to the same objects that are apprehended by us, instead of being turned upon some phase of nature wholly dark to us; and (3.) that our human knowledge is valid for the reality of things, and is not a mere subjective affair, whose truth cannot be depended upon away from home. A geologist, referring to the time when no man was upon the earth, might question the first; a psychologist, who derives all knowledge from sense, and, by the easy conception of *other* senses, supposes the possibility of other knowledge, might doubt the second; and a follower of Kant (as Oersted himself once was), who is convinced of the ideality of space, would deny the third. Whether even the discoveries of modern science, whose threads our author so skilfully weaves into a network of universal law, have really much to do with our belief in that *unity of all nature*, whence he infers the likeness of all minds, appears questionable. Parmenides, Plato, and Aristotle belonged to an age and a people ignorant of the law of gravitation and the theory of light; yet they spoke in a language and taught philosophies, betraying the profoundest impression of this very unity of nature; so that we cannot even translate the phrases, τὸ ἔν, — τὸ πᾶν, — τὸ ὅν,

—into which the feeling was condensed. The grand picture, with which Plato mythically closes his "Republic" — of the universe revolving round the spindle of necessity, to the blended hymn of past, present, and future; of the eternal circulation of spirits between heaven and earth; of the throne of Lachesis beneath the span of the milky way; of the Prophet scattering the lots of mortal life, and warning the "souls of a day" not to choose amiss, since the free thread of choice once taken would be fastened to the wheel of destiny; of the journey across Lethe's leafless plain, and the encampment by the river "Careless," and the midnight spring, as with the shoot of stars, up to the human birth — is penetrated throughout with a feeling of the physical and moral oneness of existence everywhere, to which neither Newton nor Fresnel could add any fresh intensity. Intellectual and moral culture so affects the attitude of the human faculties towards nature, as to render the faith inevitable that all her parts constitute a perfect whole; and whatever may be the direction which that culture predominantly takes, — whether metaphysical as in Greece, or physical as in modern Europe, — the mind's instinctive demand for unity will make itself felt, and compel the universe to respond. What once was but an incipient point of clearness rising from the sea of the unknown, reflects ever more light from a surface gaining breadth and grandeur: no sooner does it open a habitable abode to settled thought, than subsidiary spots emerge around and group themselves invitingly first to the explorer, and ere long to the colonist; and as the island of knowledge is multiplied into the

archipelago, so is the archipelago blended into the continent; till reason can every way pass to and fro over its world, and find it a thing of spheriform perfection. Without this synoptic progress, the occupation of the intellect would be gone; and the faith which attends it, — faith in the unity of nature, — while finding support from the contents of all sciences, is contingent on the special discoveries of none; and cannot be properly treated as the exclusive or characteristic revelation of natural philosophy.

The identity of nature between other created beings and ourselves is thus made by our author to rest upon too narrow a basis; and his reasonings, like those of natural theology, do but contribute a series of illustrative applications of a faith not really dependent upon them. His proof of our identity of mental nature with God, and his whole conception of the divine presence in the universe, appears to us liable to much more serious objection. His argument amounts, in brief, to this: we find that nature has for ages been following the very laws which we now fetch out of our own mind by necessary procedure of reason; since, without our aid, nature *acts* in the order in which we *think*. Thought, like our own, is the eternal agent in nature; and that thought is what we mean by "God." Again and again, with repetition which precludes mistake, does Oersted announce, as the ground of all religion, this concurrence between the physical laws without us and the logical laws within. We object to the argument on scientific grounds. It assumes, to an extent entirely unwarrantable, the *à priori* character of all natural knowl-



edge ; and represents the encyclopædia of the sciences as an excogitated system arising by the evolution of pure thought, and then brought into comparison with the realm of fact, and turning out to be an accurate prediction of its course. The whole body of science is conceived of according to the type and method of geometry, in which, after the definition of a few elementary notions, and the statement of a few axioms, one property of figures after another is reasoned out by necessary laws of thought. And as a counterpart to this process, the universe is described as standing opposite, and doing the very same ; reasoning itself out into open being, as if it were mimicking our intellectual ways, — overhearing our deductions and echoing them. The whole value of this concurrence, between external physical law and internal logical law, as evidence of the presence in both of a divine reason higher than either, is plainly contingent on the two series being independent of each other. If either be a mere copy of the other, their agreement is not wonderful, and can report nothing to us respecting the cause whence they proceed. Should the doctrine of the sensational philosophy be true, and all our modes of thought be the mere delivery of the outer world upon our receptive capacity, — it will no doubt still hold that the world will accord with our intellectual rules, but only because those rules are humble followers of the world's course, and would compliantly reflect it, whatever it might be. It is no glory to the universe to be "agreeable to reason" in this sense, no distinction even from any other supposable condition ; for it could not possibly be anything else : so

long as it flings an impression upon a conscious being set before it, that impression, irrespective of its quality, is just what the philosophy in question *means by* "reason." Again, should the opposite doctrine of idealism be true, and all "laws of nature" be but the projected figure of our laws of thought, the seeming intellectual structure of the universe can neither surprise nor instruct us; for we see but the shadow of ourselves traversing the spaces of our objective thought. It is only on the hypothesis that nature and man are as perfectly distinct as two strangers who have never met before, that you can appeal to correspondence in their ideas as evidence of their joint relation to an eternal reason as a *tertium quid*. Yet Oersted by no means preserves the balance of this dualism against the two extremes which are ever soliciting it in opposite directions. The idealist indeed he does not attempt to put down by the remark, that the successful *predictions* of science prove her to be no dreamer but to have a good understanding with reality. The fallacy of the remark is transparent. Were nature nothing but appearance, transacting itself wholly within the mind, there would still be *laws* of appearance, according to which the phenomena would recur; and the correct observation of these laws would be announced and rewarded by the punctual fulfilment of expectation. In effectually resisting the error of exclusive idealism, our author repeatedly falls into that of exclusive realism; instead of detaining the human mind outside the realm of nature, he flings it in among her products, represents it as wholly generated by natural laws, and accounts in this way

for its seeing in nature the likeness of itself. This likeness, however, we should see in any case, so long as we were growths of nature; for it is, in our author's view, the mere sympathy of origin, the tingling of the sap of ancestry in our veins. To us, who are her fabric, nature would be sure to look like ourselves, and to wear the semblance of such mind as ours, whether she were the work of reason or not; this aspect is given, not by her laws being the result of intellect, but by our intellect being the result of her laws. Were it therefore ever so true that the correspondence between our mind and the universe is the sign of a common power pervading both, it would still remain undetermined whether nature, to begin with, was the fruit of mind, or our mind, in the last resort, were the blossoming of mere nature. That the heavens and the earth are *intelligible* to us cannot surely be accepted as, in itself, a revelation of their *intelligent* origin, though this is our author's frequent assertion. Are we to lay it down as an axiom that, in order to be *objects of reason*, a set of facts or truths must be *products of reason*;—so that whatever is apprehended by a living mind must be regarded as having its genesis from a living mind? What then are we to say to the truths of geometry, than which no more perfect example of logical sequence can be found? In what sense can these objects of rational cognizance be considered as births or creations for the divine intellect? It is their function to define the relations of space under the limitations of figure; and these relations, so far from requiring a living mind as their cause, are wholly

unaffected by the supposed presence or absence of such a mind, remaining in any case equally and independently true. Who indeed can persuade himself that, if there had been no sphere of truth except the mathematical, accessible to our thought, — if, without any concrete knowledge, any personal love, any sense of beauty or rectitude, we had been a mere incarnation of porisms, — we should ever have found ourselves on the traces of a divine mind? Yet not only would all the conditions of Oersted's faith be still present, but they would be present in the most intense degree and the most perfect form; for it is just when the universe becomes to us one vast deducible, with all its epochs and constructions hung together by a texture of necessity, like the *data* and *quæsita* of a theorem, that, in his view, it must unconditionally appear to be the pure genesis of eternal thought. It is highly instructive to observe that this *à priori* sequence of phenomena, on which our author rests his theism, is the favorite stronghold of the older atheism. I ask no more, says La Place, than the laws of motion, heat, and gravitation, and I will write you the nativity and biography of the solar system. Allow me further, says the physiologist, electricity and cells, and I will evolve the organic universe in an appendix. And only grant us a little time, says a third, and we will reduce the number of primitive data we require, and probably merge them all into one; and then you will see that nothing could have been other than it is: from the alpha to the omega of the series of phenomena, every succession is determined by a force which science has ascertained and defined, and which, instead of rising

out of mind culminates into it. We want therefore no God; there is nowhere any scope left for the action of his will. It is precisely in confutation of this reasoning that Paley and others have endeavored to rescue certain provinces of nature from this voracious claim of necessity, — to show that light, while needful for the eye, did not create it; that the blood, so curiously related to the atmosphere, did not compound it; that life abounds with provisions necessitated by no known force, but flung in as the gratuity of a free beneficence. The class of phenomena which are thus the pride of Paley's argument are the opprobrium of Oersted's; who, on the other hand, discovers a divine thought only in a realm which, were it universal, would put Paley into despair. We are clearly of opinion that Paley's *feeling* — his sense of what we want to have proved — is infinitely the more correct; and if his mode of proof is precarious and unsatisfactory, the fault lies in his conceding too much to the natural philosophers, and secretly adopting in his own mind their false postulate, that their favorite "forces" are separate realities in nature, instead of mere hypotheses of thought. No theist ought to be alarmed by the encroachment of science upon the region of indeterminate phenomena, her interpretation of free into necessary facts, or even by her ultimate threat of exhibiting the entire universe as a deducible. He ought by no means to resist or disown her progress in this direction, and to entrench himself as in a forlorn hope on the heights not yet within her reach. Let him rather anticipate her final conquest of a universal empire and suppose it gained.

His answer to any atheistic boast may then stand thus : "I grant that you can now deduce all things, and have won, in reference to nature, a clue of universal prediction. But the necessity of your sequences does not terrify me ; for it is a necessity reigning only in your thought, and not dominant in the reality of things, — the necessity with which consequences flow from an hypothesis, not that with which effects arise from their cause. *If* your stock of original forces, as conceived and defined by you, were producible as operative facts, having a concrete history each for itself, they would doubtless be the producing source of all phenomena. But I see no evidence of their reality, and find them to be, not concrete existences, but mere abstractions of the mind, fictions of analysis, formulas of computation, no more resembling the living agencies of things than the rules by which the astronomer catches a star's place would resemble the instinct of an angel's flight returning thither home. All that you have done is, to say how, if you had to deal with a dead universe, you would make it do in your absence just the work it does now ; and you have devised a set of conditions which, if they could but find themselves prefixed at the outset of events, might serve in place of mind, if mind could not be there. But if mind *can be* there and *is* there, its competency to the voluntary production of the same effects cannot be denied ; and we may then dispense with your set of conditions as real causes, and use them simply as a stock of substituted ratios, varying as the phenomena and so serving to predict them. A lecturer on animal mechanics will explain to you the

rationale of a Taglioni's movements ; will analyze the complexities of an attitude, and the requisites of the most graceful curve ; will tell you how many score of muscles, and in what nice antagonisms, compose a gesture of equilibrium. And doubtless, if he could make a saltatory automaton, with all the separate springs of which he speaks, he might set it on the stage with like effect. But in the performer herself, it is a simple power that does it all ; the living will, inspired with rhythmic and poetic feeling, and leaping, without once touching the steps of the scientific dynamics, straight from conception of beautiful form to the execution. As surely as this lecturer gives us but a *quasi*-dancer, so surely do physical systems the most perfect give us, instead of the divine reality, only nature's hypothetical equivalent."

This answer appears at once to reconcile the just rights of science, and of faith ; withdrawing every jealous lingering fear that would obstruct the one, and leaving the other in its fresh simplicity ; referring to God as the living Cause in the universe, yet looking to science as the indirect calculus of its phenomena. In cutting down the pretensions of physical theory to the rank of hypothesis, we do no more than take it at its word. For what do its first laws of motion affirm, but an hypothetical proposition, namely, that *if* a body be unoccupied by a will, it cannot, when set in motion, change the direction or velocity of its course, without the application of another foreign force? What, as Oersted himself observes, is the so-called "*Inertia*" of matter but "the absence of will from body destitute of soul?"

The primary maxims therefore and definitions on which the august structure of the celestial mechanics is raised, do not pretend to be more than conditionally true: should will be absent, then they hold; should will be present, the case does not arise for their application. When the doctrine of central forces is said to account for the motion of a planet, all that is meant is accordingly this: "*If* no will be there, such is the way in which the phenomena come about,"-- which we readily grant, but which is not to debar us from thinking that a will *is* there, or to slip from representative modesty to positive usurpation.

Oersted's mode of presenting nature and her operations to the mind is however far more objectionable on religious than on scientific grounds. We are far from saying that to himself and others formed in the same intellectual mould, the conception of God, as the unity of all natural forces, with just as many thoughts as there are laws, as the common element in which gravitation and electricity and the ether-base of light and heat and chemical action, all coexist, may not be adequate to the demands of the conscience and affections. Possibly men, all whose admirations have been drawn into the one direction of natural research, may rise to a sufficing worship in contemplating a Being whose eternal life consists in the steps of a demonstration, who genetically *proves* the universe into realization, and descends into phenomena by Newton's synthetic method. But sure we are that a conception like this, — avowedly excluding purpose, affection, moral preference, — from the divine nature, and re-



solving it all into an *à priori* development of reason, cannot give inspiration and repose to balanced minds and sorrowing hearts. The essential defects of this religion will most easily appear, — or at least their root will be most effectually touched, — if we conclude with a few words, exhibiting its fundamental difference from contrasted modes of thought.

The ultimate problem of all philosophy and all religion is this: "How are we to conceive aright the origin and first principle of things?" The answers, it has been contended by a living author of distinguished merit, are necessarily reducible to two, between which all systems are divided, and on the decision of whose controversy, all antagonist speculations would lay down their arms. "In the beginning was FORCE," says one class of thinkers; "force, singular or plural, splitting into opposites, standing off into polarities, ramifying into attractions and repulsions, heat and magnetism, and climbing through the stages of physical, vital, animal, to the mental life itself." "On the contrary," says the other class, "in the beginning was THOUGHT; and only in the necessary evolution of its eternal ideas into expression does force arise; self-realizing thought declaring itself in the types of being and the laws of phenomena." We need hardly say, that the former of these two notions coalesces with the creed of atheism, and is most frequently met with upon the path of the physical sciences, while the latter is favored by the mathematical and metaphysical, and gives the essence of pantheism. Each of them has insurmountable difficulties, with which it is successfully taunted by the

other. Start from blind force; and how, by any spinning from that solitary centre, are we ever to arrive at the seeing intellect? Can the lower create the higher, and the unconscious enable us to think? Start from pure thinking, and how then can you get any force for the production of objective effects? How metamorphose a passage of dialectic into the power of gravitation, and a silent corollary into a flash of lightning? In taking the Intellect as the type of God, this difficulty must always be felt. We are well aware that it is not in *this* endowment that our dynamic energy resides. The *activity* which we ascribe to our intellect is not a power going out into external efficiency, but a mere passage across the internal field of successive thoughts as spontaneous phenomena. Nor have we, as thinking beings only, any *option* with respect to the thoughts thus streaming over the theatre of rational consciousness; our constitution legislates for us in this particular, and the order of suggestion is determined by laws, having their seat in us. Finally, we are not, by mere thinking capacity, constituted *persons*, any more than a sleeper, who should never wake, yet always be engaged with rational and scientific dreams, would be a person. Without some further endowment, we should only be a *logical life* and development. All these characters are imported into the conception of God, when he is represented as conforming to the type of reason. The activity of intellect being wholly internal, the phenomena of the universe could not be referred to him as a thinking Being, were they not gathered up into the interior of his nature, and con-

ceived, not as objective effects of his power, but as purely subjective successions within the theatre of his infinitude. Intellect again having no option, the God of this theory is without freedom, and is represented as the eternal necessity of reason. And lastly, in fidelity to the same analogy, he is not a divine *Person*, but rather a *Thinking Thing* or the thinking function of the universe; we may say, *universal science in a state of self-consciousness*. The necessity under which pantheism lies, of fetching all that is to be referred to God into the *interior* of his being, and dealing with it as not less a necessary manifestation of his mental essence than are our ideas of the mind that has them, explains the unwillingness of this system to allow any motives to God, any field of objective operation, any special relation to individuals, any revealing interposition, any *supernatural* agency.

It is however true, that human belief can only choose between these two extremes, and must oscillate eternally between the atheistic homage to force, and the Pantheistic to thought? Far from it; and it is curiously indicative of the state of the philosophic atmosphere in Germany, that one of her most discerning and wide-seeing authors<sup>1</sup> should find no third possibility within the sphere of vision. In any latitude except one in which moral science has altogether melted away in the universal solvent of metaphysics, it would occur as one of the most obvious sugges-

<sup>1</sup> See the Essay, before alluded to, by Professor Trendelenburg; *Ueber den letzten Unterschied der philosophischen Systeme*; in the Transactions of the Berlin Academie der Wissenschaften, 1847.

tions, that the intellect is not the only element of human nature which may be taken as type of the divine, and as furnishing a possible solution to the problem of origination. Quitting the two poles of extreme philosophy, confessedly incompetent in their separation, we submit that WILL presents the middle point which takes up into itself thought on the one hand and force on the other; and which yet, so far from appearing to us as a *compound* arising out of them as an effect, is more easily conceived than either as the originating prefix of all phenomena. It has none of the disqualifications which we have remarked as flowing from the others into their respective systems of doctrine. It carries with it, in its very idea, the co-presence of thought, as the necessary element within whose sphere it has to manifest itself; its phenomena cannot exist *alone*; it acts on preconceptions, which stand related to it however not as its source, but as its conditions, and are its co-ordinates in the effect rather than its generating antecedents. If, therefore, all things are issued by will, there is mind at the fountain-head, and the absurdity is avoided of deriving intelligence from unintelligence. While it thus escapes the difficulty of passing from mere force to thought, it is equally clear of the opposite difficulty of making mere thought supply any force. The activity of will is not, like that of intellect, a subjective transit of regimented ideas, but an *objective* power *going out* for the production of effects; nay, it is a *free* power; exercising *preference* among data furnished by internal or external conditions present in its field; and it thus constitutes proper *causality*,

which always implies control over an alternative. We need hardly add, that all the requisites are thus complete for the true idea of a *person*: and an infinite Being, contemplated under this type, is neither a fateful nor a logical principle of necessity, but a living God; out of whose purposed legislation has sprung whatever necessity there is, except the self-existent beauty of his holiness. Thus, between the force of the physical atheist, and the thought of the metaphysical pantheist, we fix upon the fulcrum of will, as the true balance-point of a moral theism.

The rapid and insidious encroachment of false and mischievous modes of thought upon this great subject—a tendency not unlikely to be encouraged by the appearance of this volume of essays—has tempted us to fix exclusive attention on one treatise and one aspect of the book. The elements in it which we passed without notice are rich in interest; at least, those which are found in the German volume; the “supplementary contributions” which are annexed in the translation are of inferior value. It is incumbent upon us, perhaps, to add, before we close, a few words on the merits of the English translation by the Misses Horner. With great reluctance we confess that no very favorable estimate can be given of it; and we fear that no English reader could gain from it any but a confused and confusing notion of the author’s course of thought. We have indeed not read the English work continuously; but the few pages here and there by which we have tested the version present so many errors as to leave no real doubt about the character of the whole. The title of the chief

essay — “Das ganze Dasein Ein Vernunftreich” — is rendered, as if “Ein” were the indefinite article instead of the numeral, “All Existence a Dominion of Reason.” The words — “um Deinem beredten Angriff gleichsam *die Spitze zu bieten*” — are rendered (p. 19) “in order to *prolong* (instead of ‘to make head against’) your eloquent attack.” The very next sentence to this expresses in the original a thought of which no trace appears in the translation: namely, that natural philosophy, liable as it is to be reproached with concerning itself only with inanimate matter, is a capital corrector of human mistakes, and “that it would go but ill with our apprehensions of things, if our living mind never went to school to what we call dead nature” (dass es schlecht mit unserer Einsicht stehen würde, wenn unser lebender Geist von der Natur, die wir die todte nennen, nicht lernte); instead of this, we have the following: “It is my real opinion, that our understanding is wrongly constituted, if our living spirit does not learn something from nature, by us called lifeless.” The words, “Ist nun der Gegensatz zwischen Gott und der Welt Nichts? Ja, *er* (that is, the Gegensatz) ist eben so gewiss wie die Endlichkeit,” are rendered in a way which misrepresents the whole thesis of the following argument, — namely, “Is there no opposition between God and the world? Yes; *the infinite is a reality* equally with the finite.” The next sentence, beginning with the inverted hypothetical order, — “Könnten wir uns einen Menschen denken,” — is rendered assertorically, “We could imagine a man.” Such mistakes as these are found on almost every

page. But the influence of conspicuous mistranslations admitting of detached exhibition is less serious than the pervading inaccuracy running through the rendering of the relational words, and the logical conception of the whole construction. In consequence of this, the author's dialectic remains untraced, and comes before the English reader in a state of hazy bewilderment, which no doubt will be set down frequently enough to the score of "German mysticism." We are truly sorry to give this report. But the ever-increasing evil and injustice of good books turned into bad by want of due accomplishment in the translators demands a scrupulous faithfulness in the discharge of the critic's duty.

## PHAETHON.<sup>1</sup>

WE have few greater teachers than Mr. Kingsley yet none more certain to go astray the moment he becomes didactic. The truths which move him most he reads off at a glance; and the attempt to exhibit them to others as the result of intellectual elaboration naturally fails. His genius is altogether that of the artist, for the apprehension of concrete reality, not that of the philosopher, for finding in thought the grounds and connections of what he perceives. With rare qualifications for seeing, feeling, and believing right, were he to abstain from reasoning, he would not often be wrong. No living writer brings a quicker eye to catch the looks of nature, a humaner heart to interpret the tragedy of life, a devouter faith to hope for the good while contending with the ill. His descriptive passages have the very smell of a new-ploughed field; his insight into the secret sorrows of a sceptic and selfish age is evidently caught through the manly tears of pity, and not by the dry stare of inquisitorial suspicion; and his aspirations after a nobler and juster society — however ill-defended from objection — are clearly the product of

<sup>1</sup> Phaethon; or, Loose Thoughts for Loose Thinkers. By Rev. Charles Kingsley, Canon of Middleham and Rector of Eversley. Macmillan. 1852. "Prospective Review," 1853. 192



a healthful reverence for human nature and trust in the Living God. The very faults which attach to his productions as works of art arise from the intensity of his moral convictions and the obtrusiveness of generous sympathy, rushing in to disturb the dramatic impartiality of his representations. His ideal world — the type of character he loves, the spirit of life he sighs to create, the religious faiths to which he clings — we seldom find to be without deep truth and beauty; the admirations and aversions he awakens are essentially wholesome and ennobling; and if he errs, it is in fitting them on amiss to actual classes and persons little known to him by direct experience. True alike in direct observation and in pure conception, he is apt to mistake in the mixed region of half-seen realities, where vision gives but the outline and the coloring is filled in by thought. Towards the object painted he teaches you to direct the right feeling, be it of love or hate; but when he borrows his names from actual men and things, he sometimes labels the object wrong, and so misdirects the favor or disfavor of his readers towards the personages of the present or the past. Whatever his impulsive nature seizes on as odious on *any* account, is liable, if discerned in the obscurity of distance, to appear to him odious on *all* accounts; and he accumulates accusations upon it which have no congruity with one another, and constructs defences against it which miss the path of its approach.

This combination of just and clear feeling with unjust and confused polemic is curiously exemplified in Mr. Kingsley's *Phaethon*. In this little book,

which borrows its form from the Dialogue of the Academy, the author applies his reverence for Socrates and imitation of Plato to express his abhorrence of Emerson. More charming painting and more miserable reasoning, better dialogue and worse dialectic, so strong a flavor of good English sentiment, and so faint a trace of any Hellenic thought, it would be difficult to find within the compass of a hundred pages professing to take their inspiration from the schools of Athens. Plato is a dangerous master to men in whom a fervid genius has not been tempered by the severest discipline. His infinite fascination depends, like the charm of all great works of Grecian art, on the blending and balance in one grand whole of the chief elements of strength and beauty; and it is vain for any mind of partial faculty, however genuine, to attempt the same effects. With some approach to him in power of portraiture, in graceful dialogue, in religious depth, in pregnant irony, Mr. Kingsley has nothing in common with his speculative subtlety and his systematizing symmetry and grasp. The consequence in the present volume is an unhappy caricature of the most questionable features of the Platonic method; introduced by a delightful English prelude where no Socrates is wanted, and followed by a deep-hearted English conversation when he is gone. Whatever persuasive power the volume may have resides, we venture to say, wholly in these passages of mere delineation, and is only impaired by the intermediate tissue of ambiguities and sophisms.

The theme of the book is professedly the tendency

of Emerson's philosophy ; and especially the doctrine that, as long as men sincerely speak and live by the faith they have, its relation to absolute truth is a matter, if not of indifference, at least of no practical concern. The scene is laid in the park of a Herefordshire gentleman, Templeton by name ; at whose dinner-table the topic has already been discussed, the day before the opening of the piece, on occasion of a visit to the hall of one Professor Windrush, an American prophet of the "spiritual school." The party gathered around the table had been such as to draw out all the points of the controversy. The hostess, Lady Jane Templeton, a refined and saintly evangelical, having retired with the ladies to the drawing-room, there were left a blundering high-church curate, who was no match for the transcendentalist ; Templeton himself, offended by the professor's rudeness and irreverence, but intellectually in sympathy with his doctrines ; and a clerical friend and former college companion of Templeton's, who evidently represents Mr. Kingsley's own sentiments, Socratically defending the Catholic creeds, and who appears in the first person through the volume as narrator of the whole. Of this party, only the last two — the host and the philosophical clergyman — are personally brought upon the scene. The colloquy is between them alone. On the morning after the Windrush visit, we find them on the bank of the park stream, with fishing-rod in hand, but with the oppression of yesterday's controversy so heavy on their minds that the chances of sport pass unheeded by ; and on the old keeper's venturing, as he strolled

by, to twit them with their awkwardness, they find out that their thoughts are running on the same matter; and the clergyman confesses that he has been sitting up all night, writing a Platonic dialogue in exposure of the professor's heresies. The manuscript is in his pocket; and as, in their present humor, they prefer philosophy to fish, it is produced and read as they sit upon the grass. To the hour and the spot of this piece of out-door dialectic we are brought by the following delicate sketch from nature:—

“Templeton and I were lounging by the clear limestone stream which crossed his park, and wound away round wooded hills towards the distant Severn. A lovelier fishing morning sportsman never saw. A soft gray under-roof of cloud slid on before a soft west wind, and here and there a stray gleam of sunlight shot into the vale across the purple mountaintops, and awoke into busy life the denizens of the water, already quickened by the mysterious electric influences of the last night's thunder-shower. The long-winged cinnamon-flies spun and fluttered over the pools; the sand-bees hummed merrily round their burrows in the marly bank; and delicate iridescent ephemeræ rose by hundreds from the depths, and, dropping their shells, floated away, each a tiny Venus Anadyomene, down the glassy ripples of the reaches. Every moment a heavy splash beneath some overhanging tuft of mill-foil or water-hemlock, proclaimed the death-doom of a hapless beetle, who had dropped into the stream beneath; yet still we fished, and fished, and caught nothing, and seemed

utterly careless about catching anything ; till the old keeper who followed us, sighing and shrugging his shoulders, broke forth into open remonstrance."— (P. 1.)

The figure of Professor Windrush is skilfully brought out, touch after touch, by the preliminary conversation of the two companions. Many of the separate strokes are capital, and place before us to the life one phase or other of the modern American free-thinker. The curiosity of the republican traveller, avowed on presenting his letters of introduction, to witness "the inner hearth-life of the English landed aristocracy;" the petting he has enjoyed at Manchester from the local *illuminati* and *-tæ* to whom every sceptic is a hero; his worship of the "glorious nineteenth century," and contempt for more elderly beliefs; the credulous expenditure of his unemployed faculty of wonder and zeal on mesmerisms, electrobiologies, loves of the plants, and vegetarianisms; the thaumaturgic cant which talks of the spiritual world as if it were within the sphere of sense, and then balances the account by "spiriting" the material away into a fanciful mythology; his neutral admiration of all well-marked specimens of any sort of man; his faith, not so much in the unity of "the Deity," as in the non-Trinity of *it*; present us with a series of features, not one of which can fail of recognition by observers familiar with the mental pathology of the newest time and the youngest nation. But by uniting them all in one person, and giving them as the characteristics of one "school,"

Mr. Kingsley has produced a confused and inconceivable picture; and by attaching to this picture at one time the name of Emerson, at another that of Parker, and then an allusion to Francis Newman, he commits a practical injustice. To make each of these writers responsible for the theories of the others, and all of them for the superstitions of magnetists, ascetics, and magicians, is at once a fallacy and an injury. Our author adopts the prevalent fashion of including them all under the name of "spiritualists;" but if this word expresses, as we suppose, a belief in the soul's apprehension of divine truth by immediate communion with God rather than by external media, it not only includes Mr. Kingsley himself, but denotes the very doctrine which his Platonic dialogue is written to uphold. The practice of classing all persons together who agree in their negative attitude towards the historical Scriptures is not surprising among the mere populace of Christendom; to them there are no differences discernible beyond their own circle: Protagoras and Parmenides, Plato and Hippias, Zeno and Epicurus, — nay, Proclus and Mohammed, — are all simply "heathens" alike. But such indiscrimination is without excuse in a scholar and a divine; nor can we understand how any one whose creed is wide enough to take Socrates as a proper type of method in religious thought, and who knows how to oppose him to the sophists and atheists of his day, can refuse to feel the presence of a deep and noble religion in Theodore Parker and Francis Newman, or can condescend to suppress the contrast which separates them from Emerson. It would be

difficult to find two living writers more diametrically opposed to one another in their whole mode of thought and feeling, in the structure of their beliefs, in the tendency of their lives, than Emerson and Parker; and equally difficult to find two men more alike in the roots of their faith and character than Kingsley and Parker. The English rector and the Boston preacher are nothing less, we do believe, than twin brothers in the eye of reality; their intense moral convictions, their impatient social compassions and indignations, their eloquent dogmatism, their deep trust in a Holy God and his ever-living inspiration, their aversion to the sublime neutrality of our modern nature-worship, their reverence for the immortal capacities of the soul, — mark them out as not far apart in the invisible church; indeed, as joint prophets set to rebuke all despair of divine truth and indifferentism to human duty. Listening more to his ecclesiastical antipathies than to his natural sympathies, Mr. Kingsley has put into one category — because they are all outside the “Catholic creeds” — persons whose whole bases and development of belief are entirely different from one another. The consequence is, that he has set before himself and his readers no one clear form of heresy or unbelief for refutation. The proposition which he chiefly attacks is the characteristic of no namable school; is expressed in language vaguely figurative; and exposed in arguments which play with the metaphor employed, and evade the reality concealed. That proposition, attributed to Windrush, is thus intro-

duced by the clergyman, in his conversation with Templeton: —

“‘Do you think, moreover, that the theory which he so boldly started, when his nerves and his manners were relieved from the unwonted pressure by Lady Jane and the ladies going upstairs, was part of the same old foundation?’

“‘Which, then?’

“‘*That, if a man does but believe a thing, he has a right to speak it and act on it, right or wrong?* Have you forgotten his vindication of your friend, the radical voter, and his “spirit of truth”?’

“‘What, the worthy who, when I canvassed him as the liberal candidate for —, and promised to support freedom of religious opinion, tested me by breaking out into such blasphemous ribaldry as made me run out of the house, and then went up and voted against me as a bigot?’

“‘I mean him, of course. The professor really seemed to admire the man, as a more brave and conscientious hero than himself. I am not squeamish, as you know, but I am afraid that I was quite rude to him when he went as far as that.’

“‘What, when you told him that you thought that, after all, the old theory of the divine right of kings was as plausible as the new theory of the divine right of blasphemy? My dear fellow, do not fret yourself on that point. He seemed to take it rather as a compliment to his own audacity, and whispered to me that “The Divine Right of Blasphemy” was an



expression of which Theodore Parker himself need not have been ashamed.'

" 'He was pleased to be complimentary. But, tell me, what was it in his oratory which has so vexed the soul of the country 'squire?'

" 'That very argument of his, among many things. I saw, or rather felt, that he was wrong; and yet, as I have said already, I could not answer him; and, had he not been my guest, should have got thoroughly cross with him as a *pis aller*.'

" 'I saw it. But, my friend, used we not to read Plato together, and enjoy him together, in old Cambridge days? Do you not think that Socrates might at all events have driven the professor into a corner?'

"He might; but I cannot. Is that, then, what you were writing about all last night?'

" 'It was.' " — (P. 14.)

According to this statement, the question which the Dialogue undertakes to solve is a purely ethical question, "Whether a man *ought to speak out unconditionally his own sincere convictions*; or whether such duty *is contingent on his convictions being absolutely true*."

Whoever maintains the latter is bound to produce a test whereby we may distinguish absolute truth from relative certitude; otherwise he leaves the duty of veracious profession subject to an impossible condition, and condemns it never to appear. With this fatal omission Mr. Kingsley's Socrates is chargeable.

To maintain the former, we need not assume that absolute truth is unattainable or unimportant, and

say that, provided we get a faithful picture of men's thought, it is of no consequence whether their thought be a correct image of reality. On the contrary, those who affirm that there is, at all events, a good in veracious profession, do so, not simply from the moral instinct of ingenuousness, but also with a view to the ulterior good of realized truth; regarding the comparison of conceptions as the appointed prelude to the command of facts. The opinion, which is thus directly expressive of a *hope* of truth, is made, by Mr. Kingsley's Protagoras, to imply a total *despair* of it, and an utter *indifference* to it.

The question is not helped forward to solution by showing that mischiefs are attendant on the belief, and therefore on the propagation, of error. Good, also, attends on the belief and therefore on the propagation of truth. "Sincere convictions" are, to their possessor, identical with truth: did he withhold them from fear of doing mischief, he would either treat them as false, — which contradicts their sincerity; or would assume truth to be hurtful, — which is the meanist atheism.

Nor, finally, do we gain any light for our problem by being told that there are times and places unsuitable for the divulging of certain thoughts, however sincerely entertained. There is no human duty that may not be similarly misplaced, and that has not to be assigned to its proper season by the exercise of moral tact and judgment. If you think a man a fool, you are not to go and tell him so; but if your best friend proposes to take him into partnership and asks your opinion of him, you are bound to speak your

mind. It is not that there are any supposed truths intrinsically unfit to be uttered; but that there are none that may not be abusively dislocated by passion and imprudence.

Yet these irrelevant positions are the only ones which Mr. Kingsley's dialectic even attempts to make good against the doctrine of ingenuous unreserve. Thus his *Thesis* (1.) extinguishes the obligation of intellectual veracity by submitting it to an impossible condition; (2.) attributes to his opponents a scepticism (as to the accessibility of truth) with which their opinion could not coexist. And his *Argument* shows only, what nobody denies, namely, (1.) the invariable hurtfulness of believed error; and (2.) the occasional unseasonableness of spoken truth.

The scene opens with the arrival at the Pnyx of the young Alcibiades and Phaethon, and the discovery of Socrates, standing with his face towards the rising sun, rapt in prayer for light to see the truth, in whatever matters might be discussed there that day. Alcibiades and his companion had been discussing, on their way, a yesterday's lecture of Protagoras, the doctrine of which they thus describe to Socrates:—

“Truth was what each man troweth, or believeth to be true. ‘So that,’ he said ‘one thing is true to me, if I believe it true, and another opposite thing to you, if you believe that opposite. For,’ continued he, ‘there is an objective and a subjective truth; the former, doubtless, one and absolute, and contained in the nature of each thing; but the other manifold

and relative, varying with the faculties of each perceiver thereof. But as each man's faculties,' he said, 'were different from his neighbor's, and all more or less imperfect, it was impossible that the absolute objective truth of anything could be seen by any mortal, but only some partial approximation, and, as it were, sketch of it, according as the object was represented with more or less refraction on the mirror of his subjectivity. And therefore, as the true inquirer deals only with the possible, and lets the impossible go, it was the business of the wise man, shunning the search after absolute truth as an impious attempt of the Titans to scale Olympus, to busy himself humbly and practically with subjective truth, and with those methods — rhetoric, for instance — by which he can make the subjective opinions of others either similar to his own, or, leaving them as they are, — for it may be very often unnecessary to change them, — useful to his own ends.' — (P. 19.)

It is perhaps too much to expect that our author, any more than the historical novelists, should bind his fiction by any close fidelity to fact. Having set himself to find, within the Athens of the Socratic age, a true sample of the New England Emersonian, he may have been obliged to put up with Protagoras, as the best-matching sophist that could be had. But we fear that the Protagoras of the Theætetus would hardly know himself again in the disguise of the Phaethon. The principle of his scepticism — indeed of the whole Hellenic logic — is mis-stated here, and confounded with a modern doctrine essentially differ-

ent. "The *subjective* is all that we can attain; and it affords no certain clue to lead us to the *objective*," is the maxim of modern Idealism, and of the Critical Philosophy on its speculative side. "The *phenomenal* is all that comes before us; and thence no bridge can be found to conduct us to the *real*," — was the position of the sophistic school of Athens. The antithesis expressed by the words "subject" and "object," with all the problems involved in it, was latent in the Greek schools, and there prevailed instead another antithesis, partly indeed concurring with the former, but crossing it at various points, — expressed by the words *γινόμενα* and *ὄντα*. The charge against human knowledge was not, that one man's faculties reported differently from another's, so as to exhibit subjective discrepancies; nor that, however accordant with itself, it was still all a subjective affair, without any objective guaranty; but that the universe being but the perpetual genesis and flow of phenomena, there *were* no fixed realities to be known. This principle was borrowed from Heraclitus; but he had resolved only the external world into the procession of eternal change, and had left to the mind at least the power or knowing *phenomena*. Protagoras advanced a step further; extending the rule to man as well as the rest of nature, he contended that the percipient not less than the perceived, the active as well as the passive condition of perception, was liable to the law of Heraclitus, and that what we call external phenomena are but the product of a relation between two transiencies, without any constant term. Apart from sight there is no color,

apart from hearing, no sound ; and where there is no perception, there is no phenomenon, and therefore nothing. This is the meaning of his celebrated maxim, that "Man is the measure of all things," phenomena requiring his senses as their condition ; and existence being at zero where phenomena are not. When, therefore, our author makes Protagoras say that "there is an objective truth," which is "doubtless one and absolute, contained in the nature of each thing," the statement is at variance with the fundamental doctrine of his system. The search after this "absolute truth," so far from appearing to him an "impious attempt" to reach a reality too divine for us, was the mere futile grasp of a dreamer at a non-existence. And hence, the limitation of ourselves to phenomena was no humble surrender of impossible, though desirable attainments, — no acquiescence in necessary ignorance ; but a positive converse with the only things there were. It was therefore, in his view, not an ignorance, but a knowledge ; and error, not truth, was the condition unattributable to thought. His maxim was that "*All* thought is knowledge," and the contrary proposition, that "*No* thought is knowledge," belongs not to him, but to Gorgias. We quite admit the *moral* equivalence of the two positions ; but their logical derivation is different, and the affinity of both with the Emersonian tendency too slight to justify the representative function which Mr. Kingsley has assigned to them.

Waiving, however, all historical niceties, and taking the doctrine as it is set up for attack, we are afraid that our author's dialectic weapons fly all round

it without so much as grazing it at all. The first stage of the argument brings us to the conclusion that it is possible, and hurtful, to believe what is false; a proposition which Mr. Kingsley's Protagoras has not the least interest in denying, and does, indeed, *ipso facto* admit, when at the outset he allows an objective reality, and complains that men, who cannot *know* it, will yet *think* about it. Nor would the genuine Protagoras question for a moment the *hurtfulness* of such a *δόξα* as the following sentences amusingly describe: —

"*Socrates*. 'Therefore, if a thing subjectively true be also objectively false, it does not exist and is nothing.'

" 'It is so,' said I.

" *Socrates*. 'Let us, then, let nothing go its own way, while we go on ours with this which is only objectively true, lest coming to a river, over which it is objectively true to us that there is a bridge, and trying to walk over that work of our own minds, but no one's hands, the bridge prove to be objectively false, and we, walking over the bank into the water, be set free from that which is subjective on the further bank of the Styx.'

"Then I, laughing, 'This hardly coincides, Alcibiades, with Protagoras's opinion, that subjective truth was alone useful.'

" 'But rather proves,' said Socrates, 'that undiluted draughts of it are of a hurtful and poisonous nature, and require to be tempered with somewhat of objective truth, before it is safe to use them at least in the case of bridges.' " — (P. 25.)

In the *Theætetus* (166, C. – 167, C.) Protagoras is made to explain his mode of dealing with just such cases as these. He allows fully that the opinions of men may widely differ from one another in utility or hurtfulness, in healthy or morbid character, in wisdom or folly; that none is so skilled as the physician in relation to animal life, or as the farmer in relation to vegetable growth. Mr. Kingsley's ideal bridge he would simply call a *πονηρὰ ἀίσθησις*; and instead of being bound to uphold it, as if nothing subjective could come amiss, would condemn it precisely and solely on the ground of its mischievousness. Having flung away the test of anterior objective reality, he was forced all the more to that of consequent injury or good. True, no thought could, in his phraseology, be other than *knowledge*. But within this comprehensive category, he made room for the better and the worse, the salutary and the pernicious; his effigy would have been the fittest vignette for the publications of the *Useful Knowledge Society*; and should the loquacious shades of Protagoras and Lord Brougham ever meet, a little rhetoric may be naturally exchanged in claiming the preconception of that renowned association.

The next stage of the discussion is occupied in extending to things moral and religious the allegation now admitted, in reference to things physical, namely, that error is mischievous, and carries in it painful consequences, not from the anger of any offended being, but from the jarring relations in which it places us with the real nature of things. Just as a mistake in arithmetic spoils our accounts and is felt



within our purse ; in music, creates dissonance instead of harmony ; in the reading of human character, places us at the mercy of a knave ; so must every false interpretation of the cause of causes, the legislator of law, bring men into discordance with the primary thought and purpose of the universe, involving the loss of needful help, or the dangers of vain reliance. Towards an Infinite Being, moreover, all errors must be errors of defect ; and he who falls into them, lives as if under a rule *less* just and holy than that which really embraces him ; a mistake operating in the worst direction, and, as measured by the greatness of its object, little less than infinite in its amount and in its misery.

“ ‘ As if, for instance, a man believing that Zeus loves him less than He really does, should become superstitious and self-tormenting. Or, believing that Zeus will guide him less than He really will, he should go his own way through life without looking for that guidance ; or if, believing that Zeus cares about his conquering his passions less than He really does, he should become careless and despairing in the struggle ; or if, believing that Zeus is less interested in the welfare of mankind than He really is, he should himself neglect to assist them, and so lose the glory of being called a benefactor of his country ; would not all these mistakes be hurtful ones ? ’

“ ‘ Certainly,’ said I ; but Alcibiades was silent.

“ *S.* ‘ And would not these mistakes, by the hypothesis, themselves punish him who made them,

without any resentment whatsoever, or Nemesis of the gods, being required for his chastisement?’

“ ‘It seems so,’ said I.

“ *S.* ‘But can we say of such mistakes, and of the harm which may accrue from them, anything but that they must both be infinite; seeing that they are mistakes concerning an infinite Being, and his infinite properties, on every one of which, and on all together, our daily existence depends?’

“ *P.* ‘It seems so.’

“ *S.* ‘So that, until such a man’s error concerning Zeus, the source of all things, is cleared up, either in this life or in some future one, we cannot but fear for him infinite confusion, misery, and harm, in all matters which he may take in hand.’ ”  
—(P. 32.)

No deeper truth can there be than this; and no nobler statement of it. It has a tone in it of Plato’s voice; touched by which, we find it hard to listen to the scruples of criticism, begging us to explain the logical relevancy of this reflection to the main argument. Yet what would our Socrates have us to do? Granted all error is mischievous; religious error, transcendently so; what then? Do you say, that we must not make ourselves parties to the mischief, by propagating error? We have no intention to do so; no man ever had. When we utter our convictions, it is in *resistance* to error; and the more you persuade us of its mischief, the more must we be impelled to speak. “Hitherto” (might a Phaethon and Alcibiades say) “we have always found, in the evils

of human ignorance and mistake, the strongest reason for endeavoring to correct them according to our light, and contributing whatever better word seemed given us to say ; and though it was not hidden from us that we too might possibly be wrong, yet whether it were so, there appeared no better way to tell, than by submitting our thought to the great dialectic of the world. For in consorting with you, O Socrates, we have experienced the following thing : We have come to you with a secret opinion on some matter, — perhaps about justice, or beauty, or the gods, — which seemed to us right, and which we had never fetched out of the silent part of us, so that we or anybody else could hear it. And when we were asking you about quite a different thing, — it might be geometry or music, — you have somehow caused us to confess in words this secret opinion, and have put to us many questions with regard to it, so that we could not help seeing whether it agreed or disagreed with other things which also appeared certain. At the end of our talk we have been ashamed to find how little true and noble was the opinion which we had supposed so good ; and we are afraid we should never have discovered this, had you not made us *speak* our thought and hear about it ; for so long as it lay still, it had a comely look ; and was like a person who when asleep indeed appears beautiful, but opening his eyes and getting up, is found to squint and hobble. How then is it, O Socrates, that your maieutic art consists in making us, even against our will, openly *speak out* our errors, and so become free

from them ; and yet now you advise us, of our own resolve, 'to hold our tongue about them' ? ”

In short, when the inquirer has spared no honest endeavors to see things as they are, there are but two inferences open to him from his contemplation of the mischiefs of mistake. He must either say everything, in hope that it may be truth : or say nothing, for fear it should be error. To do the last is to hold, in relation to his belief, the attitude of unbelief ; to presume the falsehood of all thought ; to behave towards his own truth as if it were nature's lie ; to act therefore on the postulate that the human faculties are instruments of delusion ; and what is this but the ultimate stage of the most pestilent scepticism ? To do the former is to protest against the despair of truth ; to assume it to be attainable, and to love it as the best ; to trust in the power of reality to get the better of semblance, and work its current on by the insensible abrasion of ignorance and obstinacy ; to live in the faith that the mind of man is capable of veracious correspondence with the facts of God ; and what is this but a healthy and devout persuasion, the common basis of philosophy and religion ? Between these extreme courses there is no intermediate ; unless Mr. Kingsley will show us how he can be simultaneously conscious and unconscious of mistake in what we hold ; retaining it in thought from presumption of its truth ; suppressing it in speech from consternation at its error.

Whether our author himself was, up to this point, quite convinced by his own reasoning, we cannot but feel some doubt ; for, in the next and third stage of

the argument, his dialectic assumes a termagant character; he loses all logical count, and scolds at the human impulse to utter ingenuously what is believed sincerely, as a propensity absolutely brutish. The discussion here becomes purely *ethical*, respecting the value of a certain inner spring of action, namely, "*the spirit of truth*," which is defined as the feeling which leads a man to "*say honestly what he believes*." In order to strip this "spirit" of all moral character, Mr. Kingsley begins by supposing it to say *dishonestly* what it does *not* believe; after which ingenious tack, there is nothing but plain sailing to the end of the argument. Whether Alcibiades or Socrates be the greater simpleton, in the following outset of the discussion, let the reader judge:—

"*Alcibiades*. 'I assert, that whoever says honestly what he believes, does so by the spirit of truth.'

"*Socrates*. 'Then, if Lyce, patting those soft cheeks of yours, were to say, "Alcibiades, thou art the fairest youth in Athens," she would speak by the spirit of truth?'

"*Alcibiades*. 'They say so.'

"*Socrates*. 'And they say rightly. But if Lyce, as is her custom, *wished by so doing to cheat you into believing that she loved you*, and thereby to wheedle you out of a new shawl, she would still speak by the spirit of truth?'

"*Alcibiades*. 'I suppose so.'"—(P. 35.)

Lyce's sly ways having passed muster as examples of "honest belief," the counsel who had appealed

with success to this audacious illustration, has it all his own way; and the "spirit of truth" is speedily and opprobriously put out of court; not, however, without further damage from confused and calumnious fallacies. To illustrate its temper, the case is put, of a person gratuitously proclaiming to the world a shameful act of which he knows, or perhaps only suspects, his own father to have been guilty; and as an example of its morals, in action rather than in speech, we are referred to the systematic and conscientious murders of the Thugs! We own to a feeling of shame and grief, when we find these wretched and worn-out pleas, with which incompetence and sciolism in philosophy are accustomed to assail the first principles of morals, adopted in a moment of blindness, by a great religious teacher, and used by him expressly to fling contempt upon the personal reverence for truth and right. Mr. Kingsley must know perfectly well how to answer himself, and resolve the perplexities of his own examples. A son who publishes his father's shame acts against natural affection and filial reverence; and no one would justify this, unless the spring of action which he obeys is higher than that which he puts aside. The "spirit of truth," which he is said to follow, may be a very good spirit, and yet may fall in sometimes with a better than itself. It is indeed a mistake to deal with it as a *simple* spring of action at all; for, by its very definition, it compounds and entangles itself with the social affections, postulates them in every act, and takes the complexion of their worth. *Truth* (as here taken) is an affair of *speech*: speech

implies the presence of hearers, and has its motive in our relation to them, and our sense of their interest in what we have to say. If the matter which lies ready for utterance belong to the realm of *doctrinal or speculative* belief, it is of cosmopolitan concern; and all men on or near our own intellectual level have a right to expect from our common human feeling a veracious interchange of thought. If it be *political*, the duty springs from national sentiment, and the claim upon us is narrowed to members of the same State. If it be *domestic*, the obligation contracts itself to the circle round the hearth; if *private*, it vanishes from without, and falls back into our own solitary mind. A father's guilt — supposing it to be personal sin, not public crime — is not a thing that the world at large has any need or any right to know; the son who proclaims it cannot be supposed to act from any solicitation of social affection; and, even if he could, still the ascendancy in him, without any constraining obligation from mutual understanding, of the dilute cosmopolitan feeling over the concentrate filial reverence, would be a shocking depravity. It is not his speaking *the truth*, but his speaking *at all*, that we condemn in such a case; and whenever we applaud the "spirit of truth," we refer invariably, not to any fondness for delivering ourselves on all occasions, and to everybody, of the whole volume of our beliefs, but to the disposition never, *at the crises proper for the introduction of a given topic*, to leave a false impression, either by what we say, or by what we withhold. The choice of proper crises must be determined by various conditions —

many of them foreign to the present question, and contingent on the grouping of social relations in the midst of which we stand. As to the case of Thuggism, and other odious fanaticisms, if Mr. Kingsley does not know how to distinguish between speech against the common opinions of men, and overt crimes against their natural rights and common conscience, — if he thinks, as he says, that both alike require “to be restrained,” — he certainly vindicates the claim of his dialogue to its title of “Loose Thoughts for Loose Thinkers;” and, in one sense, converts us to his own doctrine, that it were well for a man to “restrain” in himself a “spirit of truth” which rushes into ethical questions without accurate insight into their nature, or reasonable preparation for their solution. On such subjects it is a very grave responsibility for a public teacher consciously to throw out “*Loose Thoughts*,” and still more to fling them superciliously down as good enough for “Loose Thinkers,” — the very persons to whom such homœopathic treatment is sure to be most poisonous. A less careless temerity of argument would better have bespoken a reverence for truth, as holy; and a less flippant title-page have better suited a temper considerate to error, as human.

What, then, is the amount of our author’s assertion, that the “spirit of truth” is not a *moral* feeling, because it is *indifferent to right and wrong*, as when a son proclaims a father’s shame? Simply this; that the truth of a thing is not of itself sufficient to recommend its utterance at any chance moment when it comes into the mind; but that the right or wrong



of speaking it depends on the concurrent presence or absence of other conditions. If this be sufficient to withdraw a feeling from the category "Moral," we have no one moral feeling at all; for there is not a spring of action which has autocratic rights of self-assertion, without taking counsel of whatever other impulses, and whatever outward circumstances simultaneously appear upon the field. Again: what means the statement, that "the spirit of truth" is not *intellectual*, because, being content with the avowal of sincere, though questionable opinion, it is *indifferent to truth and falsehood*? Simply this; that veracity is no sufficient guaranty of knowledge, but may coexist with mistake. In this sense, it will be allowed on all hands that sincerity of profession is not an *intellectual* quality; but is it therefore to be described as "*indifferent to truth and falsehood*;" a phrase which implies that the sincere man does not care whether his belief be true or false, and that his sincerity bears not only an indecisive relation, but absolutely *no* relation to the apprehension of facts as they are? Veracity of profession, at all events, proceeds on the hypothesis that *reality is best*; and it is so far *intellectual*; and also on the further hypothesis, that to *perceive a reality* is to hold a trust, and *lie under an obligation*; and it is so far *moral*. In direct contradiction, therefore, of Mr. Kingsley's assertion, we submit that "the spirit of truth" is *both* intellectual and moral, and *that* without the mixture of any other element whatever. It is indeed inadequate to the determination of truth and duty; but it is concerned with nothing else.

Throughout the argument of our author, the want must be felt, by even his most convinced disciples, of some practical rule, separating the cases in which they ought to declare their belief, from those in which they ought to hide it. At last the rule comes out; they are to speak out *when they agree with the many*; to be silent, when they have other thoughts of their own. The atheist, we are told, is bound to conceal his unbelief: —

“For there would be far more chance that he alone was wrong, and the many right, than that the many were wrong, and he alone right. He would therefore commit an insolent and conceited action, and, moreover, a cruel and shameless one; for he would certainly make miserable, if he were believed, the hearts of many virtuous persons who had never harmed him, for no immediate or demonstrable purpose except that of pleasing his own self-will; and that much more, were he wrong in his assertion.” — (P. 41.)

If this process, of consulting the suffrages of mankind, is good against the *expression*, it is good also and antecedently against the *belief* of atheism. The man is to hold his tongue, in the persuasion that most probably he is in the wrong; in the persuasion, therefore, that the evidence goes against him, and that “the Gods exist” after all. So the reasoning stands thus: he ought not to *say*, “I am an atheist;” why? — because he ought not to *be* an atheist. The obligation to *suppress* the belief is deduced from the

obligation to *renounce* it; and the duty of silence about a conviction is made contingent, by our author himself, on the conviction being no longer there to avow. He cannot justify the silence, except by expelling the very matter for speech. Thus it turns out impossible, after all, for a high-minded man, like Mr. Kingsley, to set up a defence of insincerity without translating it back into sincerity first.

The injunction, however, to accept the votes of a majority as decisive of greater probability in questions of religion is futile and impracticable. The authority of numbers and acknowledged wisdom necessarily and properly determines our belief in matters whose inner relations we have never entered; and we receive without question the diagnosis of our physician, and abide by the judgment of our lawyer. But when once we have investigated *the grounds* on which a doctrine rests, and pronounced them to ourselves inadequate, the consciousness of this inadequacy cannot be affected by any reckoning of the votes against us. An outside observer indeed, looking only at our paucity compared with the common voice of all mankind besides, may fairly surmise that, when the lots are drawn from the urn of reality, the white ball of truth will not be found with us. But once admitted into the interior processes and texture of belief, we cannot transpose ourselves again into the blind external position to which alone this computation of chances is approximate; we feel as though we had looked into the urn, and read off the fated rule by which the award must fall. Nor is it just to charge with

insolence and conceit those who refuse to surrender the convictions of seeming insight to the voices of other men. It is not modesty ; it is not faith ; but, on the contrary, a lax and impious scepticism, to look reason in the face and say, " probably it is a lie ;" to feel ourselves behind the sacred screen of reality, yet treat it as the hiding-place of juggleries, that play us false. It is a more fatal thing to lose the reverence for *fact*—that last root of religion, which even atheism does not destroy—than to lower our intellectual deference for the opinions of mankind. Does Mr. Kingsley really think that, whether there were a God or not, his existence and providence should at all events be taught? Would our author himself, if unhappily he lost his belief in immortality, deem it, notwithstanding, best to keep up the notion, and, in giving the moral picture of the world and life, to substitute a fictitious theory of men for the real programme of God? Impossible ! and yet, if the lips of doubt and disbelief are to be sealed, if philosophy is always to expound and never to dispute the *consensus* of the greater multitude, this doctrine of imposture cannot be escaped.

Sufficient discredit having been thrown upon the Windrush spirit-of-truth, it disappears from the dialogue ; and in its place the author's real spirit of truth presents itself for interpretation. To release it from its subjective limits as a mere private propensity : to assign to it not only an objective but a divine and self-conscious nature ; in fine, to raise it to the character of the Logos as a common medium of reason between the minds of men and God, is

the purpose of this concluding portion of the discussion. We cannot profess to think either the reasoning or the conclusion satisfactory; the one appears to us illogical, and the other pantheistic. The arguments are these: (1.) The spirit of truth *tells* facts as they are; therefore *sees* them as they are; but this is a power possessed exclusively by God; therefore the light by which moral truth is discerned is not human, but divine. (2.) What we *long for*, is not yet possessed by us, is moreover beyond us, and not either an effect or a part of us: we long for truth; which is therefore beyond our personality, — is not ours to win or to possess; hence the spirit of truth is a foreign agency which *possesses us*, and vouchsafes to us a portion of holy light. (3.) As *seeing*, the spirit of truth is *intellectual*; as seeing facts of a moral nature, it is *moral*; therefore, also *personal*; and as seeing God, it is God, who alone can know himself. In calling the conclusion pantheistic, we do not use this much-abused word vaguely but strictly, to express the sacrifice of the human personality to the claims of the Divine Infinitude. The spirit of truth, being that whereby we see facts as they are, is coextensive in us with our rational nature; and if, in being personal, it be God himself, what personality is left for us? Our whole rational nature being flung away into the Infinite Mind, nothing remains but the brute element in us, where it were vain to look for any attribute that will keep us in the rank of *persons*, and prevent us from being only *things*. God thus becomes the only Intellect of the universe; and

though our personality is surrendered for no other purpose than to provide for his, and the doctrine of a personal God may thus appear to be pre-eminently secure; yet those who have studied the courses of human belief know that the very reverse is true; that without the relation between two persons, there cannot long survive the attributes of one; and that to drown the human soul is, for purposes of faith, to desolate if not to dissipate the divine. This very inference, moreover, by which our author reduces the persons in the universe to One, is drawn from an argument which supposes *two*; — there is a being who *longs* for the truth, and is therefore a *person*: there is an *object longed for*; which again is affirmed to be *also a person*: there are consequently in the premises two persons who, in the conclusion, disappear into one. We content ourselves with pointing out this interior contradiction in Mr. Kingsley's doctrine; without pressing any further analysis upon arguments which probably have neither convinced any reader, nor served as the real grounds of conviction to the author himself.

But there is one inference deduced from his theory, which must not be passed without remark. If all our intellectual apprehension is a direct presence of God in person, it must be and must give only pure and unmixed truth. Whence then the errors into which we fall? Since the divine light is without blemish, and is never denied to our longing prayer, its deficiency and failure must be ascribed to the want on our part of adequate love and aspiration. In other words, mistaken judgments and discordant

faiths are referable solely to moral causes, and are to be regarded as proofs of guilt.

"*Phaethon*. 'Yet what are we to say of those who, sincerely loving and longing after knowledge, yet arrive at false conclusions, which are proved to be false by contradicting each other?'

"*Socrates*. 'We are to say, Phaethon, that they have not loved knowledge enough to desire utterly to see facts as they are, but only to see them as they would wish them to be; and, loving themselves rather than Zeus, have wished to remodel in some things or other his universe, according to their own subjective opinions. By this, or by some other act of self-will, or self-conceit, or self-dependence, they have compelled Zeus, not, as I think, without pity and kindness to them, to withdraw from them in some degree, the sight of his own beauty. We must therefore, I fear, liken them to Acharis, the painter of Lemnos, who, intending to represent Phœbus, painted from a mirror a copy of his own defects and deformities; or perhaps to that Nymph, who finding herself beloved by Phœbus, instead of reverently and silently returning his affection, boasted of it to all her neighbors as a token of her own beauty, and despised the God; so that he, being angry, changed her into a chattering magpie; or again, to Arachne, who having been taught the art of weaving by Athene, pretended to compete with her own instructress, and being metamorphosed by her into a spider, was condemned, like the sophists, to spin out of her own entrails endless ugly webs, which are

destroyed as soon as finished, by every slave-girl's broom.' " — (P. 64.)

This is a characteristic instance of Mr. Kingsley's tendency to dash, out of the repulsions of a partial experience, into the most extravagant antagonism of judgment. It is conspicuous and undeniable that moral causes have not merely a collateral and accidental, but a direct and essential, influence in the formation of human beliefs; and especially that the religious faith of men is so immediate a product of their affections and conscience, that the logical thought stands to it chiefly in a negative relation, determining its limits and systematizing its form. That self-worship renders all religion impossible; that exclusive confidence in the will breaks it short off at morality; that the overbalance of conscience makes it superstitious, and that of love, fanatical, — are certainties of deepest import, with which the doctrine of the involuntary and irresponsible nature of belief requires to be qualified. For any liberalism which denies these things; which releases us from a holy vigilance as to the secret springs of our faith or doubt; which forbids us ever to see in bigotry or in disbelief a root of conceit and arrogance, however obvious the symptoms may be to every eye, — we feel nothing but contempt. But our *moral* criticism is not, in such instances, visited upon the opinions, as such; it addresses itself to the concomitant temper and natural language of character; and whenever these present the aspect of purity and reverence, it joyfully believes in this good sign, and retires within



the pale of equal intellectual discussion. In this view, error is treated as having origin, possibly indeed from moral sources; but possibly also from unmoral; and as never to be referred to the former, in the absence of justifying indications. Mr. Kingsley's doctrine, on the other hand, stops up every opening for charitable construction, and requires us to look on all intellectual differences as the product and the symptoms of a bad heart. On the strength of mere error and mutual contradiction, we are to presume the existence in men of evil passions, which make no sign; to disbelieve the fair look of candor and piety, and exchange our natural trust and admiration for dogmatic pity and suspicion. The moral scepticism implied in this tenet—the willingness to accept creed-evidence against character—is the most melancholy delusion which ecclesiastic unity has introduced into philosophy and life; and we are sorry that Mr. Kingsley, whether in recoil from American free-thinkers, or from entanglement with the "Catholic creeds," has allowed his generous nature to be betrayed into so ungenial a sophistry.

After all, we have somehow the feeling, on laying down this little book, that Mr. Kingsley does not really *mean* its narrowness and fallacies, and is truly himself in all its beauty, truth, and nobleness. The dialectic *is made up*; the deep sentiment is his own. Laughter at his eccentric logic passes into tears at the pathetic faithfulness with which he draws the agonies of doubt beneath the fair surface of English opulence and culture. That society throughout Europe is rapidly suffering a loss of moral strength

from the decay of clear and assured faith is but too certain ; and no one has a juster discernment of this fact than Mr. Kingsley. He appreciates it in its breadth ; he sees it in its detail ; he reads its hidden drama beneath the vicissitudes of states and the decadence of churches. If he will but cease to tamper with philosophy, and neither rail at it nor adopt it, — if he will only paint and preach, — if he will simply tell the visions which the living spectacle of the world flings upon his mind, and announce without proving the faiths deepest in his being ; he is fitted to be among the prophets of recovery, who may prepare for us a more wholesome future otherwise than by vain reproduction of the past.

## SIR W. HAMILTON'S PHILOSOPHY.<sup>1</sup>

THESE goodly volumes have in their very aspect an interest independent of the rare value of their contents. They are the record of a life, devoted with singular faithfulness to an unambitious, yet laborious and noble work; and no studious man can turn over the pages, crowded with the proofs of conscientious care, without profound respect for a teacher who so honors his task, not with a high estimate only, but with thorough and unsparing achievement. Should the reader, instead of turning over the pages with modern levity of hand, effectively master them by patient toil of mind, and should he be at all qualified to appreciate the cost of gaining, and the value of possessing, the erudite and disciplined intellect implied in these discussions, he will scarcely be untouched by a certain sadness in the homage which he pays to the author's genius and accomplishment. It is impossible to doubt that, in all the higher essen-

<sup>1</sup> Discussions on Philosophy and Literature, Education and University Reform; chiefly from the "Edinburgh Review." Corrected, vindicated, enlarged, in Notes and Appendices, by Sir William Hamilton, Bart. London. 1852.

The Works of Thomas Reid, D.D., now fully collected, with selections from his unpublished letters. Preface, Notes, and Supplementary Dissertations, by Sir William Hamilton, Bart. Edinburgh. 1846.

"Prospective Review," 1853.

tials, Sir W. Hamilton is fitted to be more faultless as a teacher, and greater as a philosopher, than at any earlier period of his career: yet when the ripeness is most complete, and the balance best adjusted between the material of knowledge and the force of thought, there comes some presage of a close; and we find him engaged in the most dignified and significant act of a professor's history,—the gathering together of his scattered stores, and the transference of them from the class-room to the world. Seldom, indeed, does human life appear less adequate to the enterprises it suggests than when it is measured against the comprehensive aspirations of a mind competent to philosophy. In no other intellectual pursuit—still less in any active occupation—is length of time so sure a gain of faculty. There is a term of middle age, beyond which, it is probable, the memory will be apt to play the historian false, and to require redoubled precautions against mistake; and we remember hearing Sismondi, when appealed to for some fact or date, make the memorable confession, "Alas! all history divides itself for me into two parts,—that which I have written and forgot, and that which I wish to write and have not learned." For the poet there is a season of inward fire which must not be permitted to damp itself down; its later gleams are fiftful, and do not suffice to conquer the colder coloring of mere thought. The student of physical science, having strung its facts together on the hypotheses in vogue when he was thirty, finds his mental cabinet disarranged, and his picture of nature confused, by the new theoretical conceptions

which, ere he is sixty, supply the catchwords of analogy and connection. But in logical and metaphysical studies (as in the functions of the statesman and the judge) a slower law of maturity appears to prevail; and the tendency, always to represent the sage as an old man, is not an unmeaning accident. Plato's Laws astonish us less as the production of an octogenarian than the *Œdipus in Colonus*. The habits of reflection, which are the great instruments of success in the *Prima Philosophia*, scarcely reach their meridian till sense and imagination begin to pale; the tact of fine discrimination first attains its rights when the fondness for analogies has abated its temptations; and the universe of ideas, like the vault of the nocturnal sky, reveals the more clearly its relations and its depth, as the shadows fall upon the concrete world, and deaden the colors of the noon of life. Moreover, the very purpose of intellectual philosophy — to detect and exhibit as an organic whole the grounds of certitude and the methods of thought common to all the sciences — is one which, it is evident, will be prosecuted with increasing promise of success, in proportion as a man's view over the whole field of knowledge becomes wider, and he bears within his living experience more various samples of its culture and products. A certain encyclopedic breadth of intelligence and sympathy is of more avail to the higher speculation than any affluence of special endowment or erudition; and this expansion, formed as it is by the confluence of many currents of thought from the narrow passes of our impetuous years, first assumes its full volume in the

later reaches of life, as it nears the sea. Nor, in any society old enough to have produced metaphysic systems, will the largest amount of other knowledge qualify the inquirer for his proper success. He cannot proceed as if no one had tried the work before him. He must see how predecessors have answered the problems which he hopes to solve; and, whether he follows or deserts their clue, the mere act of tracing it will afford an inestimable guidance to himself. Without a large acquaintance with the history of philosophy, the greatest inventive power will but elaborate some one-sided theory; and the utmost acuteness and depth may waste themselves in reproducing doctrines which have run their cycle, and been forgot. In an age inheriting so many literatures as ours, this survey is in itself the work of half a life; and not till it approaches completion do the great cardinal tendencies of human thought—Idealism and Realism, Pantheism and Dualism, Necessity and Free-will—so mark themselves out as to show the symmetry of their relations and the multitude of their varieties, and become intelligible at once in their root and in their blossom. In apparent consciousness of the immaturity of their earlier genius, the greatest philosophical writers have reserved their chief efforts for the period of approaching age. Eminent names may, indeed, be cited to prove that the metaphysic laurel does not wait for gray hairs on the head which it adorns. Berkeley was only twenty-six on the appearance of his "Principles of Human Knowledge;" nor was Hume older, we believe, when he published his "Treatise on Hu-

man Nature ;" or Brown, at the earliest date of his essay on the "Relation of Cause and Effect ;" and though the "Ethics" of Spinoza was a posthumous publication, the author's early death (at forty-five) compels us to refer it to the mid-term of ordinary life. Hegel, also, was not more than thirty-seven when his "Phänomenologie des Geistes" foreshadowed the system which, ten years later, appeared complete in the "Encyclopädie." But in each of these instances the author has followed out some single line of thought to the opening of which his immediate predecessors had brought him, and appears as the organ of a necessary, but one-sided development. Berkeley's idealism and Hume's scepticism were both reached by a single step of inference from the received doctrine, that the only objects of knowledge were not *ipsissimæ res*, but certain representative ideas ; and Brown's Essay was but a re-written chapter of the empirical psychology introduced by the authority of Locke. Spinoza's task was accomplished by evolution of the Cartesian notion of "Substance." And notwithstanding the universality which Hegel undoubtedly attained, and his constant boast that all previous systems are absorbed into his own, he started, no less than his forerunners, from the assumption that it is the business of philosophy to abolish the antithesis of thought as knowing, and existence as known ; and, finding the separate paths of subjective and objective solution preoccupied by other explorers, simply struck into the only third device, and resolved them both into one. Logical feats like these, accomplishing the residuary work of

previous thinkers, are perhaps the appropriate function of younger minds, — open, as they usually are, to the fascination of coherent system, and willing to look on the symmetry and grandeur of an ideal architecture as evidence enough that it is the very temple of truth. But the great writers to whom we turn, less for displays of inventiveness than for stores of wisdom, and who rather spread thought in many directions than elongate its consistency in one, have left their chief works as the legacy of age. Half of Plato's long life was over before the gardens of the Academy were opened; and his finest productions were undoubtedly his last. Aristotle's literary period is said to have begun from his fiftieth year. Bacon wrote his *Novum Organon*, Locke his *Essay*, Leibnitz his *Nouveaux Essais*, Kant his *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, in the sixth decade of life; nor was it till late in the seventh that the *Critical Philosophy* received its completion (in the *Kritik der Urtheilskraft*) at Königsburg, and the *Monadology* its best exposition at Hanover. Dugald Stewart produced little more than the first volume of his *Elements* till an age equally advanced; and Reid was past seventy before he began to embody the results of his experience and reflection in the *Essays on the Intellectual and Active Powers*. The vast superiority of these *Essays* to the "Inquiry," which he had brought out more than twenty years before, affords a curious testimony to the progress which may be made in philosophical aptitude after passing the confines of old age. His distinguished editor gives, in the volumes before us, abundant evidence of the same fact, — that his



latest meditations are his best ; and, were it not that no vain wish can be a good one, we could desire nothing better for British philosophy than that the career were now commencing of which these pages fore-announce the end.

Yet not precisely for "British Philosophy," but rather for philosophy in Britain ; for it is the distinction of Sir W. Hamilton that from his scheme of thought national limitations and peculiarities fall away ; and that, of all our metaphysical writers, he first has sufficient appreciation of every "school," and sufficient independence of all, to assume a cosmopolitan character, and produce dispositions that may travel without a passport, and be at home in every civilized land. Of whom else among our countrymen could we say, — what surely may be said of him, — that if there were to be a congress of all the philosophies, he would be chosen universal interpreter ? In this respect he occupies, in the series of British professors, nearly the same place that we must assign to Aristotle among the Greeks. Previous to the time of the great Stagyrite, all Hellenic speculation bore some special impress from the genius of a particular race, or the habits of a particular science. The Ionian tendency displayed itself in the search of some material ground or element of things, and produced a physical history of nature. The Doric precision and severity broke into the Pythagorean veneration for quantity and measure, as containing the principles of ideal harmony and moral proportion. The synthetic impulse of religion to deduce all finite appearance from infinite reality,

shaped itself into the Eleatic doctrine of absolute existence; on which the analytic temper of science revenged itself by resolving everything into relative phenomena. All these elements flowed together and sought reconciliation in Plato; but he also showed himself still a Greek—nay, an Athenian—in spirit; for he held them together by the band of *beauty*; made philosophy a work of highest art; in seeking the true, never lost from his hand the clue of the fair and good; and when he could not make fast a holy thing by dialectic, still kept it afloat before the soul upon the wings of myth. Aristotle escaped even the magic of this last restraint, unconditionally looked to universal reason for the ground of all, and betrayed no sign of time or place. Hence his world-wide influence; the products of his thought having been stored and distributed in every literature, and nourished the intellect of Arabia and Islam not less than that of Germany and the church. Plato was the blossom of the pure Hellenic mind in its fullest bloom,—which is only to be seen upon the native soil. Aristotle is the useful fruit, which may be gathered for the commerce of thought, and exported to every land. A similar disappearance of national in universal method may be remarked in Sir W. Hamilton. He is the first eminent writer of his class, in our language, over whose imagination Lord Bacon has exercised no tyranny; and who has therefore been able to appreciate the problems regarded in other countries as the very essence of “philosophy,” but treated as its delirium in this. All that is elsewhere included in the name had been dropped out

among us, except psychology alone; which is much the same, in reference to metaphysics, as if, in physical knowledge, we were to cancel everything but natural history. And even psychology itself, affected by the realism engendered in the pursuit of material laws, went to work on the assumption that mental facts must be explained by physical, and detected among the contributions of outward experience; and thus lost its proper character of a purely observing and classificatory study, embodying the reports of an accurate self-consciousness, and became a conjectural history, of the genesis of conceptions. From the time of Locke to that of James Mill this passion for empirical deduction has prevailed in England; nor did it receive a check till it struck upon results startling to the moral and natural faiths which have so sturdy a hold of the national mind. When thought turned out to be a chemical compound of animal sensations, conscience but the showy flower fed by the sap of self-love, and the knowledge of causation but the customary transit of associated "impressions," the direction of this downward path became evident. All the solid ground of life was pulverizing itself away into unattached phenomena; and to find again some base and hold for human belief, the Scottish school, under Reid's guidance, began at the beginning once more; put themselves back to the initial point of self-knowledge; and, extinguishing the lamp of hypothesis, entered the mind to explore it with only its native light. The result was, in the main, a true psychology, — a faithful natural history of the mind, — and with it the means of restoring the truths

which had threatened to dissipate themselves. Led astray by its bias towards physical realism, British speculation recovered itself by the force of its moral realism. Still, *nothing but* a psychology was produced; and even the very existence of any other mode of intellectual philosophy was hardly recognized. The mind, when taken up for study, was regarded merely as *an object or energy in nature*, whose processes furnished materials for a separate science in the same way as the laws of life supplied distinctive contents for physiology; those of affinity among the kinds of body, for chemistry; and the general properties of matter, for mechanics. In this view, "mental philosophy" does but form — as indeed its very name implies — the apex of the several physical sciences, leaving them undisturbed beneath, and constructing itself out of the residuary object-matter which they have not pre-engaged. This mode of conception must be totally changed before the true character of logic and metaphysics can be understood. The mind must be imagined, not as the crown or any other part of nature, but as standing over against nature, and outside of it, all the time; not as a thing that can be separately and subsequently known, when the sciences have made themselves up, but as a being that in knowing aught else knows also itself; not therefore as furnishing different materials for study, but only the inner side of the very same series of phenomena. In this way, intellectual philosophy is but the self-knowledge of physical science, proceeding *pari passu* with it, having a voice in all its methods and an interest in every step. When the

mind and nature are thus placed opposite each other, there arise, besides the transient phenomena, and as conditions of their apprehension, certain notions of permanent existences, — space, time, substance, soul, cause. With these, so far as they enter into the forms of thinking irrespective of the matter of thought, *logic* concerns itself as with subjective facts, without, however, any inquiry what they are objectively worth. *This* question it is the proper business of *metaphysics* to take up, — to pronounce upon the validity of these notions as revelations of real existence, and, if they be reliable, use them as a bridge to cross the chasm from relative thought to absolute being. Once safe across, and gazing about it in that realm, the mind stands in presence of the objects of *ontology*, under which category must be entered whatever it may find to say respecting these objects. Thus the complete conception of the higher philosophy contains the following elements: —

(1.) **PSYCHOLOGY**, the descriptive knowledge of mental phenomena, examined as they occur, and distributed into their several *kinds*. This is the natural history of the world within. Its business of classification is coextensive with the facts of self-consciousness, and addresses itself to the affective states and springs of the will, not less than to the intellectual procedures. It is therefore the common prelude to all departments of the science of human nature, whether concerning themselves with the laws of *cognition* (logic), of *admiring* (æsthetic), or of *obligation* (morals).

(2.) **LOGIC**, which investigates the ultimate laws

of *thinking*, so far as it has a cognitive character and is constant in its method, whatever be the matter thought. It is thus purely a *notional* science; and among its results presents us with a list of the fundamental forms of thought underlying, as conditions, the operations of intelligence. These primary notions, however (substance, cause, etc.), though detected among our *ways of thinking*, appear to us also as if they were *things thought*; and we cannot divest ourselves of the belief that they are *more than notional*. At this point step in —

(3.) METAPHYSICS, to ascertain whether they be, as we imagine, also *real*, belonging to existence as well as to thought. Here, therefore, we have a science which is not exclusively either *notional* or *real*, but occupies the transition space from the one character to the other. It endeavors to settle accounts with reality on behalf of the ideal objects given to us by our reason, and determine whether they have an existence independent of our faculties. Should they prove to be only the mocking image of those faculties themselves, then the only result of metaphysic research is to dissipate its own objects; it springs into life for no other purpose than to commit suicide, and consign all its affairs, by process of relapse, back into the hands of logic. But should they, on the other hand, legitimate their claim to be regarded as objects, and obtain a footing on the ground of positive existence, they forthwith become the concern of —

(4.) ONTOLOGY, which endeavors to evolve true propositions respecting God, the soul, and nature, as

*à priori* objects of knowledge, and whether by deduction, intuition, or dialectic, to reach the essence of their necessary being. It is therefore a *real* science; accessible, however, only from the *notional* territory of logic, and contingently on some means of transport being found;—a divine Elysian land, longed for by shades of thought on the hither side of Styx, and destined to be touched perhaps, provided the metaphysic boat of passage does not leak.

Now of this range of investigations, in their scientific relation to each other, no British writer, earlier than Sir W. Hamilton, appears to us to have had any clear conception; and the problems they involve, if touched at all, have been fortuitously treated, by way of irregular excursus from the classificatory business of psychology. The confused notions of the scope and contents of logical science sufficiently betray themselves in the absurd rivalry set up between Aristotle and Bacon. And the great question, whether our ontological faiths are exploded or established by philosophy, has furnished no inspiration except to continental speculation. The systems born under its influence in Germany, and partially reproduced in France, were simply laughed at or stared out of countenance, till our author set the example of understanding them, and treating them with discriminating and respectful dissent. Dugald Stewart's criticism, in his historical dissertation, on Kant, Fichte, and Schelling,—a criticism strangely blending modest confessions of ignorance with scornful indications of temper, — shows how slight an appreciation of the state of European philosophy was compatible,

thirty years ago, with the highest reputation for copious reading and accomplishment. Without a wide sympathy with the efforts of human reason, however unsuccessful they may be, to determine the limits of knowledge or to push them beyond finite things, it is impossible for the teacher to obtain more than a provincial hearing; and, what is worse, no less impossible to understand the great courses of human thought, and trace their windings through ancient, mediæval, and foreign history. In largeness of theoretic ground-plan, of historical knowledge, and of genial admiration for various merit, Sir W. Hamilton exceeds all his predecessors, and, quitting the limits of a school, makes us feel that nowhere within the community of civilized nations does Philosophy stray from its native land. It was time that the ignorant airs of contempt, assumed by our professors of wisdom towards speculations they did not take the pains to comprehend, should cease; that the common councilmen of a municipal philosophy should no longer mock at august dynasties of thought bearing the kingly names of Plato and Aristotle, Descartes and Spinoza, Kant and Hegel; that reputations, so long achieved by abusing the *Organon* and ridiculing the schoolmen, should at length be deserved by understanding them. There had been enough of logicians who disparaged logic, and metaphysicians who did not believe in metaphysics. How can any branch of human culture fail to pine away, when trusting for its nutriment to the acrid juices of an inner scepticism? That for some time past a better spirit has prevailed is largely due to the influence of



our author; whose hearty loyalty to his work, and clear insight into the nature of its claims, are conspicuous in all his writings, and find distinct expression in the following sentences:—

“Plato has profoundly defined man, ‘the hunter of *truth* ;’ for in this chase, as in others, the *pursuit* is all in all, the *success* comparatively nothing. ‘Did the Almighty,’ says Lessing, ‘holding in his right hand *Truth*, and in his left *Search after Truth*, deign to proffer me the one I might prefer, in all humility, but without hesitation, I should request *Search after Truth*.’ We *exist* only as we *energize* ; *pleasure* is the reflex of unimpeded energy ; energy is the *mean* by which our faculties are developed ; and a higher energy the *end* which their development proposes. In *action* is thus contained the existence, happiness, improvement, and perfection of our being ; and knowledge is only precious, as it may afford a stimulus to the exercise of our powers, and the condition of their more complete activity. Speculative truth is, therefore, subordinate to speculation itself ; and its value is directly measured by the quantity of energy which it occasions—immediately on its discovery—mediately through its consequences. Life to Endymion was not preferable to death ; aloof from practice, a waking error is better than a sleeping truth. Neither, in point of fact, is there found any proportion between the *possession* of truths, and the *development* of the mind in which they are deposited. Every *learner* in science is now familiar with more truths than Aristotle or Plato ever dreamt of know-

ing; yet, compared with the Stagirite or the Athenian, how few, among our masters of modern science, rank higher than intellectual barbarians! Ancient Greece and Modern Europe prove, indeed, that 'the march of intellect' is no inseparable concomitant of 'the march of science;' that the cultivation of the individual is not to be rashly confounded with the progress of the species." . . . "It is as the *best gymnastic of the mind*,—as a mean, principally, and almost exclusively conducive to the highest education of our noblest powers, that we would vindicate to these speculations the necessity which has too frequently been denied them. By no other intellectual application (and least of all by physical pursuits) is the soul thus reflected on itself, and its faculties concentrated in such independent, vigorous, unwonted, and continued energy; by none, therefore, are its best capacities so variously and intensely evolved. 'Where there is most life there is the victory.'" —*Discussions*, p. 39.

The original researches of Sir W. Hamilton may be said to have reference to three related topics: the GROUND of knowledge; the LIMIT of knowledge; the METHOD of knowledge; so far as these are determined by the constitution of the human faculties. The first is discussed in his doctrine of perception; the second, in his refutation of Cousin's Ontology; the third, in his logical discussions, especially his controversy with Professor de Morgan. This last field is strewed with thorny technicalities, and, unhappily, too, not without its nettle-growths of temper; and in

spite of a perverse propensity thither, we shall not ask our readers to enter it just now; but shall confine ourselves to some account of our author's doctrine on the first two points.

The one great question which mankind, when brought to the mood of reflective wonder, are never tired of preferring at the oracle of philosophy, is this: How can I *know*? So long as our faculties are engaged with concrete affairs, and learning particular matters, they are troubled with no such inquiry, and work on with a healthy dogmatism, accepting their light without analyzing it. But the moment arrives when the mind wakes up and halts at the thought, "What *is* knowledge? what is there *in me* that fits me to have it? what is there *out of me* that is given to me by it?" That these two factors are inevitably present in it is manifest. But how are they related to each other, and qualified to join, as constituents, in the same acts, and merge in a unitary result? Are they quantities of the same kind, capable of yielding a product by their concurrence? or do not their spheres belong to different universes, which co-exist but cannot interact? These perplexities, however, though proposed in general terms, have not affected every part of the problem in an equal degree. There are three possible objects of our cognitive faculties, namely: (1.) Ourselves. (2.) Nature. (3.) God. Respecting the first of these, the mystery has been little felt: the mind, being ever present with itself, can scarcely fail, it has been supposed, to become at home there, and be cognizant of its own events, especially as those events are just of its own

sort, neither more nor less than the old familiars of consciousness turned out before the eye of self-consciousness. Hence of all knowledge, *self*-knowledge alone has been regarded as inherently intelligible. But the approach to the other two kinds seemed beset with obstacles insuperable in both instances, though different in each. To know *Nature* is for mind to apprehend matter, — for incommensurable things to measure themselves against each other. To know *God* is for the finite to take in the infinite, — for a relative act to achieve the absolute. From the world the soul would appear to be cut off by contrariety of essence, though akin to it in limitation of scale; from God, by disproportion of scale, though allied to him by congeniality of essence. Either by qualitative or by quantitative incapacity, we seem to be detained at hopeless distance from all that lies beyond ourselves. To remove the first of these impediments is the purpose of every doctrine of perception; to remove the second, of every theory of ontology.

The first evidently rests on the assumption that "like only can know like," — a maxim which, consciously or unconsciously, has never ceased to control the processes of philosophy. It is the want of homogeneity between the knowing mind and the known thing, the total absence from the former of all the predicates (extension, externality, solidity) of the latter, — that perplexes men about their mutual relation. There are but two ways of possible escape from the difficulty, — to deny the maxim, and dispense with all likeness between subject and object as a condition of knowledge; or else, retaining the maxim,

to destroy the *primâ facie* unlikeness. By a perverse aberration philosophers have, with few exceptions, struck into the latter path; and have exhausted the varieties of ingenuity to cancel the primary antithesis of all intelligence. They have not questioned the fact that, in the exercise of perception, a man supposes himself to gain assurance, equally strong, of two opposite existences, — of himself as perceiving subject; and of an external reality as perceived object. But, as if they could not let this belief alone, they have conspired to worry and torture it in all conceivable ways. To get rid of the opposition between the two existences some have erased the existences, — one or both (*Sublatâ re, tollitur qualitas rei*); others have explained away their opposition. The former is the resource of the idealists; who either with Berkeley content themselves with abolishing the given object and resolving it into an ideal state operated in the human mind by the agency of the divine; or, with Fichte, proceed further to abrogate the reality of the subject too, by denying it as a persistent entity, identifying it with its momentary condition, and treating it as a mere train of phenomena. As Berkeley had lowered the objective *esse* to the *percipi*, so Fichte, to complete the process, reduced the subjective *esse* to the *percipere*: both resorting to the same argument that the interaction of heterogeneous nature, was inconceivable; the one asking how material things could produce what is so unlike themselves as sensations and ideas; the other laying down the rule that the effect of existence could only be existence, and not thought. It is curious to notice

the subtle disguises under which this doctrine continually reappears. Who would expect to find in the empirical psychology of England any kindred with the extreme idealism, or rather *nihilism*, of Fichte? Yet what else can be made of an "Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind," which, like that of Mill, disowns, with Hume, all *perceptive* knowledge whatsoever, and compels the very word to abdicate and take its heavy troops away in favor of *sensation*, and its *garde mobile*? In this system, my "idea of an object" is but the coexistence, in a state fusion together, of my separate ideas of its so-called qualities: and when I predicate redness of a billiard ball, I merely refer the color to the group of companion-attributes amid which it will be found; I intend to say that along with the sensations of smoothness, hardness, roundness, etc., which exhaust the meaning of the word "ball," the further sensation of redness will also be experienced. Nor are the "qualities," even when set afloat from their substratum, allowed to stand, in the registers of this school, among things *known*; they are but empty names for the *unknown* objective counterparts of our sensations, — not even figments of thought, but only contrivances of speech. Thus is all my supposed perception of an outer world fetched back into the mind, and resolved into the grouping of synchronous sensations, beyond which I am cognizant of nothing but myself. Then, again, what is this *self*? Has it any firmer moorings in reality than the objects with which it deals? Not a whit, so far as philosophy can tell. The passing phenomenon of my conscious-

ness is that which constitutes my present self; its predecessors make up my past, and its successors my future self; and whenever I apply to any part of this procession words of *personality*, it is only that I would fling the element of which I speak into the right series, and keep the line of beads called "*Me*" clear of that other which is called "*You*," and of that third which we call "*Him*." A scheme which in this way resolves all things into clusters, and persons into files, of subjective phenomena, is coincident in its results with Fichte's; and the comparison affords an instructive example, how the same false postulate, simultaneously manœuvred by material and by ideal thinkers, will work its way from these opposite ends of the diameter of being, and fall at last into the same gulf of negation.

But the more favorite and less daring way of destroying the antithesis between mind perceiving and matter perceived, is to leave the two terms standing and deny their opposition. As the only ground for affirming their existence is furnished by the very same act of consciousness which equally pronounces *on* their opposition, this device is really less philosophical than the other. It is worked out by introducing a third term, either *above* the subject and object, to serve as a point of unity whence they divaricate into the sphere of consciousness; or *between* them, so as to furnish a neutral ground *on* which they may meet and come to an understanding. The former is the method of Hegel, and, in the last resort, of Spinoza; indeed, deducing as it does mind and matter, as mere phenomenal opposites, from a com-

mon substantive being, it is a speculation on which Pantheism must ever look with filial affection. To trace the latter through its metamorphoses would be little less than to write the history of philosophy. From the εἶδῶν of Plato — thoughts incarnate in matter to render it intelligible to mind — down to the mesmeric fluid—a physical conception to serve as the *nidus* and vehicle of thought — the theories of mediation for conciliating the incompatibilities of the percipient and the perceived have been innumerable. The principle or feeling to which they all owe their origin is strikingly apparent in a speculation on the nature of vision contained in the *Timæus*. According to Plato, there is treasured *within* us a store of pure fire, which streams out through the centre of the eyes; while *without*, there is the open illumination of day, which awaits and envelops the current of *eye-light* ever flowing into it. On the concurrence of the two, like being mingled with like, the conditions of an active result are complete; and there arise the counterpart phenomena of visibility in objects and vision in us. But when the gentle light of day no longer flows around, the beams of the eye, passing out into the night, meet with nothing congenial with themselves, and realize no illumination, but ineffectually perish. In consequence of this frustration, the eyelids close in sleep; and shutting in the light from its fruitless exit, let it employ itself in painting for us the images of our dreams.<sup>1</sup> In this

<sup>1</sup> *Timæus*, § 45. For Aristotle's polemic against the doctrine, see his *Treatise de Sensu*, c. 2.



graceful attempt to explain the process of visual perception, the assumption is manifest enough, that for the purposes of communication between the mind and the outward world some common medium is required; and to effect the mediation *light* is the element selected, as occupying the border territory between the spiritual and the material. At other times, *form* is invested with this reconciling function; being recommended to choice by its neutral character, as at once a physical condition of body and a geometrical object of pure thought. It carries with it, however, peculiar difficulties when used as a representative medium; for it must be *located* somewhere; if fixed in the object, how can it carry a message to the subject? If in subject, who can tell whether it be a true copy of the object? If it be a volatile form transmitted from the one to the other, where can the unextended mind store all the diagrams of extended things? These perplexities, it has been supposed, might be escaped by resorting to *motion* as the element of mediation. Under favor of the ambiguity of the word *κίνησις* (which is used of mental modification as well as of local change), even Aristotle has lent, we think, an unfortunate sanction to this notion. Motion, objectively considered, he regards as one of the things of which *all* the five senses<sup>1</sup> are cognizant, and classes accordingly among

<sup>1</sup> He elsewhere appears to limit the apprehension of the *κοινὰ αἰσθητά* to the *two* senses of sight and touch, as if conscious that, in allowing it to *all* the senses, he was extending the prerogative too far. "Magnitude and form, and the rough and smooth, and the acute and obtuse, in angles, are common to all the senses; or, if not to *all*, at least to sight and touch."

— *De Sensu* 4. 5. Bekker.

the "common sensibles" (*κοινὰ αἰσθητά*); and to motion, as subjectively involved in the action of all the senses, he attributes our perception, by any of them indifferently, of these common sensibles, namely, motion and rest, form, size, and number.<sup>1</sup> This hint has not been permitted to remain unfruitful; but, in the hands of Aristotle's distinguished living commentator, Professor Trendelenburg, has been worked out into an elaborate metaphysical theory; in which motion (*bewegung* conveniently responding to the ambiguity of *κίνησις*) plays the part of the unitary element belonging equally to existence and to thought, generative of real space and body and form in the one, and of their reflection by geometry and the natural sciences in the other.<sup>2</sup> No one has asserted with more emphasis than this learned and strenuous opponent of Hegel the fallacious principle which is the beginning of the Hegelian aberration, and which has so long stood unquestioned as the open portal of a thousand labyrinths. "Without an activity," he says, "in which existence and thought are equal partners, it was impossible to understand how the thinking principle conceives given objects in afterthought, or designs them in forethought. Neither the *à priori* procedure of mathematics, nor the *à posteriori* of experience, nor the constructive power of final causation, could be understood without such a common activity."<sup>3</sup> If, however, this maxim is to usurp a dictatorial power in philosophy, we must say we had

<sup>1</sup> De Animâ, III. 1. 5.

<sup>2</sup> See his *Logische Untersuchungen*; especially Band I. § 4-6.

<sup>3</sup> *Log. Unters.* B. II. § 12, p. 139.

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rather see it at work upon a grand scale, proclaiming its rights aloud and setting up sublime tyrannies on the scholastic thrones of Heidelberg and Berlin, than creeping in at the back door of empirical psychology and corrupting the simplicity of its faith in consciousness. If motion can do nothing more to bring matter and mind to a compatible disposition than set a-going an "agitation in the *animal spirits*," or "vibrations and vibratiuncles in the nerves," its mediation, always ineffectual, is sure to be inglorious too. Not only does it fail to be a fact, but it has the additional disadvantage of not even seeming to explain anything, if it were so; and can have no effect but to betray the wider empire of philosophy into the special hands of physiology.

The last and most refined effort of the doctrine of mediation recedes, however, in its quest of a vicarious element, further from matter than to be content with form or motion; it seizes on the *idea* of the object, and insists that this, imparted by the object, and contained in the act of perception, is the only thing present to the cognitive subject, and known by him. Thus, Professor De Morgan states the following, as "an important distinction, which we must carry with us throughout the whole" of his work (*Formal Logic*). "Besides the actual external object, there is also the mind which perceives it, and what (for want of better words, or rather for want of knowing whether they be good words or not) we must call the *image of that object in the mind*, or the *idea* which it communicates."

“The word *idea*, as here used, does not enter in that vague sense in which it is generally used, as if it were an opinion that might be right or wrong. It is that which the object gives to the mind, or the state of the mind produced by the object. Thus the idea of a horse is *the horse in the mind*; and we know no other horse. We admit that there is an external object, a horse, which may give a *horse in the mind* to twenty different persons; but no one of these twenty knows the object; each one only knows his *idea*.” — *Formal Logic*, p. 29.

Here, then, the representative medium is fairly withdrawn from the physical end of the perceptive relation, and becomes a spiritual thing,—an affection of the intellect itself. Does it accomplish its end any better for this? Not in the least. It stands, indeed, in closer kindred to the percipient subject, but proportionally further in estrangement from the object it pretends to represent. It is certainly easier to negotiate with *thought* through an *idea* than through a *motion* or a *vibration*; but just in the same degree does the negotiation with *reality* become more difficult. Who shall guarantee the relation between the immediate idea and the inaccessible thing for which it stands? If the percipient mind itself is hopelessly cut off from the outward object, is the “idea” involved in the act of perception any less so? Can the subject be doomed to darkness, and yet his subjective act be let into the secret? Either, in spite of the “idea,” objects remain unknown; or, by means of it, they become known. To maintain the first is

unqualified idealism. To affirm the second is to pronounce on the likeness between an image and invisible reality; to profess in the same breath that the same things are immediately, and yet only mediately, accessible; to avow an utter ignorance of the external world, and yet go bail for the only reporter of it. Thus, for absurdity and contradiction, the last state of this doctrine is worse than the first.

And what is the exigency which has called into existence these multifarious systems, whether of idealism or of mediation? They have sprung up, merely to humor the maxim, that "like only can know like,"—a maxim absolutely groundless, and whose long despotism in the schools is the opprobrium of philosophy. Of this "crotchet of philosophers" Sir W. Hamilton says, that

"Though contrary to the evidence of consciousness, and consequently not only *without* but *against* all evidence, it has yet exerted a more extensive and important influence than any principle in the whole history of philosophy. This subject deserves a volume; we can only afford it a few sentences.—Some philosophers (as Anaxagoras, Heraclitus, Alcmaeon) maintained that knowledge implied even a *contrariety* of subject and object. But since the time of Empedocles, no opinion has been more universally admitted than that the *relation of knowledge* inferred the analogy of existence. This analogy may be supposed in two potences. What knows and what is known, are either, 1st, *similar*, or, 2d, the *same*; and if the general principle be true, the latter is the

more philosophical. This principle it was, which immediately determined the whole doctrine of a representative perception. Its lower potence is seen in the *intentional species* of the schools, and in the *ideas* of Mallebranche and Berkeley; its higher in the *gnostic* reasons of the Platonists, in the *pre-existing species* of Avicenna and the Arabians, in the *ideas* of Descartes and Leibnitz, in the phenomena of Kant, and in the *external states* of Dr. Brown. It mediately determined the *hierarchical gradation of faculties or souls* of the Aristotelian, the *reticular media* of the Platonists, — the theories of a *common intellect* of Alexander, Themistius, Averroes, Cajetanus, and Zabarella — the *vision in the deity* of Mallebranche — and the Cartesian and Leibnitzian doctrines of *assistance*, and *predetermined harmony*. To no other origin is to be ascribed the refusal of the fact of consciousness in its primitive duality; and the unitarian systems of identity, materialism, idealism, are the result." — *Discussions*, p. 60.

Undeterred by the ruin of falling systems, Sir W. Hamilton boldly tears away the maxim on which they rest, and exposes it to distinct view, instead of leaving it to crumble obscurely away beneath the superincumbent weight of absurdity and contradiction raised upon it. That he well knew how vast and lofty was the metaphysic Babel which he thus destroyed, how many wise and great had their chambers in it at various heights, believing it a watch-tower of heaven, is evident from the passage just cited. But where the mind is clear, the heart is

strong, and the largest collapse of error is not a terrible or destructive phenomenon to the eye pure to discern the disengaging forms of truth. Flinging away the assumption of the schools, our author reverts to the simplicity of nature; and declares that in perception the mind, with equal *immediateness*, knows itself as subject and an outward reality as object; and in knowing this, knows their relation to be one, not of analogy, but of antithesis. He puts sheer out of existence all *representative* apparatus devised for whispering into the mind's ear the state of affairs without, and affirms the *ego* and *non-ego* to be face to face,—co-present realities in every phenomenon of perception. Consciousness, so far from revealing only our own existence, and leaving us to gather all other existence by *inference* from this, cannot give us the percipient *self* except in simultaneously giving us the perceived *other-than-self*; and we are as directly cognizant of the one as of the other. Both must be accepted as primary data involved in the exercise of our perceptions, and liable to no doubt which does not perish of itself by impugning the veracity of the doubter's own faculties. It is not therefore true that a man is *surer* of his own existence than of anything else; he is simply *as sure* of it as he is that something else exists. The certainty he feels in either case is precisely the same; and is the very highest that can be had, with only one exception, in which doubt is not simply suicidal, but impossible. The exception is,—the bare *fact of the perception* as a felt phenomenon, apart from the contents or necessary self-interpretation it carries with

it. To have a certain consciousness, and to doubt whether I have it, are incompatible conditions. Nor can I call in question the description given of what this consciousness includes, in the case of perception; it assuredly says, — truly or mendaciously, — that it is the direct product from two opposite factors, a self that has it and a not-self that gives it, — both of which are alike present in it and known in it, as real existences. That there is the phenomenon, and that this is what it says, is beyond denial. The first possibility of scepticism opens with the query, “Whether this which the phenomenon says be true? or whether perhaps the self alone be not competent to the whole fact, by illusive creation of the other factor among its own ideal states?” This doubt, however, is possible only at the expense of arraigning consciousness as a deceiver, and assuming that the very faculties of knowledge may be but an organism of mendacity. There is but one conceivable plea which could justify so monstrous a suspicion; that the original data of consciousness directly or in their legitimate consequences contradicted each other. No such plea, however, can be advanced; and though in its absence the bare possibility will always remain presentable to imagination, that we may be coherently and systematically imposed upon, and our whole intellectual life but a mocking dream, yet in such a fancy there is no logical base, for it demands a disbelief of everything, even of itself; and no philosophical recommendation, — for it places *ab initio* out of reach that *truth* which all philosophy assumes to be attainable. Our author therefore claims un-



conditional assent to the primitive beliefs given in consciousness itself; places among these, as contained in the act of perception, the faith in a personal subject and in an outward object; and thus vindicates a doctrine of "Natural Dualism" against all the mere hypothetical impeachments, brought against it by the "Unitarian schemes of idealism, materialism, and absolutism."

"What is all this but mere common sense, spoiled by metaphysic jargon?" perhaps our readers may say. Be it so; if only it supersede a much more voluminous amount of nonsense not better phrased, the gain is undeniable. But it claims a higher praise,—a praise which indeed the objector unconsciously bestows. It is the glory of philosophy to end where common sense begins; to evolve as *ἐπιστήμη* that which had existed as *ἀληθὴς δόξα*; to find and lay bare the ground of all derivative beliefs, and sweep away the clouds that hang around the margin and make it indistinct. Those who know how rarely the truth upon this matter has been found, and how variously it has been lost, will not be tempted, by its extreme simplicity, to undervalue the precision with which Sir W. Hamilton has seized it, the incomparable subtlety with which he has discriminated it from all counterfeits, the multifarious learning with which he has tracked the aberrations from it, and the skill which he has displayed in insulating and fencing it all round. Nor can any competent judge fail profoundly to admire the courageous intellectual integrity which, in loyalty to truth, vows to restore the modest empire of natural dualism, at a time when

the continental schools use the very name as a by-word of contempt, and England has ceased to confer reputations in philosophy.

In the development and application of our author's doctrine there are, however, some details which, it appears to us, may require revision. We cannot accept, without some modification, the line of separation which he draws between the cases of presentative and representative cognition, between immediate and mediate objects of knowledge. With perception as immediate he contrasts memory as mediate, in its mode of apprehension; and repeatedly censures Reid and Stewart for their disregard of this distinction.

“Memory is defined by Reid ‘an *immediate* knowledge of the *past* ;’ and is thus distinguished from consciousness, which, with all philosophers, he views as ‘an *immediate* knowledge of the *present*.’ We may therefore be conscious of the act of memory *as present*, but of its object as *past*, consciousness is impossible. And certainly, if Reid's definition of memory be admitted, this inference cannot be disallowed. But memory is not an immediate knowledge of the past; an *immediate knowledge of the past* is a contradiction in terms. This is manifest, whether we look *from the act to the object*, or *from the object to the act*. To be known immediately, an *object* must be known *in itself*; to be known in itself, it must be known as actual, now existent, *present*. But the object of memory is *past*, — not present, not now existent, not actual; it cannot therefore be known in itself. If known at all, it must be known in some

thing different from itself; that is, *mediately*; and memory as an immediate knowledge of the past is thus impossible. Again: memory is an *act* of knowledge; an act exists only as present; and a present knowledge can be immediately cognizant only of a present object. But the object known in memory is *past*; consequently either memory is not an *act* of knowledge at all, or the object immediately known is present; and the past, if known, is known only through the *medium* of the *present*; on either alternative, memory is not 'an *immediate* knowledge of the *past*.' Thus memory, like our other faculties, affords only an immediate knowledge of the present; and, like them, is nothing more than consciousness variously modified."— *Discussions*, p. 48.

In spite of the acuteness with which the argument is here and elsewhere stated, we suspect that the reader's feeling will persist in taking sides with Reid. It is no doubt competent to Sir W. Hamilton to define the phrase "*immediate* object," an object *now* and *here*; and if it is thus to include in its meaning proximity to the cognitive subject *in time and place*; no argument is needed to show that what is absent in either relation cannot be immediately known. But Reid, who in his use of the word "*immediate*" was thinking only of *direct* as opposed to circuitous or *indirect* knowledge, would not have admitted the propriety of this definition; and in our author's hands, who consistently carries it out in its several applications, it leads to results repugnant, we think, to the common consciousness of men. For instance:

if nothing can be an "immediate" object of knowledge except what is separated from the knower by no space at all, it follows that I cannot either smell or see the orange in my hand, or hear the wind that beats against my window. Accordingly Sir W. Hamilton pronounces it "wrong to say that '*a body is smelled by means of effluvia.*' Nothing is smelt but the effluvia themselves. They constitute the total object of *perception* in smell; and in all the senses *the only object perceived is that in immediate contact with the organ.* There is, in reality, no medium in any sense; and, as Democritus long ago shrewdly observed, all the senses are only modifications of touch."<sup>1</sup> This doctrine is naturally held by James Mill,<sup>2</sup> who resolves all perception into sensation, and who, therefore, in allocating the word "object," can find nothing on which to fit it except the nearest cause of the sensation; but it surprises us greatly in a philosopher who is distinguished for his skilful discrimination of perception proper from sensation proper. Surely the *object of perception* is the *thing perceived*; and a thing perceived cannot be a *thing unknown*. But the majority of men know nothing of the effluvia of the orange, the vibrations of the air, the luminous undulations, or of any of the proximate agents in sensation. Their minds are running on the remoter realities,—the scented fruit, the ringing bell, the shining fire,—of which they learn something by the use of their senses; and except of these as known, and of themselves as know-

<sup>1</sup> Hamilton's Reid, p. 104, b, note.

<sup>2</sup> Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind, vol. i. p. 6.

ing, they have no cognition at all. Psychologically, the ethereal emanations make no appearance, and are as though they did not exist. If, therefore, in the ordinary exercise of their senses, men do not perceive what is at some distance, either they perceive nothing, or they perceive something without knowing it. The very word "object," indeed, implying as it does what is *there* as opposed to *here*, recalcitrates against this statement, and refuses to settle on anything which is *not* at *some distance*. The proposed phraseology confounds together the *cause* of a sensation and the *object* of a perception; the former is that *from which a feeling is derived*; the latter is that *to which a feeling is directed*. And it is only under cover of this confusion that the word "*immediate*" is brought to claim direct contact as indispensable to its meaning; a *cause*, it is supposed, must *be* where it acts; but an *object* need not be where the thought or perception of it is. Nor does an object necessarily cease to be *immediately* known by quitting the *now*, any more than by absenting itself from the *here*. I remember seeing a house on fire last week. That past event is the thing which in my present act of memory I *immediately* contemplate, and which alone is known in it. My consciousness in remembering refers as directly to the event, without any vicarious interposition, as my consciousness in perception to the thing perceived. In both cases the relation of the mental phenomenon to the external datum appears to us precisely the same. If not, if the past occurrence be mediately known, — where is the *medium*? Is it my own act of memory? Is

this the *object of my immediate knowledge*? On the contrary, it is not the object of my thought at all, but my very thought itself; just as much the momentary form of my own subjective activity, as in the act of perception my perceiving consciousness is. In neither instance do I first attend to my present state of mind, and then, stepping on this as evidence, pass at one remove to the ultimate fact; but that fact, dispensing with mediation, emerges of itself into knowledge in being remembered or in being perceived. Have we not here fallen again on the traces of confusion between the *cause* and the *object* of a mental state? In perception, the cause and the object of my knowledge are the same, and are finished off at the same point; my consciousness is the *causa cognoscendi* in relation to the external reality; and this reality is the *causa essendi* in relation to my consciousness; and the fact has no reference beyond this. In memory, also, my present knowledge has the same thing, namely, the past event, for cause and for object; but what is that past event? It is a *former perception of my own*, my presence, for instance, and experience at the burning of the house; for we need hardly say that the mere mental picture of the fire without reference to one's self as witness would be no case of memory at all, but only of free imagination. Thus the very thing known is here a prior act of knowledge, which act had its own object, the ulterior cause, through our then-perception, of our present memory. Descend then from the past in the order of experience, and pick out the whole *causa essendi* of my present consciousness; and you

pass from the physical fact, through a former perception, into the existing remembrance. But ascend from the present, and find the whole *causa cognoscendi* of the past event I am contemplating; and you proceed direct from the memory I have, to the perception I had; and *this* immediately arrests and satisfies my search for the *object* of remembrance, for this experience of mine *is* the past event which I recollect; and only as lying within this and appearing among its contents does the mere physical fact figure in my cognitive act. Certainly, if you take the physical fact, the burning house, apart from my perception of it, as the *object remembered*, you may obtain the same number of steps upwards as downwards; but even then the result, illegitimately obtained, will not answer the conditions required; for the *mediate phenomenon*, through which I step from the present to that past fact, turns out to be my former perception, and not, as the theory demands, my existing memory. For these reasons, we feel disposed to place the difference between the two faculties, considered as cognitive, not in the *mode of their knowing*, but only in the *object of their knowledge*; which, in the case of memory, is always egoistic, one's own perceptions in the past; in the case of perception, non-egoistic, an outward reality given in the present.

The question whether a rose, or the effluvia from it, should be regarded as the object smelt, merges in a larger question, whether smell has any object at all. We cannot but think that such language is the relic of an erroneous doctrine of the senses; and that if

Sir W. Hamilton's admirable hints for discriminating sensation from perception were followed out to their legitimate results, the impropriety of this phraseology would be immediately apparent. We are profoundly sensible of the value of this part of his philosophy, which is a treasury of original reflection and research; and our only doubt is, whether his law of the inverse variation of sensation and perception ought not to be pushed to its ultimate ratio, or at least carried beyond the limits at which he arrests it. We see no reason for regarding the two functions as necessarily coexisting; and are inclined to think that what are called the "ignoble senses"—which agree in not being at the disposal of the locomotive power—are wholly *impercipient*; and would never, by the mere succession of their feelings, waken into consciousness the distinction between subject and object, or reveal their own organic seat. Plato reproaches Protagoras with reducing human cognition to a level with "*the tadpole's*;"<sup>1</sup> and certainly, if we want to estimate the resources of sensation, as such, apart from the uses to which it is put by higher faculties copresent with it, we ought to carry our experiments down to the creatures where it is most unmixed. Without pretending to pronounce upon the psychology of the mollusca, we may reasonably doubt whether an animal of that class can say to itself, "*I feel a good taste*;" or, "*this taste is from my food*;" and if so, sensations may exist, without involving any cognition, even of themselves. If they fall upon

<sup>1</sup> Theætetus, 161. D.



a creature purely recipient, — merely lying still to feel, — they will simply come and perish, like a train of sparks issuing, one by one, out of a dark tube, and falling extinguished in water as fast as they appear. They will be carried back to no source whence they are administered, and home to no being to whom they belong. To *have sensations* is a state far short of *knowing that one has them*. The self-consciousness which this would imply does not spring up without another element, opposite to this sensitive receptivity; namely, a spontaneous *nisus* of the mind, proceeding from within outwards, and at one time completely executing itself, at another arrested by an impediment. The moment this condition is added, and the inner activity meets obstruction, the unity of consciousness breaks into subject and object; we know that an act has gone forth from us, and that a counter-act is delivered upon us. The opposition thus gained of the ego and the non-ego contains two momenta. (1.) It appears as a *dynamic* antithesis, namely, subjective *force* and objective *force*. (2.) It appears as a *mathematical* antithesis, namely, subjective *position* (here) and objective *position* (there); for in thinking of something *independent* of ourselves we necessarily represent it as *external* to ourselves. We are thus introduced, in one and the same act, to the two great notions within which these antitheses respectively lie, namely, of CAUSE and of SPACE; and are provided with the needful conditions for deducing the primary qualities of body from the data of resistance and extension. Short of this apprehension of body, there is surely no perception; and

without perception, no apperception (to borrow a word from Leibnitz); neither the *self* nor the *other-than-self* yet exists as a sphere to which phenomena are referred; and whatever sensations may passively occur will simply alter the sentient condition, without being referred to any seat, without starting any question of causation, without awakening any act of attention. The contrary lines of direction taken by the mental spontaneity and the sensitive receptivity must meet and cross, before we can make an *object* of any phenomenon, or have a place, whether inner or outer, in which to look at it. Sensation, therefore, as such, has no *object*; and this word acquires its first title to appear, when some point comes into view on which an energy of attention can direct itself. In proportion as a sense — smell, for instance — is more entirely receptive, does it remain impercipient; and when Kant makes the categories of space and time conditions of the exercise of *sense in general*, without excluding even its most passive changes, he misses, as it seems to us, their precise nativity. Nor does it suffice to fix, in more recent fashion, on the *muscular sense* as the exclusive source of our primary perceptions. The muscles, after long neglect, have become the psychologist's favorite resource, and have just reason to complain of being greatly overworked. Taken merely as a sixth *sense*, — as the seat of certain feelings during the execution of a movement, — they are no more competent than any of their five old-fashioned companions to call up before us the spectacle of the world as antithetic to ourselves. There is no magic in the distinctive sort of sensation

they give us; it might be altered into any other sort, — nay, might be extinguished in stupefaction, — without forfeiture, on their part, of the perceptive prerogative attached so pre-eminently to them. The peculiarity resides not *in* them, but *behind* them; — in the antecedent *nisus* or mental energy which initiates their action and goes before their sensations. The feelings of any other sense come upon us with surprise; in their case alone is a prior signal passed in the mind, which they do but follow. Were this spontaneous activity prefixed to any other sense instead, — were it transferred, for example, from the muscular to the auditory system, so as to make hearing, like motion, partially voluntary, partially obstructed, — we apprehend that the perceptive power would change its lodgings to the ear, and space and causation be known to us by a new medium. Under such conditions we should of course be precluded from knowing several qualities of body now familiar to us, in the appreciating of which, — and still more of their degrees, — the tactual and muscular sensations are specifically indispensable. But the fundamental bases of cognition, the subjective and objective antithesis, on both its dynamic and its mathematical side, would be secured. For these reasons we think that perception should be wholly denied to sensation, as such, and referred not to the mind's receptivity, but inversely, to its spontaneous activity; that self-consciousness belongs to a being as percipient, not as sensitive; that, in the partnership and co-operation of the two functions, perception gives us direct cognizance of objects, we know not, subjectively, how;

while sensation (now self-conscious) presents us with feelings of our own from objective causes, we know not what; that the primary qualities of body, being given us in the former, are known as realities, while the secondary, belonging to the latter, are thought as hypotheses. In this view, objectivity does not belong to sense at all, but must be sought at the terminus of that perceptive attention which streams out through the instruments of sense; and wherever that attention alights, there and no nearer is the only proper claimant of the word "*object*;" nor does its possible remoteness in time or place disqualify it for the name "*immediate object*."

From our author's doctrine as to the ground of knowledge, we proceed to his estimate of the inherent *limits* of knowledge. Ourselves and the external world we know by direct presence with each other, and in equipoise of conscious certainty. We know them, however, only under *relation*; of subject, for example, to object; of succession in time; of co-existence in space; of phenomenon to cause. Yet, in pursuing this relative course of cognition, we are apt to be struck with the belief that one of the two terms in each of the primary syzygies transcends relation at the very moment of creating it; that the soul, discovered by physical plurality, is a hyper-physical unity; that time and space, apprehended in the conception of finite positions, are actually infinite; that causality, evinced only in phenomenal manifestations, has an absolute self-subsistence. In what light are we to regard these entities of our thought? Are they cognizable by us, and may we

credit them with real existence? Or must we pronounce them the mere mental conditions under which alone our faculties can conceive the objects of their positive knowledge? In our own time Schelling has vindicated the possibility of knowing the absolute; but only by arbitrarily assuming for the purpose an impersonal intellectual intuition above the reach of consciousness, and as little within the sphere of knowledge as that which it is set to know. Hegel has applied the skeleton keys of his counterfeit logic to pick every lock that detains him in the prison of the relative. And Cousin has contended that, in the very act of recognizing the inner and the outer worlds as finite and mutually conditioning, the mind becomes aware of God, as the infinite and unconditioned into which both are taken up. In opposition to all these, and with special regard to the last, Sir W. Hamilton recalls, with modifications, the critical conclusions of Kant, and pronounces ontology a series of optical illusions spread as shadows upon the bounding walls of reason. The necessary correlations of thought on which Cousin insists, — which render it impossible, for instance, to conceive the finite without the infinite, — are not, he remarks, to be confounded with an equal reality in the things. We apprehend nothing except by differencing it from what is other than itself; yet, in affirming its existence, we do not affirm also the existence of its "other;" and the paradox of Hegel, that contradictories are compatibles, refutes itself. The ideal entities with which ontology concerns itself are only the negatives which the mind sets up as a background on which to define its ob-

jects of positive knowledge. Relations of succession require for their discernment an underlying non-succession or duration; and those of position, an indeterminate sphere which holds all places and is in none, namely, space. But the infinitude which we ascribe to these is not an objective reality, but the mere product of a subjective incapacity; it results from our inability to think except by relation, and consequent necessity, in order to appreciate relation itself, of feigning an unrelated. Two opposite incompetencies shut us in; we can neither finish off our conceptions of quantity, and set them in a definite frame, nor let them work out their inexhaustible progression. A minimum or a maximum of time; an irresolvable nucleus or a bounded whole, is inconceivable and contradictory; as *absolute*, it defies our faculties. Nor less so, on the other side of the alternative, — as *infinite*; for to continue the increment of any given quantity to its ultimate possibility would require an eternity of addition. On the one hand, therefore, absolute commencement and absolute close, — on the other, infinite non-commencement and infinite non-close, are impossible to thought; yet as contradictories must, one or the other of them, be true. Our only positive conception is found as an unfinished section between the two extremes, and is expressed by the word "*indefinite*." Nor is the rule confined to the case of quantitative conception; it applies equally to quality and degree. To *think* is to *condition*; and thought must cease to be thought, or the unconditioned must accept conditions, ere they can have any dealings with each other.

By this "law of the conditioned," which confines the free play of positive knowledge between two extremes, both impossible yet mutually contradictory, Sir W. Hamilton dissipates all the objects of ontology, and reduces it from a *science* to a *nescience*. The most curious and important application of the doctrine is found in the appendix to his "Discussions," and is new to those who have not enjoyed the privileges of his class-room. In this essay he resolves the principle of causality, — the mental necessity of referring every phenomenon to a cause, — into one of the two counter-imbecilities of reason, which bound our relative field. Debarred from conceiving any absolute commencement of existence, we are obliged, on the occurrence of a phenomenon, to attribute to it a pre-existence ere yet it had attained its manifestation; and this is nothing else than to *assign it to a cause*. But of this interesting speculation our author must give his own account.

"The phenomenon of causality seems nothing more than a corollary of the law of the conditioned, in its application to a thing thought under the form or mental category of *existence relative in time*. We cannot know, we cannot think a thing, except under the attribute of *existence*; we cannot know or think a thing to exist, except as in *time*; and we cannot know or think a thing to exist in time, and think it *absolutely to commence*. Now this at once imposes on us the judgment of causality. And thus: an object is given us, either by our presentative, or by our representative, faculty. As given, we cannot

but think it existent, and existent in time. But to say, that we cannot but think it to exist, is to say, that we are unable to think it non-existent, — to think it away, — to annihilate it in thought. And this we cannot do. We may turn away from it; we may engross our attention with other objects; we may, consequently, exclude it from our thought. That we need not think a thing is certain; but thinking it, it is equally certain that we cannot think it not to exist. So much will be at once admitted of the present; but it may probably be denied of the past and future. Yet, if we make the experiment, we shall find the mental annihilation of an object equally impossible under time past and present and future. To obviate, however, misapprehension, a very simple observation may be proper. In saying that it is impossible to annihilate an object in thought, in other words, to conceive as non-existent what has been conceived as existent, — it is of course not meant that it is impossible to imagine the object wholly changed in form. We can represent to ourselves the elements of which it is composed, divided, dissipated, modified in any way; we can imagine any thing of it, short of annihilation. But the complement, the quantum, of existence, thought as constituent of an object, — *that* we cannot represent to ourselves, either as increased, without abstraction from other entities, or as diminished, without annexation to them. In short, we are unable to construe it in thought that there can be an atom absolutely added to, or absolutely taken away from, existence in general. Let us make the experiment. Let us



form to ourselves a concept of the universe. Now, we are unable to think that the quantity of existence, of which the universe is the conceived sum, can either be amplified or diminished. We are able to conceive, indeed, the creation of a world; this indeed as easily as the creation of an atom. But what is our thought of creation? It is not a thought of the mere springing of nothing into something. On the contrary, creation is conceived, and is by us conceivable, only as the evolution of existence from possibility into actuality, by the fiat of the Deity. Let us place ourselves in imagination at its very crisis. Now, can we construe it to thought, that the moment after the universe flashed into material reality, into manifested being, there was a larger complement of existence in the universe and its Author together, than, the moment before, there subsisted in the Deity alone? This we are unable to imagine. And what is true of our concept of creation, holds of our concept of annihilation. We can think no real annihilation,—no absolute sinking of something into nothing. But, as creation is cogitable by us, only as a putting forth of divine power, so is annihilation by us only conceivable as a withdrawal of that same power. All that is now *actually* existent in the universe, this we think and must think, as having, prior to creation, *virtually* existed in the Creator; and in imagining the universe to be annihilated, we can only conceive this as the retractation by the Deity of an overt energy into latent power. In short, it is impossible for the human mind to think what it thinks existent lapsing into non-existence, either in time past or in

time future. Our inability to think what we have once conceived existent in *time*, as in time becoming non-existent, corresponds with our inability to think what we have conceived existent in *space*, as in space becoming non-existent. We cannot realize it to thought, that a thing should be extruded, either from the one quantity or from the other. Hence, under extension, the law of *ultimate incompressibility*; under protension, the law of *cause and effect*." . . . "An object is presented to our observation which has phenomenally begun to be. But we cannot construe it to thought that the object, that is, *this determinate complement of existence*, had really no being at any past moment; because, in that case, once thinking it as existent, we should again think it as non-existent, which is for us impossible. What then can we — must we do? That the phenomenon presented to us did, *as a phenomenon*, begin to be, — this we know by experience; but that the elements of its existence only began when the phenomenon which they constitute came into manifested being, — this we are wholly unable to think. In these circumstances how do we proceed? There is for us only one possible way. We are compelled to believe that the object (that is the certain *quale* and *quantum* of being), whose phenomenal rise into existence we have witnessed, did *really* exist, prior to this rise, under other forms. But to say that a thing previously existed under different forms, is only to say, in other words, that *a thing had causes*." — *Discussions*, p. 591.

It is with the utmost diffidence that we confess our doubts of the correctness of this doctrine; affirmed as it is by a philosopher who has tested it, he assures us, in all its applications, and whose judgment always prevails with us as far as authority can fitly go. But it certainly does not speak home to our consciousness; and strikes us as an instance, — not solitary, — in which our author's logical acuteness is too much for the soundness of his psychological interpretation. Without calling in question the general "law of the conditioned," we are far from being convinced of its complicity with the principle of causality. Granting for the moment that we cannot conceive the existence of a phenomenon without also conceiving of its pre-existence, we cannot allow that this evolution of being is at all equivalent to the exercise of causation. That there was something *ready to be evolved* gives no satisfactory account of the *evolution itself*; and this it is that we want to know. When we would learn the  $\delta\delta\tau\iota$ , — to send us up to the previous  $\delta\tau\iota$ , — what is it but, on our asking for bread, to give us a stone? A cause is demanded, to explain precisely and only that which in any case did *not* pre-exist, namely, the *new* element, the form of fact which now *is* and *was not* before. To say that the difference of the present from the past has its solution in the identity of the past with the present, is surely a paradox. Indeed, sameness in the quantum of existence is not less compatible with the absence of all fresh phenomena than with their manifold occurrence; and cannot therefore account for either the fact or the nature of their change. An equation

contains no force; and to balance the amount of being is no provision for its transmigration into altered forms. Even if we allow this equipoise to be a condition of our judgments of causation, we cannot make it the sole condition, unless we are prepared to contend that the potentiality of a thing is the cause of its actuality. Thus, the theory seems to render no account of the essential element in the fact proposed for explanation.

But is any quantitative judgment at all involved in the principle of causality? We greatly doubt it. Were there any mental affirmation of identity in the sum of being before and after a phenomenon, we should regard the effect as evolved at the expense of the cause, and cancelling a portion of its existence; and no such mensurative comparison appears to us to belong to our casual faith in its inartificial form. Originally, cause and effect are incommensurable; and in its explanation of all phenomena the mind draws on the same fund of power, and that an infinite one, without supposing it ever to be diminished. The scientific reduction of force to quantitative rules is a subsequent and empirical result, not involved in the axiom of causation, but depending on the muscular limitations imposed on our own *visus*, and the tendency on this hint to detach from the infinite fund, and set up apart in our thought, certain delegated *stocks* of force, susceptible, through analogy among the phenomena, of an apparent common measure. Even then, however, the causal judgment extends in every direction over fields which dynamic mensuration cannot approach; and imagination is a

little provided as science with any metre for estimating the causality which gives to a plant yellow blossoms instead of white, or which produces a poem, or keeps a resolve. Thus, the theory seems to insist on a non-essential element in place of the essential, which it has cast out.

Again; what, according to this doctrine, is the *contradictory* of the principle of causality? what must we say, if we would flatly deny the proposition, that every phenomenon must have a cause? We must affirm, — so our author assures us, — that man is a free agent, and God the source of all! These beliefs, which certainly *mean* to vindicate causality in its highest and only genuine sense, are said to destroy it; and though set up expressly to prevent the whole universe filing off in a dead march of mere effects, are made responsible for the affirmation of lawless fortuity. So far from having any conflict in the common consciousness of mankind, with the causal faith, they are the very form which that faith assumes in its utmost intensity; and whatever finds itself in contradiction to them cannot well be the real law of the mind's feeling and procedure. The nature of the contradiction is thus expounded: —

“Fatalism and atheism are convertible terms. The only valid arguments for the existence of a God, and for the immortality of the human soul, rest on the ground of man's moral nature; consequently, if that moral nature be annihilated, which in any scheme of thorough-going necessity it is, every conclusion, established on such a nature, is annihilated likewise.

Aware of this, some of those who make the judgment of causality a positive dictate of intelligence, find themselves compelled, in order to escape from the consequences of their doctrine, to deny that this dictate, though universal in its deliverance, should be allowed to hold universally true; and, accordingly, they would exempt from it the facts of volition. Will, they hold to be a free cause, a cause which is not an effect; in other words, they attribute to it the power of absolute origination. But here their own principle of causality is too strong for them. They say that it is unconditionally promulgated, as an express and positive law of intelligence, that every origination is an apparent only, not a real, commencement. Now, to exempt certain phenomena from this universal law, on the ground of our moral consciousness, cannot validly be done; for, in the first place, this would be an admission that the mind is a complement of contradictory revelations. If mendacity be admitted of some of our mental dictates, we cannot vindicate veracity to any. If one be delusive, so may all. 'Falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus.' Absolute scepticism is here the legitimate conclusion. But, in the second place, waiving this conclusion, what right have we, on this doctrine, to subordinate the positive affirmation of causality to our consciousness of moral liberty, — what right have we, for the interest of the latter, to derogate from the former? We have none. If both be equally positive, we are not entitled to sacrifice the alternative, which our wishes prompt us to abandon." — *Discussions*, p. 595.

If the judgment of causality is tantamount to a denial of origination, it certainly cannot coexist with a doctrine of free will. This, however, is a postulate which we are not disposed to concede; least of all to Sir W. Hamilton, who condemns the only scheme that has a right to it, namely, Dr. Brown's resolution of causality into invariable phenomenal antecedence. To the *phenomenon*, as a realized fact, we no doubt do deny the power to originate itself; but to the *cause*, as a realizing agency, we do not deny, but, on the contrary, directly affirm, the power of absolutely originating the phenomenon: only in virtue of this prerogative is it presumed to be a cause at all. The true notion of causation in all men's minds, till science substitutes for the faith in origination the mere study of premonitory signs, is that of a power necessitating but not necessitated; — capable of determining one actuality out of a plurality of indeterminate possibilities, — of turning up into existence something rather than nothing, and *this* rather than *that*. We never ask for a cause except to resolve a question of *comparison*, — “why *this* and not *other than this*?” and the function which we demand from it is precisely that of elective determination. Hence, among the assemblage of conditions which are collectively indispensable to a given result, we attach the name “*cause*” distinctively to that *one* which has upset the equilibrium of possibilities, and precipitated the actual fact. Whence this notion of *preferential* agency? To what point does it refer us as the nativity of our causal belief? Can it be denied that in the exercise of our own WILL we are conscious of this

very power, — of fetching a single fact out of more than a single potentiality? that nowhere else than at this fountain-head of energy *could* this notion be got, requiring access, as it does, to the occult priorities of action, as well as to its posterior manifestation to the eye? and that only in so far as we interpret Nature by the type thus found, can we recognize there the characteristic element of causality? The will, therefore, we submit, so far from being the solitary exception to a universal rule of necessary causation, is itself the universal rule which makes all real causation free. Volitional agency is that which the mind originally sees in nature as in itself, — the opposite term in that dynamic antithesis on which the obstructed *nisus* of perception lands us; and never does the inquisitive “whence?” find repose along the linear ascent of antecedents, till it reaches the only power intrinsically capable of fetching the determinate out of the indeterminate, namely, a MIND. The advocate of free will, instead of standing in contradiction to the principle of causality, thus regards himself as in possession of its only key; he retorts upon his opponent the charge of corrupting the psychological text of nature’s definition in order to find his own interpretation; and protests that a denial of all origination is but a poor account of how a phenomenon came to be. He identifies the causal law with the faith, not in necessity, but in freedom, and dates the semblance of contradiction between them from the moment when the observed rule of phenomenal succession, required for purposes of scientific prediction, usurped the place of the real prin-



ciple of causality, which is the living essence of all ontological faith.

What, then, are we to say of the asserted psychological fact, that an absolute commencement of existence is intrinsically inconceivable? Is it a fact at all? We believe not. *Of* time itself indeed no beginning can be thought; but a beginning of existence *in* time, the apparition of a phenomenon perfectly new, appears to us to contradict no law of imagination or belief. In demanding a *cause* for such phenomenon, we do not wish to make out that it is the disguised reappearance of a quantity already there; nor does any mental necessity constrain us to compare the amount of existence before and after its manifestation. The theist who holds the doctrine of a positive creation of all things by an act of volition, does not suppose that the divine nature suffers decrement by the sum of created existences; nor does he think of God as now, in part even, metamorphosed into the universe; but as having made space richer by an absolute augmentation of being. Whether this mode of conception is, on religious or philosophical grounds, better or worse than the doctrine of evolution and transmigration, we do not inquire; we only submit that it is psychologically possible.

The "law of the conditioned," therefore, appears inadequate to solve the mystery of causation. It only remains to ask, whether it closes the door of hope against all ontological inquiry? Are the boasted entities of pure thought mere negations obtained by abstracting all the conditions of positive cognition? and is the "indefinite" the only notion we can have

of the "infinite"? On these great questions we will no further presume to touch, than to suggest one or two cautionary reflections, with a view to relieve the utter despair which our author encourages of any but phenomenal knowledge. Let it be admitted at once that all knowledge is relative, and that every attempt of the mind to sink away from all relation and merge into the absolute is vain, and were it not so, would be suicidal,—a total extinction of thought, not an enlargement of it. This is not a mere provincial limitation of the *human* faculties, but an inherent character of knowledge, as such, and inseparable from it in the highest as in the lowest mind. For this very reason, however, it appears absurd to put on the airs of modest disclaimer in professing to have no cognizance of "things in themselves." This is not a prerogative missed, but a prerogative gained; not a science beyond reach, but a nescience escaped. To know two things (for example, master and mind) only in their relation ought to be treated as tantamount, not to an ignorance of both, but to a knowledge of both; if we are unacquainted with them *out of relation*, we are ignorant of them only where there is nothing to be known. Intellectual humility consists in a profound sense of the littleness of our actual knowledge, as compared with the possible, not with the impossible. Whoever feels humbled by the relativity of his faculties must assume that by this he is debarred from something it were well to reach; that he is hindered from getting at reality, and doomed to be content with shadows; he wants, not to know *more* (for that "more," however vast, would still be

relative), but to know *differently*; and deplores the very essence of intellect itself as a hopeless blindness. What is this but the morbid lament of scepticism? Faith in the veracity of our faculties, if it means anything, requires us to believe that *things are as they appear*, — that is, appear to the mind in the last and highest resort; and to deal with the fact that they "*only appear*" as if it constituted an eternal exile from their *reality* is to attribute lunacy to universal reason. But the objects of ontological quest are not lost to us in being only relatively discerned. Being either plural themselves, or containing a plurality, they are actually charged with relations; and to know them as out of relation would be simply to *mis-know* them. Because God can be contemplated only, like other objects of thought, as differenced from our subjective selves, is it needful to say, that he is merely phenomenal to us and not cognizable in his reality?

*Negatives* in thought are perhaps as unjustly disparaged as *relatives*. The infinite is no doubt the negation of the finite; but so also is the finite of the infinite; the relation is strictly convertible, and either term may be equally assumed as positive. Both are not indeed alike "*conceivable*," if by that word be meant *presentable in imagination*; but both are alike cogitable, and take their place among the objects of assured belief, at the same moment and in the same act. The experience which gives to my perception a body of certain shape and size, simultaneously gives to my knowledge the boundless space in which it lies. The definite object is seen upon

the infinite ground ; neither is gained before or after the other ; neither, therefore, by thinking away or abstracting the conditions of the other, as prior ; both are accepted as immediately known realities. The instant the ego stands consciously face to face with the non-ego, the antithesis of *here* and *there* is understood ; and the *elsewhere*, which is the negative of either, is felt to be not merely an indefinite possibility to which we know *of no end*, but an infinite actuality to which we know *that there is no end*. Is this necessary faith, which comes in with the first apprehension of solid extension, and holds us by the same tenure, a mere delusion ? If it be, we charge mendacity on a primary cognition. If it be not, then infinitude is affirmed as a reality, and therefore positively thought, of space. The continued additive process, never stopping except from the fatigue of going on, to which our author, like Locke and Mill, ascribes our representation of inexhaustible extension, appears to us an unpsychologic fiction ; it is not under this aspect of a "growing quantity," but under that of an "infinite datum," that space presents itself in thought. Of course such infinite datum, imposed on our acceptance by necessity of thought, can be referred only to an *à priori* source ; and were this an idea inadmissible in Sir W. Hamilton's philosophy, we should understand his refusal to advance beyond the "indefinite." But he approves and professes the Kantian doctrine of space and time ; only with the addition that we have an *à posteriori* as well as an *à priori* apprehension of them. From the one source we should learn them to be indefinite ; from

the other they are given to us as infinite: why are we to register the former testimony with our knowledge, the latter with our ignorance? In showing the subjective origin of our beliefs about time and space, Kant has failed to prove their objective invalidity. Is every representation which is the pure birth of the mind untrustworthy on that account? Hegel accused Kant of assailing all the most necessary persuasions of mankind with the curious argument, "It cannot be true, because *we* have to believe it." And this reproach any philosophy must incur, which is not prepared to accept as valid the objective contents of every *à priori* belief, until their credit is shaken by the appearance of contradictory claims. In spite, therefore, of its relative, its negative, its subjective character, we are disposed to vindicate the real, positive, objective validity of that infinitude which we ascribe to extension and duration. The same remarks apply to the other entities of thought, as substance and cause, soul and God. These notions are all vehicles of indestructible belief in certain ideal objects as also real; and do not present themselves as mere subjective aids to the apprehension of other related things. Why have they not as good title to be believed on their own word, as the consciousness which assures us of the existence of an external world? There would seem to be something arbitrary in our author's discrimination of what he shall take and what he shall leave of the critical philosophy. Kant's tendency to idealistic scepticism he sees and condemns on his own favorite field, — the doctrine of perception; and the justice of his verdict is ren-

dered evident to the least discerning by the fact that, in the first edition of the "Kritik der reinen Vernunft," the philosopher of Königsberg had hinted at the possibility of resolving the non-ego, in the last resort, into the same thinking essence with the ego; and had thus furnished the text, cancelled almost as soon as written, for Fichte's subsequent speculations. But no sooner is Sir W. Hamilton clear of the senses, than the realism with which he has protected himself against Kant is flung away; the natural faiths of consciousness, trusted hitherto in evidence of positive fact, become suspected as mere negative dreams; they are described as the blanks drawn by our imbecility, instead of the prizes awarded to our capacity; and the mind, previously guided in so sound a course, is pronounced to have no other choice, for its higher beliefs, than between two extremes both separately impossible, and, in their relation, mutually contradictory. This complete ontological scepticism we cannot fully reconcile with our author's perceptive realism; and while acknowledging the adequacy of his polemic against the modern continental absolutists, we are not yet stripped of the hope that a less precarious passage may be found from the knowledge of self to that of hyperphysical nature and of God.

Nor does our author himself esteem the gulf impassable. Like Kant, he demolishes your one bridge, and leaves you shuddering on the solemn verge; but when you are duly humbled with despair, he leads you to another spot, and shows you a footway across to which you may safely trust; only it rests, he assures you, on no arches of reason spanning the

abyss and bottomed in known reality; but rather hangs from chains of obligation, whose curve dips into the clearest sight, while for their fastening they run up into the dark of heaven. What the speculative intellect dissipates, the practical restores; and the moral consciousness countermands the scepticism which had been pronounced the only wisdom of pure thought. The truths denied to knowledge are given to faith, and found to be entangled as indispensable postulates in the whole action of the will and conscience:—

“It is chiefly, if not solely, to explain the one phenomenon of *morality*, of *free-will*, that we are warranted in assuming a second and hyperphysical substance, in an immaterial principle of thought; for it is only on the supposition of a moral liberty in man, that we can attempt to vindicate, as truths, a moral order, and, consequently, a moral governor, in the universe; and it is only on the hypothesis of a soul within us, that we can assert the reality of a God above us,—‘Nullus in microcosmo spiritus, nullus in macrocosmo Deus.’ In the hands of the materialist, or physical necessitarian, every argument for the existence of a Deity is either annulled, or reversed into a demonstration of atheism. In his hands, with the moral worth of man, the inference to a moral ruler of a moral world is gone. In his hands, the argument from the adaptations of end and mean, everywhere apparent in existence, to the primary causality of intelligence and liberty, if applied, establishes, in fact, the primary causality of

necessity and matter. For as this argument is only an extension to the universe of the analogy observed in man; if in man, design,—intelligence, be only a phenomenon of matter, only a reflex of organization; this consecution of first and second in us, extended to the universal order of things, reverses the absolute priority of intelligence to matter, that is, subverts the fundamental condition of a Deity. Thus it is, that our theology is necessarily founded on our psychology; that we must *recognize a God from our own minds*, before we can *detect a God in the universe of nature.*—*Discussions*, p. 298.

“To recognize a God from our own minds” is surely to discover a “passage from psychology to ontology;” and the transition which Sir W. Hamilton denies to Cousin he finds possible himself. There is a way—and he has indicated, with the clearest discernment, precisely where it lies—to reach the sublime truths in which philosophy culminates. Why then describe these truths as intrinsically incognizable, and draw the boundary of possible knowledge far short of them? Why denounce all claim to their discovery as a presumptuous delusion, yet hold up the disbelief of them as a mischievous ignorance; censuring at once the metaphysician for finding and the mathematician for missing them? That they are included among the contents of our moral rather than of our perceptive experience, that they are hypotheses underlying all action instead of postulates conditioning reflective thought, affords no adequate reason for withdrawing them from the category of



*knowledge.* If they be susceptible of becoming any-how legitimate objects of belief, if to be without them is to be in error and misconceive the universe and life, it must be a wrong definition of knowledge which excludes them; of logic, which disowns the laws of thought conducting to them; of philosophy, which deals with them as its own outer darkness. We do not believe in the mutual conflict and ultimate contradiction of the human faculties, so that the light put out by one is kindled by another; nor, if we did, should we find much comfort in the assurance that the contradiction is the result, not of their power, but of their impotence. Be their deliverances called positive or negative, if they coerce our faith into incompatible admissions, leave us no choice but between two impossibles, and amid the protests of reason against both, provoke us, by force of instinct, into one, our nature is indeed a strange confusion, and breaks into utter distortion the divine image it was created to reflect. Thus to affirm a discord of its capacities *inter se* appears scarcely a more warrantable scepticism, than to repudiate its announcements, one by one. Let a single *à priori* belief, given us by a necessary law of thought (like the judgment of causality and of the infinitude of space) be once discredited, and the moral effect and intellectual havoc are the same, whether it be treated *ab initio* as unreliable, or be convicted, at a later stage, of denying an allegation equally original and authentic with itself. The mind is in either way a shrine of falsehood; the Pythoness is drunk, and the oracles rave. Afflicted with the belief of two contradictories, neither

of which we are permitted to conceive possible, how are we to choose our course? how detect the cheat that is somewhere put upon us? Shall we say to ourselves, one of these extremes must be true and the other false, — so we cannot hold both? This assumes that the *contradiction is real*, and not a phantasm of our incapacity; yet who can assure us of this? for if it be so, and we forthwith decide to drop one of the extremes, the other which we retain is still felt to be an impossibility, while admitted as a reality. We distrust the feeling, and believe in spite of it. But why fix the cheat *there*? If the *impossibility* of either term may be treated as mere semblance, why not the *contradictoriness* between the two? And is it not as competent to us to say, "Since both are impossible, neither can be true," as to urge, "Since they are contradictory, *only one* can be false"? All sane direction of the mind is lost, if among its guiding stars there ever hangs an ignis fatuus. It behoves philosophy sooner to suspect itself, than to install contradictions within the very essence of reason; and rather than make our nature Jesuitically insinuate a lie, to persist in the hope of so interpreting the mottoes of its several faculties and combining the scattered leaves of its faith, as to bring out the continuity of truth, and its unity with all beauty and good. A philosophy which creates antinomies may have the highest merit but one; the highest of all is reserved for a philosophy that resolves them.

We must close this notice without a word on the subject of Sir W. Hamilton's scheme of logical forms. Indeed, when we advert to the various topics elabo-

rately treated by him, which we cannot so much as enumerate to our readers, and see how slightly we have touched his solid mass of doctrine even at the few points which have attracted us, we are more impressed than ever with profound admiration for his largeness of learning and thoroughness of mind. That the one sometimes tempts to a superfluous display, and the other to an intellectual scorn more merited by his victims than graceful to himself, will be most readily forgiven by those who understand the author and know his writings best. In him the old scholastic spirit seems embodied again; its capacity for work; its vehemence of disputation; its generous intellectual admirations; its fineness of logical apprehension; the want of perspective and proportion in its mental view. Books and thoughts are evidently the population of his world; they form the natural circle of his friendships and his enmities; their reputations touch his sense of equity and honor; their rivalries and delinquencies furnish the needful amusement of a little gossip and scandal. Where the range of knowledge is so vast, this enclosure of the whole intensity of life within the sphere of notional speculation involves no narrowness; but can scarcely fail to impart a warmth of zeal, which others can scarcely believe to be excited by formulas and theories. Professional enthusiasm is so needful an inspiration for every effective teacher, that only those who cannot appreciate its value will be unwilling to take it on its own terms. The great critic and metaphysician of Edinburgh has rendered inestimable service by reducing the leading problems of philos-

ophy into a better form than they had assumed in the hands of any of his predecessors, and by admirable examples of the true method of discussion. But he has rendered a higher and yet more fruitful service by awakening the dormant genius of British philosophy, rebuking its sluggishness, reviving its aspirations, and training a school of studious and generous admirers, who will emulate his example and reverently carry on his work.

## ALEXANDRIA AND HER SCHOOLS.<sup>1</sup>

THE intensity of Mr. Kingsley's genius always secures to his productions a certain singleness of impression. The most heterogeneous materials, put into the crucible of his thought and brought to its white heat, flow down into forms perfectly characteristic and distinct. The unity, however, is simply that of his own personality, meeting us again and again; — a phenomenon, let us say, ever delightful to us, and rich in whatever it is best to love and admire; but needing for its full power more elaboration of matter and harmony of plan than he exacts from himself. These Edinburgh Lectures deal with a topic eminently special and rounded off within itself, — with a feature prominent if not unique in the moral physiognomy of the world: nor does any one more truly apprehend its significance than the author; yet, for want of observing its real limits, he has presented it in the midst of confusing accessories, and broken the force of his own interpretation. By the "Alexandrine School" is usually understood the peculiar de-

<sup>1</sup> Alexandria and her Schools. Four Lectures delivered at the Philosophical Institution, Edinburgh. With a Preface. By the Rev. Charles Kingsley, Canon of Middleham, and Rector of Eversley. Cambridge: Macmillan & Co. 1854.

"Prospective Review," 1854.

velopment of philosophical doctrine, which had its origin from Ammonius Saccas, its chief representative in Plotinus, and its last teacher in Simplicius; extending therefore from the end of the second century through the first quarter of the sixth. This system is entitled to a separate chapter in the history of mankind. It is a genuine and distinctive product of its time, which you cannot even in imagination transpose. It bears the mingled colors of an old world and a new; and is the twilight dream of thought between the sunny hours of Pagan life and the night-watches of Christian meditation. It is moreover the one original growth of Ægypto-Hellenic civilization; and its expositor naturally encounters in his task whatever is indigenious to the city of the Ptolemies. To this episode in the story of the human mind Mr. Kingsley, however, has not confined himself. Alexandria is with him "a geographical expression;" her "Schools" are in the plural number, and include the taskwork of critics and grammarians, as well as the efforts of native speculation; and whatever he finds upon the spot, whether put there by external succession, or arising by proper evolution, he passes under hasty review; enclosing his proper subject between a superfluous prefix on the erudition and science of the Ptolemaic era, and an irrelevant supplement on the Mohammedan conquest and religion. The parts have not that natural connection with each other which is needful to any successful sweep over a thousand years in four evening lectures; and though a scenic variety is thus attained, it is the variety of a local handbook rather than of a tale of character and life. Perhaps

the range, as well as the selection of the subject was determined for the author by the Institution where the Lectures were delivered; for assuredly the lessons which it is his purpose to impress would have been more distinctly brought out by a less discursive survey.

Mr. Kingsley, it has long been evident, is haunted by a supposed analogy between the Neoplatonic period of the declining empire and the intellectual tendencies of the present age. And certainly if any believer in the metempsychosis chose to identify Margaret Fuller with Hypatia, Emerson with Porphyry, the Poughkeepsie seer with Jamblichus, and Frederick Maurice with Clement, grounds of recognition would not be wanting. Nor does the parallelism wholly fail in the broad features of the two ages. The decline of ancient faith without mature successor to take the vacant throne; the attempt of metaphysics to fit the soul with a religion; the pretensions of intuition and ecstasy; the sudden birth, from the very eggs of a high-flown spiritualism, of mystagogues and mesmerists, as larvæ are born of butterflies; the growth of world-cities and world-science, with their public libraries and institutes, their botanic and zoölogic gardens, their cheap baths and open parks; the joint diffusion of taste and demoralization, of asceticism and intemperance; the increase of a proletary class amid the growing humanity of society and the laws; the frequency of frightful epidemics; the combination of gigantic enterprises and immense commerce with decay at the heart of private life; — afford undoubtedly a curious

group of symptoms common to the Europe of that day and of this. And when Mr. Kingsley justifies, by appeal to the example of the Old World, his despair of any philosophy or theology which substitutes opinions about God for faith in him, and idolizes its own dogma instead of trusting his living guidance, we think his estimate not less seasonable than it is just. For all time the difference *is* infinite between the partisan of beliefs, and the man whose heart is set upon reality, — between one who is lifted up in the pride of his representative notions, and another to whose humility the divine truth is present in person : and whether the old orthodox forms or the new-light images be the better type of thought is a barren controversy, breeding only error and nursing only conceit, till the mood of advocacy be changed ; and they are no longer appropriated as *our* ideal scheme, but surrendered to God's realism. Our century also, no less than the third and fourth, requires to be recalled from subjective systems to objective fact ; to cease prating of the "Religious Sentiment" in the august hearing of the very God ; and, instead of straining the fine metaphysic wing to seek him in the seventh heaven, simply to let him be here and tell us what to do. In fetching this lesson out of the Alexandrine history, and warning us of the difference between worship of human intellect and reverence for divine truth, Mr. Kingsley renders good service. But when he seems to anticipate for Europe a social dissolution like that of the lower empire, his divination overstrains, we hope, the analogy between the periods which he is accustomed to compare. When



the Macedonian conquests had suppressed the nationalities of the East, and Rome had completed their extinction in the West, all local color faded from the surface of the civilized world; intellectual culture and political organization attained a cosmopolitan diffusion; the special became the provincial, and the provincial passed into the servile. There were but two languages, foreign to the vast majority of Roman subjects, in which thought and passion could gain audience; all others, though they might flow more naturally to the lips, were abandoned to the chaffering of the market, the games of children, and the altercations of slaves. The favored languages themselves suffered by their own privilege, and bore testimony to their own degeneration. The Latin, which now gave the world its laws, could not forget the Forum, and had in it the flavor of a pride and virtue that were gone. The Greek, now forced to do the ingenious and polite for all mankind, had its bloom and glory in an autochthonic literature, breathing a faith, and fresh from a life which the sickened age could no longer understand. All that was indigenous and characteristic was smoothed away; and over the wooded uplands and sequestered meadows of history, the paved roads of universal empire pushed their level way. The whole problem of the scholar was to extract something for men in general out of what was meant for Greeks alone; to wipe out the Hellenic, or translate it into the human; and eliminate from the formulas of Attic thought every term that did not admit of indefinite expansion. Those only who have a life of their own can really set themselves to appre-

ciate the life of another people ; the vapid lot of the Alexandrines, without country, without ancestry, enabled them, neither by analogy nor by antithesis of pride and admiration, to understand the traditions and vicissitudes of the Athenian commonwealth. To accommodate the contents of a unique literature to the spirit of a characterless civilization was the function of the philosophers of the Nile. As all the worships of mankind had been connected with the locality and race, the absorption of States was the dying out of religions ; divinities, once venerable in their native abodes, were pensioned off into the Pantheon ; and the reconciled East and West met in Rome to exchange compliments and gods. To save a comprehensive religion out of the wreck of perishing mythologies is a hopeless attempt ; reverence, wounded in the concrete, cannot be restored in the abstract ; and piety, accustomed to warm colors and concentrated air, turns pale and dies in the ether and its cold light. It is not surprising that the effort should fail to turn a world-wide tyranny to account for the creation of a universal faith, and to make men who had unlearned their worships one by one, believe them all again, as soon as they were regimented into system. The cosmopolitanism of modern times is altogether different. Instead of being the residuary effect from the negation of prior faiths, it arises from the positive presence, to begin with, of a universal faith. It is essentially a *religious* feeling, acknowledging the common law and common kindred of the human race, in all the highest relations. It is encouraged, no doubt, as in the Roman period, by the extension

of mercantile transactions and facilities of intercourse; and from the mixture of trading interest with evangelic sentiment, many delusive dreams of unity and peace, and much stupid indifference to municipal, ethnological, and political distinctions cannot fail to arise. But with all this, — with a catholic religion, a terrestrial commerce, and our share in the speculative philosophy whose very aim it is to grasp the all of things, — it is impossible for the wide synoptic tendency to obtain exclusive dominance over us, with no other check than individual self-love or passion. The past providence of God has taken care of this. The mere coexistence of so many cultivated languages, each with a literature of its own, preserves securely the rich variety of the world's life, and treasures up, for the hour of reassertion, whatever noble heritage of race and history a transient overbalance of force may have neutralized. Nor is our age, as compared with its predecessors, chargeable with disregard, in its arrangements and aims, of the historical data of European society. The mimicry of "classical" antiquity, and the propagation of paper "constitutions," which satisfied the pedantic aspirations of reform in the last century, are laughed at in this; and it is the violence done to *nationalities* that revolutionary movements everywhere resent, and even diplomacy is learning to regret. With the unity of human nature given in our religion, and the right of various development enforced on us by the necessity of history, we hold in happy balance, as it seems to us, the two opposite conditions, of which the Neoplatonic age had lost the latter and vainly sought to

find the former. Persons no doubt there are, and particular schools amongst us, who may run again the morbid course of Alexandrine thought; but we believe there is health in the heart of European nations to pass through such pestilent hours as they may bring.

Whatever may be our author's forebodings as to the future of Europe, he treats with just disdain the pleas of selfishness and tyranny, and manfully enforces the duties of free States, in the crisis brought on by Russian encroachment: —

“Europe needs a holier and more spiritual, and therefore a stronger union, than can be given by armed neutralities, and the so-called cause of order. She needs such a bond as in the Elizabethan age united the free States of Europe against the Anarch of Spain, and delivered the western nations from a rising world-tyranny, which promised to be even more hideous than that elder one of Rome. If, as then, England shall proclaim herself the champion of freedom by acts, and not by words and paper, she may, as she did then, defy the rulers of the darkness of this world, for the God of light will be with her. But, as yet, it is impossible to look without sad forebodings upon the destiny of a war, begun upon the express understanding that evil shall be left triumphant throughout Europe, wheresoever that evil does not seem, to our own selfish shortsightedness, to threaten us with immediate danger; with promises, that under the hollow name of the Cause of Order — and that promise made by a revolutionary Anarch —

the wrongs of Italy, Hungary, Poland, Sweden, shall remain unredressed, and that Prussia and Austria, two tyrannies, the one far more false and hypocritical than the other, even more rotten than that of Turkey, shall, if they will but observe a hollow and uncertain neutrality (for who can trust the liar and the oppressor?) be allowed not only to keep their ill-gotten spoils, but even now to play into the hands of our foe, by guarding his Polish frontier for him, and keeping down the victims of his cruelty, under pretence of keeping down those of their own. . . . We shall not escape our duty by inventing to ourselves some other duty, and calling it 'order.' Elizabeth did so at first. She tried to keep the peace with Spain; she shrank from injuring the cause of order (then a nobler one than now, because it was the cause of loyalty, and not merely of mammon), by assisting the Scotch and the Netherlanders; but her duty was forced upon her; and she did it at last cheerfully, boldly, utterly, like a hero; she put herself at the head of the battle for the freedom of the world, and she conquered, for God was with her; and so that seemingly most fearful of all England's perils, when the real meaning of it was seen, and God's will in it obeyed manfully, became the foundation of England's naval and colonial empire, and laid the foundation of all her future glories. So it was then, so it is now; so it will be forever: he who seeks to save his life will lose it; he who willingly throws away his life for the cause of mankind, which is the cause of God, the Father of mankind, he shall save it, and be rewarded a hundred-fold. That God may

grant us, the children of the Elizabethan heroes, all wisdom to see our duty, and courage to do it, even to the death, should be our earnest prayer. . . . .

It is reported that our rulers have said that English diplomacy can no longer recognize 'nationalities,' but only existing 'governments.' God grant that they may see in time that the assertion of national life, as a spiritual and indefeasible existence, was for centuries the central idea of English policy; the idea by faith in which she delivered first herself, and then the Protestant nations of the Continent, successively from the yokes of Rome, of Spain, of France, and that they may reassert that most English of all truths again, let the apparent cost be what it may."

— *Preface*, p. xviii.

Before treating of the "physical" and "metaphysical" schools of Alexandria, Mr. Kingsley explains the origin and meaning of these two terms: "physical" denoting that which "is born" and grows (*φύεται*), or, the phenomenal; "metaphysical," that of which we learn to think *after* we think of nature; the supernatural ground of all phenomena, which never begins and ends, but always *is*. By a *physical* school, then, we should understand one which treats of phenomena; by a *metaphysical*, one which treats of real or fundamental being. Mr. Kingsley, however, with one of his strange and sudden twists, pronounces all Alexandria one physical school. Why? Not because it engaged itself in the *study* of phenomena, but because the city and its history *constitute* a phenomenon; and he no less claims it as a *meta-*

*physical* school, on the counter-ground, that it held human beings with imperishable elements and spiritual relations. Assuredly, not Alexandria alone, but any smallest fact or object in this universe, being an evolution in time out of that which is eternal, presents *material* for both physical and metaphysic study. but this is nothing to the point; and is as if, when we want to know what the College of Physicians thinks of asthma, you were to give us the name of a wheezy doctor. The digressions into which our author starts off in this wild illogical way are always eloquent and often deep and beautiful; but a quieter command of coherent thought would awaken stronger trust; and it is hardly well that our guide across a great tract of time should be so ready to plunge off into the forest to chase a bird, or dart aside over the prairie just to ride into the wind.

We have said that it might have been more judicious in our author to pass without notice the labors of the Ptolemaic savans, and go at once to the single original product of Alexandrine culture, the system of Plotinus and his successors. With this the researches and instructions of the Museum had nothing to do. In the lecture-rooms of that great literary and scientific institute various knowledge was taught; the stores of the past were gathered up and systematized; mathematical and astronomical science was improved; what genius had created industry criticised: but no great work relieved the barrenness of the time. All the schools of Greek doctrine — Pythagorean, Academic, Aristotelian, etc. — had their separate representatives, who expounded the systems as they had been

handed down ; but no fresh philosophic impulse originated new speculation or fused and recast the old. Neoplatonism was not only a later, but a wholly independent product, in which the patronage of the palace and the institute can claim no share. Mr. Kingsley has not clearly distinguished historical juxtaposition from causal connection, and has presented the pre-Christian erudition and the post-Christian metaphysics in a continuity of development which did not belong to them. But he so finely exhibits in its essence the sterility of the early artificial school, and traces it so justly to blind reverence for the letter rather than the spirit of ancient wisdom, that we care not to criticise his plan : —

“ This, if you will consider, is the true meaning of that great command, ‘ Honor thy father and mother, that thy days may be long in the land.’ On reverence for the authority of by-gone generations depends the permanence of every form of thought or belief, as much as of all social, national, and family life ; but on reverence of the spirit, not merely of the letter ; of the methods of our ancestors, not merely of their conclusions. Ay, and we shall not be able to preserve their conclusions, not even to understand them ; they will die away on our lips into skeleton notions and soulless phrases, unless we see that the greatness of the mighty dead has always consisted in this, that they were seekers, improvers, inventors, endued with that divine power and right of discovery which has been bestowed on us, even as on them ; unless we become such men as they were, and go on to culti-



vate and develop the precious heritage which they have bequeathed to us, instead of hiding their talent in a napkin and burying it in the earth ; making their greatness an excuse for our own littleness, their industry for our laziness, their faith for our despair ; and prating about the old paths, while we forget that paths were made that men might walk in them, and not stand still, and try in vain to stop the way.

“It may be said certainly, as an excuse for these Alexandrian Greeks, that they were a people in a state of old age and decay ; and that they only exhibited the common and natural faults of old age. For as with individuals, so with races, nations, societies, schools of thought ; youth is the time of free fancy and poetry ; manhood, of calm and strong induction ; old age, of deduction, when men settle down upon their lees, and content themselves with reaffirming and verifying the conclusions of their earlier years, and too often, alas ! with denying and anathematizing all conclusions which have been arrived at since their own meridian. It is sad ; but it is patent and common. It is sad to think that the day may come to each of us, when we shall have ceased to hope for discovery and for progress ; when a thing will seem *à priori* false to us, simply because it is new ; and we shall say querulously to the Divine Light which lightens every man who comes into the world, ‘Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further. Thou hast taught men enough ; yea, rather, thou hast exhausted thine own infinitude, and hast no more to teach them.’ Surely such a temper is to be fought against, prayed against, both in ourselves and in the generation in which we live. Surely

there is no reason why such a temper should overtake old age. There may be reason enough, 'in the nature of things.' For that which is of nature is born only to decay and die. But in man there is more than dying nature; there is spirit, and a capability of spiritual and everlasting life, which renews its youth like the eagle's, and goes on from strength to strength, and which, if it have its autumns and its winters, has no less its ever-recurring springs and summers; if it has its Sabbaths, finds in them only rest and refreshment for coming labor. And why not in nations, societies, scientific schools? These too are not merely natural; they are spiritual, and are only living and healthy in as far as they are in harmony with spiritual, unseen, and everlasting laws of God. May not they, too, have a capability of everlasting life, as long as they obey those laws in faith, and patience, and humility? We cannot deny the analogy between the individual man and these societies of men. We cannot at least deny the analogy between them in growth, decay, and death. May we not have hope that it holds good also for that which can never die; and that if they do die, as this old Greek society did, it is by no brute natural necessity, but by their own unfaithfulness to that which they knew, to that which they ought to have known? It is always more hopeful, always, as I think, more philosophic, to throw the blame of failure on man, on our ourselves, rather than on God and the perfect law of his universe. At least, let us be sure for ourselves that such an old age as befell this Greek society, as befalls many a man now-a-days, need not be our lot. Let us be

sure that earth shows no fairer sight than the old man, whose worn-out brain and nerves make it painful, and perhaps impossible, to produce fresh thought himself; but who can yet welcome smilingly and joyfully the fresh thoughts of others; who keeps unwearied his faith in God's government of the universe, in God's continual education of the human race; who draws around him the young and the sanguine, not merely to check their rashness by his wise cautions, but to inspirit their sloth by the memories of his own past victories; who hands over, without envy or repining, the lamp of truth to younger runners than himself, and sits contented by, bidding the new generation God-speed along the paths untrodden by him, but seen afar off by faith. A few such old persons have I seen, both men and women; in whom the young heart beat pure and fresh, beneath the cautious and practised brain of age, and gray hairs, which were indeed a crown of glory. A few such have I seen; and from them I seemed to learn what was the likeness of our Father who is in heaven. To such an old age may he bring you and me, and all for whom we are bound to pray." — Pp. 33-37.

The sketch of the proper Alexandrine philosophy given in these Lectures is too slight to admit of either criticism or completion. The few lines and points that are jotted down may serve, perhaps, as indicative memoranda to those who know the ground; but so indistinct a picture can neither be filled in with supplementary features to make it true, nor exactly condemned as intrinsically false. In fact, Mr. King's

ley's interest in the Neoplatonic system arises not from anything special to it and discriminating it from all other schemes of doctrine, but from a character which it has in common with most of the great Greek and modern German schools, namely, its proper *realism*, or assumption of something to be known behind phenomena and their laws. He resents the indignity put upon metaphysic by Locke, in reducing it from a science of real being to a classification of mental appearances; and perceives, with sensitive religious instinct, that if only phenomena can be known, God, who is no phenomenon, must be inapprehensible by the human mind. In his antipathy to this notion, he welcomes as an ally every system at marked variance with it; and exaggerates the relationships between doctrines which have little in common beyond their commencement from an ontological ground. He puts together, as if they belonged to the same philosophical group, Philo the Jew, Numenius the Pythagorean, Plotinus the Platonist; and attributes to the first especially an influence over the speculations of the last which it is quite gratuitous to assume. To say that "the father of New Platonism was Philo the Jew" (p. 79), and that "from the time of Philo, the deepest thought of the heathen world began to flow in a theologic channel" (p. 93), is to give a totally false impression of the order of action and reaction between the Judaic and the Hellenic thought. Indeed the latter of these assertions is essentially erroneous even in relation to the external fact. No change towards a more theologic character marked the course of philosophy till the appearance of Ammonius—

the *θεοδίδακτος*, as he was called — at the end of the second century; the religious sentiment of Epictetus belonging to the doctrine of the Porch; and that of Numenius to the Pythagorean scheme. Nor is there any reason to believe that the New Platonism would have been materially different if Philo had never lived. It is possible indeed that Plotinus, whose curiosity respecting Oriental notions emboldened him to share the dangers of Gordian's Persian expedition, may have referred to Philo's writings as a source of Jewish knowledge, and felt a congenial interest in his doctrines of the absolute as distinguished from the rational Deity, and of the contemplative union of the soul with the divine nature. But even where the resemblance is least doubtful, plagiarism, or even derivation of the later from the earlier, is not to be presumed. The condition of the world rendered it inevitable that the Hellenic thought should penetrate and win the Hebrew; impossible that the Hebrew should at all considerably influence the Hellenic, except indeed within the Christian Church, the appointed providential medium for their conjunction and reconciliation. The East, twice subjugated by the West, had surrendered to its culture not less than to its arms, and could negotiate on no equal terms with the languages of Alexander and Pompey. The Greek and Roman literature, apart from any higher claim, was the literature of conquerors, and gave the law to education, to taste, to manners, to art. To be at cross purposes with it was to be disqualified for polished society. The schools of philosophy and rhetoric which trained the youth and in-

terested the leisure of the wealthy and accomplished classes, kept alive the admiration of Athenian models, and were wholly engaged in expounding the wisdom and copying the intellectual discipline of the city of the Sophists. Nor was any lesson more readily communicated by Greek egotism to Roman pride, than the contempt for "barbarian" literature; and if some exception must be made on behalf of Magian, Indian, and Egyptian doctrines, which enjoyed the repute of a mysterious antiquity, and of having passed under the notice of Herodotus and Plato, no such romantic attraction rescued from contempt the intellectual pretensions of the Hebrew people. The Platonizing system of Philo only shows how completely the dominant civilization carried all before it, and found even the impenetrable substance of Jewish belief not proof against its infiltration. Had the philosophical impulse been strong enough in him, as it was in Spinoza, to induce apostasy and deliver him over from the synagogue to the academy, he might have affected the future development of doctrine. But he has no dialectic genius; no disposition to compromise his nationality; only the bad taste to dress up Moses in the philosophic cloak, and hang the white sheet on a many-colored history that it may play the part of ghostly allegory. His appropriation of Greek ideas to the honor of Hebrew theology is precisely the use of them which would most certainly repel the fastidiousness of Gentile scholars, and limit his influence to his compatriots. We believe, therefore, that the New Platonism of Ammonius and Plotinus was of pure Hellenic descent; and arose naturally from the

confluence of Ionic and Doric elements of thought at a time when there was nothing to maintain their distinction, and when the loss or degradation of living *moral* activities, whether in the family or the state, drove the soul upon mystical methods of self-reconciling union with the absolutely good. This Alexandrine school was the last effort of a culture purely Greek to satisfy out of its own resources the altered demands of the human mind, and stop the encroachment of Eastern barbarism and superstition. For this purpose all the appliances of Hellenic wisdom were brought together and exhausted in the comprehensive genius of Plotinus; but nothing was touched that lay beyond; the very problem being to show that the Western schools were equal to the utmost strain that could be put upon a system of philosophy and religion. This jealous Greek exclusiveness is indeed the key to the whole history of Neoplatonism; and the tendency of the French eclectics on the one hand, and of Mr. Maurice and his disciples on the other, to run its genealogy into the lines of Jewish and Christian development, only confuses the apprehension of the period.

If on historical grounds we object to the slurring together of these two elements, we still more decidedly protest, in the interests of philosophical criticism, against the attempt to harmonize them, and apply them both, indifferently, to the interpretation of the Hebrew Scriptures. Mr. Kingsley approves of Philo's procedure in forcing the Platonic doctrine of  $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\delta\eta$  on the Mosaic account of the creation; adopting, we presume, Mr. Maurice's suggestion, that the first

chapter of Genesis describes the origin of archetypal *kinds*, and the second the creation of concrete *individuals*; and the divine guide and teacher of Israel he brings under the same essential category with the demon of Socrates. We hold it to be quite illegitimate, thus to try a set of Athenian keys to unlock the arcana of the Israelitish temple. The Jewish Theism and the Greek Pantheism are radically distinct in their genesis and whole development; even their passages of apparent analogy are but false parallelisms; and whatever reconciliation they may have, in objective truth fully understood, can only come out at the end, and must not be presupposed at the beginning of their career. The Old Testament literature was anterior to even the incipient approximation between the two directions of thought; and interpreters who infuse into it Platonic ideas to take out its stains do but bleach away the rich colors of its native life, and destroy one of the most picturesque and instructive contrasts in the history of the human race. Mr. Kingsley, approving of Philo's theosophy, condemns his allegorizing, as dissipating in vaporous piety the concrete and passionate humanities of the Hebrew tradition. But the two things are inseparable from each other. If you will have Moses philosophize about  $\epsilon\lambda\theta\eta$ , you cannot leave Samson making crazy riddles about a beehive in a dead lion. The whole method of this exegetical school is spurious and mischievous. The least intrusion of metaphysical interest in the work of interpretation is an impertinence; and spoils that pure historical sympathy which, when directed by adequate



learning, is the proper organ of intelligence with regard to the monuments of the past.

Mr. Kingsley is happier in drawing the contrast than in giving the derivation of the Christian and Pagan schools of Alexandria. He says most justly, that, while they both aim to find a way of reunion between the divine nature and the human, the Christian represents God as stooping to man, while the Pagan professes to explain how the soul of man may rise to God.

“There is the vast gulf between the Christian and the Heathen schools, which when any man had overleaped, the whole problem of the universe was from that moment inverted. With Plotinus and his school, man is seeking for God; with Clemens and his, God is seeking for man. With the former, God is passive, and man active; with the latter, God is active, man is passive, — passive, that is, in so far as his business is to listen when he is spoken to, to look at the light which is unveiled to him, to submit himself to the inward laws which he feels reproving and checking him at every turn, as Socrates was reprovèd and checked by his inward demon. Whether of these two theorems gives the higher conception, either of the divine being, or of man, I leave it for you to judge. To those old Alexandrian Christians, a Being who was not seeking after every single creature, and trying to raise him, could not be a Being of absolute righteousness, power, love; could not be a Being worthy of respect or admiration, even of philosophic speculation. Human righteousness and love flows

forth disinterestedly to all around it, however unconscious, however unworthy they may be ; human power associated with goodness, seeks for objects which it may raise and benefit by that power. We must confess this, with the Christian schools, or, with the Heathen schools, we must allow another theory which brought them into awful depths ; which may bring any generation which holds it into the same depths. If Clemens had asked the Neoplatonists : ' You believe, Plotinus, in an absolutely good Being. Do you believe that it desires to shed forth its goodness on all ? ' ' Of course,' they would have answered, ' on those who seek for it, on the philosopher.' ' But not, it seems, Plotinus, on the herd, the brutal ignorant mass, wallowing in those foul crimes above which you have risen ? ' And at that question there would have been not a little hesitation. These brutes in human form, these souls wallowing in earthly mire, could hardly, in the Neoplatonists' eyes, be objects of the divine desire. ' Then this absolute Good, you say, Plotinus, has no relation with them, no care to raise them. In fact, it cannot raise them, because they have nothing in common with it. Is that your notion ? And the Neoplatonists would have, on the whole, allowed that argument. And if Clemens had answered, that such was not his notion of goodness, or of a good Being, and that therefore the goodness of their absolute Good, careless of the degradation and misery around it, must be something very different from his notions of human goodness ; the Neoplatonists would have answered—indeed they did answer—' After all, why not ? Why should the absolute goodness be

like our human goodness?' This is Plotinus's own belief. It is a question with him, it was still more a question with those who came after him, whether virtues could be predicated of the divine nature; courage, for instance, of one who had nothing to fear; self-restraint of one who had nothing to desire? And thus by setting up a different standard of morality for the divine and for the human, Plotinus gradually arrives at the conclusion that virtue is not the end, but the means; not the divine nature itself as the Christian schools held, but only the purgative process by which man was to ascend into heaven, and which was necessary to arrive at that nature — that nature itself being — what? — P. 100.

This will be found to be the great fundamental difference between Monism and Monotheism, — between the metaphysic evolution of the universe from one *principle*, and moral recognition in it and beyond it of one *God*. The latter doctrine retains without fear the human analogy in its conception of the divine nature, and places there whatever is venerable and holy in character. The former, often doubting whether its Deity really *thinks*, can never persuade itself that he *feels*. The source of all can be recipient of nothing; and he abides behind the impressions which he only gives. Hence not only the doctrine of the impassibility of God, but, in mischievous reaction from that doctrine on human morality, the notion that the extinction of feeling, the absorption of the sensitive faculties in the contemplative, constitutes the true approach to God. In nothing does the contrast of

this idea with the Christian appear more striking than in its application to the theory of worship. In the Neoplatonic treatise *De Mysteriis*, belonging to the time of Jamblichus, the question is raised, how, if the gods are impassible, can they be accessible to prayer. The answer — though we have heard it from other Pagan lips — is intensely heathen: "It is not that the gods descend to the soul of the suppliant, but that he lifts his soul to them. Nor is it change of place only that must be denied to them; there is no change of feeling in relation to the worshipper; for they are unsusceptible of joy or grief, of anger or love. Do we speak sometimes of their anger? we only mean that the soul withdraws from them; of their propitiation? we mean, that the soul draws nigh. Prayer is simply a means of rendering one's self like the gods; whatever resembles them has them present in essence." Let this be compared with the passage, "If any man love me, he will keep my words; and *my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him;*" — and the difference between the genius of Heathen theosophy and Christian faith is exhibited in its very essence. We have often thought that the doctrine of the incarnation may have been an indispensable means of guarding the church from this most pestilent delusion of philosophy, — that, to be divine, a nature must not feel. So long as the voluntary adoption of a human life by the Divine Logos is the object of affectionate faith, the disciple is at least secure against the doubt whether there can be care and tenderness for him in heaven. He is not terrified by the infinitely arduous problem

of finding by his own devices One who makes no offer to meet him, who is deaf to his entreaties and unmoved by his utmost passion of aspiration. Be the errors involved in his theology what they may, they are at least compatible with trust and devout affection.

With these desultory remarks on a desultory book we must content ourselves for the present ; not without a hope of some time returning, under more systematic guidance, to the study of a phenomenon singularly instructive to our own age. The reactionary movement of the third century towards philosophical heathenism presents many features of resemblance to the fanaticisms of the present time. And when Porphyry tells us of the boundless influence of Plotinus over the educated and fashionable circles in Rome ; of the religious veneration in which the traditions and words of the Athenian sages were held ; of the consecration of their birthdays by special liturgies and offerings ; of the distinguished citizens who laid down their offices and sold their property in devotion to the resuscitated faith ; of the noble ladies who retired from society and took their vows to the philosophic inspiration, — it is impossible not to be reminded of a modern revival of elder faith, appealing to the same historic reverence. embodying the same contempt of partial sects, and making the same boast of Catholic equivalence to all separate wisdoms. We recommend Mr. Kingsley's little book to all who would know how suggestive are the phenomena of that curious time.

## THEORY OF REASONING.<sup>1</sup>

WHEN a gentleman of Sheffield publishes a reply to the tutor of Alexander the Great, there is enough in the mere chronology of such a controversy to induce a spirit of caution and respect. It is no blind veneration for antiquity, but only a rational estimate of the forces operative in human culture, to feel, that a philosopher who, like Aristotle, has propagated an influence through upwards of two thousand years; who has formed the scientific vocabulary of nations and languages foreign to his own; whom neither the officiousness of idolatrous admiration nor the reaction of extravagant contempt have been able to displace; and who still distributes to his commentators and interpreters the freshest palm of intellectual fame,—must have possessed a marvellous depth and variety of endowment. No accidents of civilization, no fashion of academic pedantry, can account for an agency so powerful and prolonged; nor can any genius, capable of moulding and enriching such men as Hegel, Brandis, Trendelenburg, and Sir W. Hamilton, be other than comprehensive and penetrating. To such considerations, however, the critics of the Aristotelian logic are usually quite insensible. They are apt

<sup>1</sup> The Theory of Reasoning. By Samuel Bailey. London, 1851.

“Prospective Review,” 1852.

to look upon it with compassionate scorn, as a miserable child's-play, with whose profitless manœuvres no manly intellect will entangle itself. From the time of Bacon to the present day, it has been the accepted mark of a "sound" and "practical" understanding to despise the *Organon* and ridicule the "Schoolmen." For a while, this feeling was more or less identified with the cause of the Reformation; which, in attacking the Dominican system, discredited the philosophy, no less than the theology, of the middle ages; and, in revising the doctrine of the Eucharist, disturbed the established realism, and demanded a new theory of universals. But in the present day, the polemic against Aristotle proceeds mainly from the disciples of the "positive philosophy," and is identified with no religious interest. It is conducted by the great expounders of the inductive method; the exclusive dominance of which over the whole realm of human thought requires that syllogistic be degraded and deposed. Of recent attempts to reduce the laws of deduction and the principles of mathematical evidence to the same type with the logic of natural science, Mr. J. S. Mill is by far the most searching and ingenious. Mr. Bailey now brings to the illustration of the same doctrine his peculiar gifts of patient analysis and lucid exposition. He gives it the advantage of many felicitous statements, and relieves it of some paradoxical accessories with which his predecessor had burthened it; but its essential evidence receives, so far as we can discover, no accession at his hands; and, notwithstanding a strong predisposition to follow in a track protected by such

powerful authorities, we are constrained to confess that we rise from the "Theory of Reasoning," as from the second book of the "System of Logic," with a feeling quite unsatisfied as to the soundness of their fundamental position. The nature of that position and of the scruples which deter us from admitting it, we will endeavor to make clear.

When reasoning is employed to establish a particular fact, the reasoner's mind follows a certain method which it is the aim of logicians to define. Often at least the particular fact seems to be authenticated to us by a general law which includes it, and the pre-conception of which contains the secret of our assent to the conclusion. Thus we may accept the proposition, "The swallow is a warm-blooded animal," on the strength of a rule previously known, but hitherto not specially applied, that "All birds are warm-blooded." To bring "the swallow" within the scope of the rule, nothing more is needful than that it be recognized as a "bird." When this recognition has been embodied (in the minor premiss), and the rule expressed (in the major), the conditions of belief are completely stated. In explaining the principle of this example, the common treatises would pronounce "Bird" to be the name of a class intermediate in magnitude between the larger one denoted by "Warm-blooded," and the smaller by "Swallow;" and would resolve the mental process into the axiom that whatever lies within a contained sphere lies within the containing. According to the prevalent doctrine, strenuously advocated by Archbishop Whately, this is the type of all reasoning whatsoever; and by no



other method can any proposition, not a first truth, obtain credence. Mr. Bailey, on the other hand, while admitting it, under the name of "class-reasoning," to a real place among the methods of cogent proof, yet assigns to it a very insignificant range; and Mr. J. S. Mill denies to it the character of reasoning or inference at all; maintaining that it is absent from every acquisition of really new truth; and regarding it, when present, as a mere *interpretation* by the mind of its own past record as pertinent to an existing case. Neither writer would allow that, in the example just adduced, the general law, "All birds are warm-blooded" forms any essential element in the procedure. It is no part of the ground on which the conclusion actually rests; it probably may not come into thought at all, and only usurps the place, and disguises the aspect of the real evidence. That evidence will be found, not in the assumption about *all* birds, but in the observation of *other* birds, that they are warm-blooded. The universal rule itself is presumed only on the strength of a limited induction of instances; and if the examination of a few hawks and sparrows and ptarmigans, etc., suffices to establish a property for birds in general, it cannot be inadequate to prove it of swallows in particular. It is in the discretion of the naturalist whether from his past experience he shall frame a rule for all similar cases, or form a judgment restricted to the nearest instance that occurs. He may reason in direct course from particular to particular, from his limited store of known facts to the unknown one awaiting his inference, — without calling by the way at the station of

any general law. Thus to the conclusion, "The swallow is a warm-blooded animal," the proper major premiss is, not the *universal rule*, "All birds are warm-blooded," but the *collective fact*, "The hawk, the sparrow, the ptarmigan, and other birds hitherto examined, have proved to be warm-blooded." The joint and co-ordinate dependence on this collective fact of both the universal law and the particular inference, at the same time that they are independent of each other, Mr. Bailey illustrates by disposing them in the following order:—

### "COLLECTIVE FACT.

All men, as far as observation has extended, have been found fallible.

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<i>Universal Law.</i>	<i>Particular Inference.</i>
Therefore all men are fallible,—[i. e. men of past times beyond the reach of observation, as well as those observed, <i>were</i> fallible; men of the present time, whether observed or unobserved, <i>are</i> fallible; and all future men <i>will be</i> fallible.]	Therefore the man Peter is fallible; <i>or</i> , The next generation of men <i>will be</i> fallible; <i>or</i> , Socrates, who lived more than two thousand years ago, was fallible.

"It is obvious," our author remarks, "that both these conclusions, both the universal law and the particular inference, are deduced from the same fact or collection of facts; they are, if I may so express it, abreast, or co-ordinate; one is not, or needs not be, logically subsequent to the other; or, to vary the language, both are probable inferences, for which the real evidence is the same. The mental process, too,

is alike ; it does not consist in the mind's discerning one thing to be implied in another, but in its being determined by known facts to believe unknown ones." -- (P. 12.)

Not only does our author substitute in the major premiss the collective fact for the universal law, but he strikes out the minor premiss altogether ; and regards the whole mental process as perfectly represented, when instead of a syllogism, we have an enthymeme drawing its conclusion from an incomplete enumeration. He says : -

"As a further illustration, let us examine a piece of reasoning often cited in logical treatises :

All horned quadrupeds are ruminant ;

Therefore this horned quadruped is ruminant.

Whether we take this enthymeme as it is, or make it, by the introduction of a minor premise, into a regular syllogism, the conclusion drawn is irresistible. You cannot admit the premise and deny the conclusion, without self-contradiction.

"But the form into which the reasoning is thrown by using the general law as a major premise marks the real nature of the evidence for the conclusion. The real argument is, —

All *other* horned quadrupeds have been found to be ruminant ;

Therefore this horned quadruped is ruminant.

It is because we have found horned quadrupeds to have been ruminant in all *other* cases, as far as our knowledge has extended, that we conclude that the

horned animal before us is ruminant. The fact or collection of facts gathered from observation, without any contrary instance, is sufficient to determine the mind to believe the conclusion; but there would be no self-contradiction, although a want of sound sense, in admitting the premise and denying the inference. The reason is, not what is usually designated logical or demonstrative, but material or contingent. It is, nevertheless, all that we can possibly have in the case.

“Laying down the general law, that all horned quadrupeds are ruminant, has not the slightest power to change either the character of the facts of which it is the indication, or that of the conclusion to which it may lead. Material arguments cannot be converted into demonstrative proofs by any arrangement of propositions, or by any translation from one form into another.” — (P. 46.)

The very language in which it is here contended that deduction is only induction in disguise, appears to us to betray a misapprehension of the purpose and pretensions of logical science. The author complains that the metamorphosis of a collective fact into a general law creates no new evidence, and that a syllogistic disposition of parts cannot turn probability into certainty. Who ever professed any such art of intellectual legerdemain? What logician has failed to explain that his business was not with the *matter* but the *form* of thought, — not to change or strengthen the grounds of conviction, but to trace the mode of their mental operation? There are two conditions

of all derivative belief; first, certain data objectively presented to the mind; secondly, a certain subjective manner of dealing with these. The former is the *thing thought*; the latter, the *rule by which we think it*. The one is the *evidence*, — the *proof*; the other is that peculiarity in the constitution of our faculties which makes it to *be* evidence and proof. It is with the latter alone that the logician is concerned; he adverts to the former merely as the instrument of his exposition; the relations involved in thinking requiring for their display a reference to some matter given to be thought. What he proposes to exhibit, when he manœuvres the elements of an argument into strange forms, is not the facts or considerations which establish the conclusion to a mind like ours; but the natural moulds of the mind itself into which the facts flow down, and without which they would not assume the shape of ratiocination. To tell him that the propositions which he offers, in order to lay bare the type of the reasoning process, never occur to you at all, — that you do not bring before you a general maxim every time you judge of the future by the past, but directly transmute your particular experience into particular expectation, — is altogether irrelevant. He does not aim at reporting *what* you think, but *how* you think it; and it is not surprising that a record of your subjective action should appear to you no true account of the objects upon which it was engaged. The test which Mr. Bailey applies in order to estimate the merits of the syllogistic procedure is, in this view, completely erroneous. He evidently asks himself, "What statement will suffice to

render a conclusion inevitable?" and limiting himself to the most frugal allowance that will put his hearers into condition to draw the inference, he charges everything beyond as a logical profuseness and impertinence. By this rule, however, he necessarily misses everything which logical investigation has any interest in discovering. For nothing requires *statement* to me except that which is absent from my mind and must be introduced in order to operate, — the external evidence *about* which I am to think; — this once given, the spontaneous action of the mind itself *silently* does the rest; the law of my own thought, being ever self-present, takes effect on the simple condition of having something delivered to its operation; it is secured to me in its latent reality, and dispenses, therefore, with all patent expression. It follows that when Mr. Bailey tries the experiment, how much can be spared from the statement of an argument without detaining the hearers from the conclusion, he incurs a logical blindness by his own act, and blocks out the whole sphere of knowledge professedly engaging his quest.

The effect of this error is, simply, that the evidence which he calls in order to destroy the case of the logicians is precisely what they require for its establishment. "We may score out," he says, "the minor premiss as a redundancy;" — "certainly," they reply, "for, whether you speak or whether you suppress it, it lies provided for in the rules of intelligence itself." "The collective fact," he insists, "serves perfectly for major premiss, though a mere record of particular experience;" — "assuredly,"

they say, "and for this very reason, that without your aid it will pick up its universality within the mind itself, which cannot be hindered by any checks of language from reading off the particular into the general." That it is *competent* to us thus to generalize from partial experience, is of course admitted by Mr. Bailey, and is implied in all inductions whatsoever; the only question is, whether it is an invariable *essential* of all contingent reasoning. Our author contends that without any general conception of horned quadrupeds as ruminant, and, while as yet we are only on our way to such a conception, we may infer from past examples that "this horned quadruped is ruminant." We submit that the very language in which the reasoner is obliged to state the collective fact contradicts his doctrine. Does he describe it by simple enumeration of its component instances, left, as they occurred, in their crude individuality, and say, "The ox, the ram, the stag, is ruminant; so, therefore, is the elk"? Had the single cases been not yet made up into a class, or thought of under the notion of a certain nature, he must have resorted to language like this, if not to names more purely denotative still. Instead of this, he first uses words which travel out indefinitely beyond the record of his experience, and which designate a type ("horned quadrupeds"); and then ties them down by limiting epithets ("other" or "hitherto observed") to the definite past. The collective fact itself is thus conceivable only as a sub-case under a general law, and bears witness in its enunciation that that law is already extant in the mind. No one who had not the generic

notion of "horned quadruped," could understand the phrase "horned quadrupeds *hitherto observed*;" it is intelligible only by limitation superinduced on a prior universal. It will, perhaps, be granted that this genus is already constituted in thought, but denied that it has mentally been pronounced "*ruminant*." It is plain, however, — for it is the very thing affirmed as the collective fact, — that the ruminant property has never been enabled hitherto to absent itself from the notion of the genus, but has invariably coexisted with it. Wherever the one goes, the other attends; and as the idea of a class is always an open one, — not an enclosure of registered individuals, but a scheme potentially unlimited, — the concomitant ruminant attribute has been invested with similar universality. It is very possible, indeed, that it may never have been detached and made into a distinct predicate for "all horned quadrupeds;" it may have slept undisturbed till now within the notion of the genus, whose proper designation, therefore, would be that of "horned ruminant quadrupeds;" the present new case may happen to be first in which (from our having, for example, only the fossil remains) the attribute in question, suppressed from view, has parted company from its associates, and required to be separately supplied. But it never could be so supplied by the mind, did not the conception of the genus lay claim to it. It is the incompleteness of the type without it that necessitates the inference. The horns of the new animal would confer upon it no title to its ruminant character, but for the previous coexistence of hornedness and rumina-



tion in our conception of a certain indennite class, exemplified in past instances, yet not restricted to them. It is evident, therefore, that the collective fact itself, used as a premiss, presupposes and represents the very generalization which it is introduced to supersede.

A fallacy, in short, lurks in the assertion, that men constantly reason from particular to particular. It is true if understood of the objects of thought; false, if of the mode of thinking. From particulars, *quâ* particular, nothing whatsoever can be inferred; they cease to be sterile only when accepted as signs of a general law. Mr. J. S. Mill tells us that the proposition "The Duke of Wellington is mortal" is an inference not from the universal rule "All men are mortal," but from the detailed observation that "John, Thomas, and Company, who were once living, are now dead."<sup>1</sup> It is plain, however, that, if John, Thomas, and Company were taken merely as *individual objects* (which might be anything indifferently; e. g., one, a horse, another, a dog, etc.), they would yield no conclusion. Their power to do so depends on their being *men*, samples of the same general type to which the Duke of Wellington is referred. It is this apprehended community of nature which spreads over *him* the attribute discovered in *them*; and if so, it is to that nature, as represented in them, and not to them as "particulars," that the mind attaches the notion of mortality. It will not be denied that, unless we could say to ourselves, "Now the Duke of

<sup>1</sup> System of Logic, Book II. ch. iii. § 3.

Wellington also is a man," we should be precluded from all inference. In this minor premiss, however, the particularity is dropped, and the general word "man" is openly substituted for the individual names occurring in the major; the "humanity" is here picked out and confessedly put forward as the universal on which the conclusion hinges. Can there be a clearer proof that past dead men are available as evidence in this matter, only so far as they are translated out of their individual character into official specimens of a race? It is a matter of perfect indifference to this logical question, whether the words of the premiss proclaim the "collective fact" or the "general law," or even whether the imagination does or does not figure to itself actual past instances. Acts of special memory or conception do not exclude concurrent generalizations of thought, and can no more be construed into disproof of a deductive process, than the John Doe and Richard Roe of the lawyers can be regarded as private individuals. Indeed, this doctrine cannot even describe itself without using language which virtually surrenders it. "From observed instances," it is said, "we reason to unobserved." "*Instances*" of what? Is it not of a general law? The word is relative, and expresses "particulars regarded as standing under a comprehending rule, and presenting that rule to the mind." Where facts are taken as "instances," it is the rule involved in them that yields the inference; and facts not taken as "instances" yield no inference at all.

Our author regards it as the distinguishing excellence of his inductive doctrine, that it relieves the

reasoning process of the charge of *Petitio Principii* to which it is liable. So long as the premiss merely recites past facts, whose analogy the conclusion carries into a fresh case, the inference which arises really constitutes a new discovery. But if the premiss states a universal law, then the conclusion, in announcing a particular example of it, furnishes, it is said, nothing that was not already assumed at the commencement. Whoever has warrant for saying that "All birds are warm-blooded" must know that "Swallows are warm-blooded:" if the fact is undetermined respecting the species, it is so far impossible to affirm it of the genus. We find it difficult to understand Mr. Bailey's exact position in reference to this well-worn objection to the syllogism. In more passages than one (pp. 39, 51) he pronounces it unanswerable, and stigmatizes all deduction of a contained proposition from a containing one as a gratuitous begging of the question. This verdict certainly reads like a sentence of condemnation; yet within a few pages we find the author defending this very process against Mr. J. S. Mill, claiming for it the honorable titles of "inference," "reasoning," "demonstration," and pronouncing it "convenient" and "useful." It would seem to follow that the "*Petitio Principii*" is often, in our author's opinion, a "convenient and useful" form of "demonstrative reasoning"!

A thorough examination of this celebrated objection to the syllogism would carry us into metaphysical questions from which we must at present refrain. The first thing necessary for its correct appreciation

is a precise answer to the inquiry, "What is, and what is not, a *petitio principii*, τὸ ἐν ἀρχῇ αἰτεῖσθαι καὶ λαμβάνειν?"<sup>1</sup> Mr. Bailey admits that the mere *implication* of the conclusion in the premiss would afford no ground of objection against the syllogism; since this is a feature inseparable from all demonstration whatever. But he insists that there is here something more; "that the major premise not merely *implies* but *contains* the conclusion; that the conclusion is in reality a constituent or integrant part of the major premise, without which the latter would not be completely true" (p. 39). We will not dispute this distinction between "implying" and "containing;" we will allow that the latter is a mode of implication having special features of its own; but, we submit, it is not in these special features, but in the generic characters of all implication whatsoever, that the essence of the *petitio principii* is found. If the charge is good against the syllogism, it is good against all demonstration whatsoever. To render this apparent we have only to cast our eye over the series of implying and implied facts which Mr. Bailey introduces with the following remark:—

"That all demonstrative reasoning consists in discerning, and, when expressed in words, in asserting, one fact or one proposition to be implied in another, is plain. If we call one the implying fact, the other will be of course the implied fact, as in the following examples.

IMPLYING FACTS.	IMPLIED FACTS.
1. All horned animals are ruminant.	This horned animal is ruminant.
2. The lines A and B are severally equal to C.	The lines A and B are equal to each other.

<sup>1</sup>Aristot. Anal., pr. II. 16. Top. VIII. 13. Comp. Biese; Philosophiæ des Aristoteles, I. iii. 2. § 2.

3. The three angles of every triangle are together equal to two right angles.	The three angles of the triangle A B C are together equal to two right angles.
4. The culprit at the bar was in Edinburgh at one o'clock on the day named.	He could not be guilty of the offence committed at that time in London.
5. The traveller had no money with him.	He could not be robbed of a large sum.
6. The portrait resembles two different persons.	They must resemble each other."

It will be seen at a glance that Nos. 1 and 3, in this series, afford the only examples of "class-reasoning,"—the only ones therefore in which the conclusion is "*contained*" in the premiss. In the rest it is "*implied*" otherwise than by inclusion within the sphere of the "*assumption*." Yet in all the instances alike a person who should use the implying fact, without offering evidence for it, as a medium of proof, would be liable to the charge of a *petitio principii*. If I am not satisfied of the equality of A and B, it must be *shown* to me that they are severally equal to C. If you merely take this for granted, shall I not say that you do but trifle with me and beg the question? When, in order to prove the apple-tree exogenous, I say "All deciduous trees are exogenous," am I more guilty of *petitio principii*, than when I prove two apples to be in the same dish by saying that each is in the same dish with a certain peach? The attempt of our author to save other demonstrative reasoning from the imputation which he reserves for the syllogism appears to us altogether futile. His indictment applies to all, or to none. Wherever such a relation subsists between premiss and conclusion that the denial of either is a contradiction of the other, there you can

never assume the ground, yet leave the inference unassumed. There are several categories of thought, within whose sphere this necessary consecutiveness is possible. The notion of *substance and attribute*, with the relations of genera and species to which it introduces us, is but one of these. It is the basis of all class-reasoning, and supplies the common logical canon of necessity, that "what is true of the containing is true of the contained." The attempt to coerce all reasoning into this single type — comprehensive as it is — appears to us arbitrary in itself, — and precluded from success except on condition of much violent psychology. The ideas of space and time, of cause and effect, of resemblance and difference, seem to involve distinct laws of thought, to create for themselves special elements and functions of language, and to require separate canons of logic. In all these spheres there is room for such a necessary nexus of conceptions as demonstration requires; yet the rules of class-reasoning have no natural application. Such maxims as that a body cannot be in two places at once, — that *Causa causæ causa causati*, — that two things of which the first is like and the second unlike a third are unlike each other, — are not less really the basis of frequent reasoning than the dictum that what is true of genus holds of the species. They furnish inferences which are "implied," but not "contained," in the premisses, — which are sequent upon them by another law of thought than that of classification. Still, however much we may enlarge the canons of demonstrative reasoning, they afford us no escape from the accusation brought against the syllogism.

To the existence of the *petitio principii* it is indifferent whether the necessary connection of inference with assumption be due to this law of thought or that; it is the connection itself, whencesoever necessitated, that constitutes the alleged fallacy.

Not only does this celebrated objection prove too much, by importing a disqualification into all demonstrative reasoning, whether formally syllogistic or not; but it extends still further: it virtually condemns induction itself, and so leaves us without any access whatever to rational belief in universal propositions. For what does our objector say? — “If you have not yet ascertained that *Swallows are warm-blooded*, you are not entitled to assert that *All birds are warm-blooded*; and, in announcing the general law, you unwarrantably take for the granted the special case afterwards drawn out under the guise of a conclusion.” Is it then true that no general law can be legitimately affirmed, so long as a single instance comprehended under it remains unexamined? Is the “*enumeratio plena*” an indispensable condition of its rational acceptance? And is there no rule of thought provided for bridging over the chasms of our defective experience, and giving us an authorized passage from the particular to the universal? Then is all induction manifestly impossible; for it consists in nothing else than extending to the unknown the rules gathered from the known, and thus obtaining, through a general formula, a mediate intelligence of that which is immediately inaccessible. Mr. Bailey himself has defended the right of a mere “collective fact” (such as, “Men, so far as hitherto known, have died”) to

yield a "universal law" (such as, "All men are mortal"). With what consistency then can he now turn round and charge every such law with *petitio principii* on the ground that, while universal in itself, it can appeal only to an experience short of universal? With a singular confusion of thought, the avowed champion of induction, in urging this objection, places himself in direct revolt against the fundamental principle of his own philosophy. He proves all *deduction* to be fallacious, by assuming all *induction* to be fallacious too; and thus cutting off the approaches to truth altogether, simply "takes away the key of knowledge, neither going in himself, nor suffering them that were entering to go in."

From the embarrassment of this objection we may extricate ourselves at once by simply remembering that, in the nature of things, or in the sight of a perfect intellect, whose processes are unconscious of succession or delay, *all* reasoning must involve a *petitio principii*, the conclusion being already discerned on the first announcement of the premiss. Ratiocination itself becomes nugatory in presence of a mind seizing by intuition what others reach by sequence. As soon as we descend to a more tardy and limited intelligence, there will be *some* beliefs that are only mediately reached: the same truths which to one being are contained within their ἀρχή are seen by another lying at some distance from it. The *petitio principii* is thus entirely relative to the state and range of the individual understanding; and cannot be established as a fault against an argument by merely showing that the inference *might* be thought



already in the assumption ; but only by showing that it *must* be. If Mr. Bailey can convince us that it is impossible to conceive the proposition, "Birds are warm-blooded," without simultaneously contemplating the particular case of the swallow, we will grant that the conclusion, "Swallows are warm-blooded," is a mere inference of *idem per idem*. But if not, — if the general law can be formed, and, as he allows, rationally formed, without the mind having ever encountered this special instance, — it is vain to pretend that the conclusion only repeats in part the thought contained in the premiss. This is true no doubt of the reasoner who, to bring conviction to others, invents the syllogism in question : he selects his general rule precisely *because* he foresees what it contains ; but in using it he assumes in his hearers a different state of mind, — in which the law has been apprehended and the example has been missed. Wherever a teacher and a learner are engaged together, the arguments comprehended in the didactic process involve a *petitio principii* to the former, but not to the latter. Upon this difference, the consciousness in one man, the unconsciousness in another, of what, according to the laws of thought, a given proposition may imply, depends the whole business of reasoning as an instrument of persuasion. Mr. Mill, we are aware, treats this doctrine with no respect, and calls Archbishop Whately to severe account for sanctioning it. "When you admitted the major premiss," contends Mr. Mill, "you asserted the conclusion ; but, says Archbishop Whately, you asserted it by implication merely : this, however, can here only mean that you asserted it unconsciously ;

that you did not know you were asserting it ; but if so the difficulty revives in this shape,— Ought you not to have known? Were you warranted in asserting the general proposition without having satisfied yourself of the truth of everything which it fairly includes? And if not, what then is the syllogistic art but a contrivance for catching you in a trap, and holding you fast in it?"<sup>1</sup> This is clever scolding, no doubt ; but, as it seems to us, indifferent logic. The phraseology itself is highly objectionable. In order to make out that the conclusion is anticipated in the premisses, though not foreseen by the reasoner, Mr. Mill resorts to a doctrine of "*unconscious assertion*," which we can only compare with the "hidden sense" of prophecy imagined by divines. "Assertion" not being an automatic articulation by the lips, but a mental act,— the intentional predication of a certain attribute present in thought respecting a certain subject also present in thought,—cannot be "unconscious;" and the epithet does but evade the fact that the assertion in question is not there at all. To another mind, indeed and to the same mind at a future time, the proposition may suggest the application which the sentence, as uttered, did not contemplate ; but these are phenomena foreign to the immediate act of predication, and not entitled to be imported into its description. And as to Mr. Mill's demand, that no general proposition shall be uttered, till the speaker holds in his thought all the instances to which it may be applied, we know of nothing more simply impossible or more entirely destructive of all scientific method whatsoever. The

<sup>1</sup> System of Logic, Book II. ch. iii. § 2.

foresight of its particular cases is *not* "fairly included" in the meaning or in the evidence of a general rule; and a person may reasonably assent to the law of refraction without any suspicion of the vast compass of facts over which its interpretation ranges. There are grounds,—whatever account we may give of them,—for ascribing attributes to certain *natures* or *kinds* of being, without going through the objects included under them or having any prescience of their actual contents. It is not necessary to know the natural history of all the varieties of mankind before we can venture to affirm mortality of human beings in general. To revert to our old syllogism:

All birds are warm-blooded;

Swallows are birds;

Therefore Swallows are warm-blooded:

It is surely possible (1.) to think the attribute "warm blood" of the genus (bird) without thinking it of the species (swallow),—that is, to have the *major* premiss without the conclusion; (2.) to ascribe to the species (swallow) the nature of the genus (bird), without therewith ascribing to it all the concomitants (as warm blood) of the genus,—that is, to have the *minor* premiss without the conclusion. But it is *not* possible to do *both* these things, without at once recognizing the conclusion. This is all that is required by the theory of the syllogism; and against this Mr. Mill can only urge, that *if* it be true, — why, it *ought not* to be true.

The celebrated *dictum de omni et de nullo*, which plays so important a part in many logical treatises, is a favorite topic of criticism and ridicule with the

school of writers to which Mr. Bailey belongs, and does not escape from his hands without a stroke of fresh indignity. There is, however, a peculiarity in his mode of disparaging it. Mr. Mill, in order to deprive it of authority, had deposed it from the rank of an axiom and reduced it to an identical proposition. Mr. Bailey includes it among axioms, and makes this the very ground of his attack; pronouncing all such general maxims absolutely sterile and worthless. In his treatment of this topic, however, we not only find nothing new; but we are carried back to the position which it occupied in the time of Locke; and even Mr. Stewart's important investigations are used only so far as they corroborate the doctrine of his predecessor, to the neglect of all that is original in them. The allegations against axioms, whether in mathematical or any other demonstrative reasoning, are two; (1.) that by themselves they are barren of result, yielding no inference; (2.) that their *à priori* pretensions are false, as they are but generalizations of particular arguments, which pre-exist and take effect without their aid. Thus, if the lines A and B are known to be severally equal to C, their equality to each other is instantly discerned; nor does the general maxim, "Things equal to the same are equal to each other," shape itself into expression till it is required to sum up the aggregate of many such particular instances. Both these allegations appear to us entirely to mistake the point at issue, and to contest a doctrine which no competent logician ever intends to maintain. They betray indeed the very same *ignoratio elerchi*, which has been

already noticed as vitiating our author's preference of collective facts over universal propositions as the ground of reasoning. We do not claim for axioms any power to evolve a science from themselves; they are not *data* or *matter* of thought at all; they do but express the *rule* according to which — matter of thought being given — the mind proceeds to think. They state the subjective side of the conditions under which knowledge is gained; and it is no more reproach to them that, without objective considerations, they can take no effect, than it is to the laws of digestion that they fill no larder and grow no crops. Nor again, in maintaining the *à priori* character of axioms, do we mean that, as objects of thought and assertion, they chronologically precede the particular arguments which exemplify them; they would incur no forfeiture of this character, though they were after-thoughts not embodied till rendered familiar by a thousand instances, — nay, even though they never came before the thought at all. D'Alembert's remark, that there is no necessity even to enunciate them, — a remark quoted by our author in proof of their puerility, — is the most perfect vindication of their logical position; if the mind will go on without them exactly as if they were there, they must give an unimpeachable account of the laws of spontaneous thought. We deny, then, that the place of axioms in science is a question of mental chronology at all. Nevertheless, we are not disposed to allow that they are posthumous generalizations of particular arguments. Generalizations are gathered from an extended survey of instances no one of which would of itself suffice to es-

tablish the rule, and which even collectively do not exclude its future modification. But to the axiom, "Things equal to the same are equal to each other," it is indifferent, whether it has been exemplified once or a thousand times, — nay, whether it be offered to the mind *before* or *after* its examples; it is equally sure of immediate assent. It depends for its recognition on nothing special, or which can be conceived to be special, to any particular instance; but wholly upon the notion of *equality* which repeats itself in each case and which is as well apprehended at first as it is at last. The presence of this notion is the only condition required; wherever two equalities are conceived with a common term, there, by a necessary law of thought, a third cannot but arise. Whatever be the actual order of date in which we acquire these maxims, they differ from inductive generalizations in this; — with an inductive rule, we do not know *till the end* of our experience, that the rule is general and that nothing was contingent upon the particulars constituting each case; with an axiom, we know positively *from the first*, that nothing does or can depend on the particular things related, but everything on the relation itself. This, and not any chronological antecedence, is what is meant, when an *à priori* character is attributed to any universal maxim. The rule of thought which it expresses is neither *before* the particular arguments, as their premiss; nor *after* them, as their generalization; but *in* them, as their form.

So far then as the *dictum de omni et de nullo* shares the fate of all axioms, it is not endangered, we ap-

prehend, by our author's disaffection towards its authority. His own attack upon it is indeed as good an example of conformity with it as we could desire to find; and it rules nowhere more completely than in the very camp of rebel argument assembled to destroy it. When Mr. Bailey reasons thus:—

All axioms are worthless;

The *dictum* is an axiom;

Therefore The *dictum* is worthless,

he contends, we presume, that "what is true (worthlessness) of a class of things (axioms) is true in like manner of anything comprehended (the *dictum*) in that class." Now this *is* the *dictum*; which our author therefore, instead of manfully annihilating by chivalrous blows *ab extra*, cruelly compels to commit suicide in his relentless presence.

But, besides this general argument, Mr. Bailey urges against the *dictum* the same objection which Mr. Mill and other writers had previously pressed, namely, that it is founded upon a false view of classification. If a "class" were a substantive existence, separate in some way from that of its constituent individuals, there would be no tautology in saying that what is true of the class is true of the individuals under it. But since "the class *is* nothing but the objects contained in it, the *dictum de omni* merely amounts to the identical proposition that whatever is true of certain objects, is true of each of those objects;"<sup>1</sup> or, as Mr. Bailey expresses it, "What belongs to every individual of a class must belong to

<sup>1</sup> Mill's System of Logic, Book II. ch. ii. § 2.

any individual of a class." (P. 65.) The *nonchalance* with which these critics assume — as if some philosophic "Rome had spoken" and heretics must hold their tongue — that "a class is nothing but the objects contained in it," cannot but amuse those who are cognizant of the history of realism, and aware how little that doctrine has lost its hold upon the speculative intellect of Europe. Into so deep a question, however, it is not necessary to enter, in order to deal with the present criticism. Whether, *in the nature of things*, a class be or be not anything different from its constituent individuals, we will not discuss; but we submit that, *to our thought* (and with this alone is logic concerned) it certainly *is* something different. The act of the mind in making a *universal* affirmation is not the same as in making a *distributive* affirmation. If there were a post-office directory of all mankind, past, present, and to come, and I were to read over all the names and say, "These are mortal," my mental act would not be identical with that of a person saying, "All men are mortal." Mr. Mill indeed would acknowledge this; but then he would dispute our account of the difference between the two cases; he would say, "This is not the difference between the idea of the individuals and the idea of the class; when you read from the directory, you no doubt enumerate the individuals; but when you enunciate the subject 'All men,' you do not suggest any class; you only refer me to certain *attributes*, — the attributes constituting *humanity*, — in virtue of which objects become entitled to the name *Man*." We are thus compelled — in completion of



our notice of this controversy — to advert to the nature of predication, and to define, if possible, what precisely the mind does, when it makes a simple affirmation, such as “Birds are warm-blooded.” To obviate possible misapprehension, we must premise that

(1.) All significant words are either *names* or *attributives*; of which, names *indicate* an object (as *London, Peter, Nile*, etc.); while attributives *characterize* it (as *red, sleeps, struck, warm*, etc.).

(2.) A word which serves *merely* for a name or sign arbitrarily put upon it, that we may know it again and be able to point it out to others, is a *denotative* word; and its force or marking function is its *denotation*. All *proper names* are of this kind.

(3.) A word which serves *merely* as an attributive, to express some character (or attribute), as such, apart from any object having it, is a *connotative* word; and its power of suggesting such attribute to the mind is its *connotation*. All *adjectives* are of this kind.

(4.) A word which serves *both* these purposes, *marking an object by giving its characters*, is a *connotative name*; its power of indicating the object is its *denotation*; of suggesting the attributes, its *connotation*. All *common nouns* are of this kind.

(5.) A connotative name, marking only by designation of characters, becomes applicable wherever those characters have been, are, or may be found; the list of *objects* on which it may be put is always an open one; while the number of *attributes* by which it indicates is fixed and definite. The range of ob-

jects in its denotation is called the term's *extension*; of attributes in its connotation, the term's *comprehension*. Thus, if the definition of "bird" be "*oviparous biped*;" the notions of *birth from an egg* and of *having two legs* constitute the word's comprehension; while the species *hawk, dove, swallow, etc.*, constitute its extension.

Now, taking as the type of all prediction what is usually (though questionably) regarded as its simplest form, namely, an affirmative sentence ("Birds are warm-blooded") in which the subject is a common noun and the predicate contains but one word besides the copula, we find among logical writers two doctrines extant as to the nature of the predicative act. The great majority fix their eye exclusively on the *extension* of both the terms, and consider the subject as naming *a class*, the predicative word as naming *another class*; and the copula as expressing that the latter is capacious enough to contain the former. Thus the example just given states that within the class of "warm-blooded creatures" will be found the class "birds." Applying this explanation to a second proposition, "Swallows are birds," we find it affirmed that the class "birds," before *contained*, now in its turn *contains* the class "swallows;" and the inference, "Swallows are warm-blooded," follows as a geometrical or numerical necessity. Were the *dictum* of Aristotle shaped into perfect conformity with this theory, it would be expressed thus: Whatever is found in a contained class is in the containing. When, instead of this, it is said, Whatever is *predicated of* a class, is *predicated of* the individuals or

species within it; the expression is of a mixed kind. It begins, in its description of the major premiss ("whatever is predicated of a class") without committing itself to any particular theory of predication; but immediately, in its description of the minor premiss (the individuals or species within it) it adopts the doctrine we are expounding, of subject within predicate, as class within class. Accordingly, the ablest critics of the *dictum* deal with it as if pledged to the *denotative* doctrine of predication, and regard its authority as destroyed when this doctrine is refuted. Thus, Mr. Mill says: "Those who considered the *dictum de omni* as the foundation of the syllogism, looked upon arguments in a manner corresponding to the erroneous view which Hobbes took of propositions. . . . If no further account than this could be given of the import of propositions, no theory could be given but the commonly received one, of the combination of propositions in a syllogism. If the minor premiss asserted nothing more than that something belongs to a class, and if as consistency would require us to suppose, the major premiss asserted nothing of that class except that it is included in another class, the conclusion would only be, that what was included in the lower class is included in the higher; and the result, therefore, nothing except that the classification is consistent with itself. But we have seen that it is no sufficient account of the meaning of a proposition to say that it refers something to, or excludes something from, a class."<sup>1</sup> What, then, is Mr. Mill's own theory of predication, on

<sup>1</sup> System of Logic, Book II. ch. ii. § 3.

whose appearance the *dictum* is deposed? It is the second of the two doctrines which we said had been advanced to explain the nature of a proposition. Reversing the procedure of the former theory, it looks exclusively to the *comprehension* of both terms; regarding the subject as the expression of a certain *attribute*, the predicative word of *another* attribute; and the copula as declaring the *coexistence* of the two. Thus, in the syllogism:—

“All men are mortal; .

All kings are men; .

Therefore All kings are mortal,

the minor premiss asserts,” says Mr. Mill, “that the attributes denoted by kingship only exist in conjunction with those signified by the word man. The major premiss asserts, as before, that the last-mentioned attributes are never found without the attribute of mortality. The conclusion is, that wherever the attributes of kingship are found, that of mortality is found also.”<sup>1</sup> In conformity with this *connotative* doctrine of predication Mr. Mill substitutes for “the unmeaning *dictum de omni et de nullo*,” the maxim (limiting ourselves, for brevity’s sake, to the *affirmative* form) that “things (attributes) which coexist with the same, coexist with one another.” He gives also another resolution of the case, which he regards as an equivalent version of it. The syllogism just quoted may be understood as follows:—

“The attributes of man are a mark of the attribute mortality; .

<sup>1</sup>System of Logic, Book II. ch. ii. § 3.

The attributes of a king are a mark of  
the attributes of man ;

Therefore The attributes of a king are a mark of the  
attribute mortality."

Drawing out the general law of this construction, we obtain the maxim, which Mr. Mill appears to regard with greatest favor, "Whatever is a mark of any mark, is a mark of that which this last is a mark of."<sup>1</sup>

All that is here achieved is, avowedly, the substitution of the maxim of comprehension for the maxim of extension ; and the author imagines that by doing this he cancels the *dictum*. His own final and favorite rule is nothing but a translation of Kant's "Supreme Rule of the syllogism," "Nota notæ est etiam nota rei ipsius ; repugnans notæ repugnat rei ipsi."<sup>2</sup> Kant himself, after enunciating this rule, immediately proceeds to show how the *dictum* arises from it as a direct corollary. And subsequent writers have very properly given both the scholastic and the Kantian maxims as two representations of the same truth, whose equivalence is apparent the moment you reflect that the comprehension and extension of a term vary inversely as each other.<sup>3</sup> Aristotle himself is

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. § 4.

<sup>2</sup> Die falsche Spitzfindigkeit der vier syllogistischen Figuren. § 2. In the Rosenkranz and Schubert edition of Kant's works, vol. i. p. 59.

<sup>3</sup> See, for instance, Twisten's Logik. § 105, and Drobisch's neue Darstellung der Logik. § 72, where the rule which Mr. Mill rejects as "unmeaning," and that which he adopts as the true base of all syllogistic reasoning, are both given, as the *dictum de omni et nullo*. "These fundamental propositions," says Drobisch, "the older logicians expressed in the following formulas, which bore the name of the *dictum de omni et nullo*: — in relation to the comprehension of the terms, *Nota notæ est etiam nota rei, repugnans*

not in the least pledged to the one form of the axiom more than to the other. His clearest and most concise expression of it is perfectly neutral; "Whatever is said of the predicate is said of the subject."<sup>1</sup> Nay; the two modes of statement are adverted to by Aristotle, and are expressly declared to be equivalent: "To say that one thing is completely included in another, and to say that this other is universally a predicate of the one, *amount to just the same thing.*"<sup>2</sup> The theory of predication therefore, gains nothing at Mr. Mill's hand, except a reaction from the exclusive doctrine of comprehension to a doctrine of extension equally exclusive; both of which are provided for by Aristotle himself, and equally compatible with his much renowned and much abused *dictum*. We think it evident that the *dictum* is no more an identical proposition in the one form than in the other; and that to infer the inclusion of A within C from their relation to B as holding the smaller, and held by the larger, is not less positive a step of reasoning, than to infer the coexistence of A with C from their joint copresence with B. The former, indeed, if there be a difference, is the richer inference of the two; inasmuch as inclusion carries coexistence with it, but not *vice versâ*.

We must confess that neither of the two doctrines of predication which we have noticed appears to us psychologically true. In saying, "Birds are warm-

*notæ repugnat etiam rei; in relation to the extension of the terms Quidquid de omnibus valet, valet etiam de quibusdam et singulis; quidquid de nullo valet, nec de quibusdam nec de singulis valet."*

<sup>1</sup> Arist. Cat. § 5.

<sup>2</sup> Arist. Anal., pr. I. 1.

blooded," we neither think of class within class, nor of attribute with attribute: The word "warm-blooded" presents to us no conception of a *genus*; it is not a name, but a mere attributive. The word "birds" expresses to us no *attribute*, as such; it is not a mere attributive, but a name. The term in the predicate acts upon the mind by its connotation, or in its comprehension; the term in the subject, by its denotation, or in its extension; and the foregoing sentence has its import in this, — that we refer the *attribute* "warm-blood" to the class of objects "birds." Hence it is, that, while a purely connotative word (an adjective) is all that is required in the predicate, a denotative term is indispensable in the subject. For "The horse is a quadruped" you can substitute "The horse is four-footed;" but the attempt to cut down the proposition to a coexistence of attributes does not succeed; — "Equine is four-footed." The mind predicates nothing except about substantive objects of thought; and of them (in the class of propositions now under consideration) it predicates nothing but attributes. This obvious fact would have been less disregarded, had not logicians allowed their theory of the simple proposition to wait upon their analysis of the syllogism. When the three propositions (say of *Barbara*) are once before them, they see the middle term, now in the subject, then in the predicate; and the identity of word suppresses all suspicion of diversity of function. Yet when we say,

All birds are warm-blooded;

All swallows are birds;

Therefore All swallows are warm-blooded,

it is evident that in the major premiss the term "birds" is wanted in its denotation; in the minor, in its connotation. No doubt also the syllogistic axioms admit of briefer expression, when propositions are forbidden to speak in the mixed dialect of nature, and forced, like French voters, to be all for extension, or all for its opposite. Conformed to the doctrine which we have laid down, the *dictum*, for instance, in its affirmative relations, would appear in some such form as this: "Where the same nature both has an attribute and is one, the attribute it has belongs to the substance in which it is." The law of the second figure would be: "If an attribute be present with one nature and absent from another, neither of these can be the attribute of the other." That of the third, — in its affirmative part, — would be: "Where two attributes are copresent in the same sphere, each is an attribute of something having the other." These rules are perhaps less easy to follow than those usually given; the reason is, that when you move exclusively within either comprehension or extension, you can obtain a purely quantitative conception of the syllogistic relations, and represent them to yourself by geometrical or numerical images. These images, however, are psychologically false; and the logical systems founded on them supply an account, not of the real living acts of the mind in its use of language as an instrument of reasoning, but of a set of processes by which these might be replaced without altering the result. The principle of equivalent or substituted ratios, powerful in other sciences, is fatal to all truth in intellectual philosophy, and has been



indeed the bane of psychology in every age. On this ground we cannot reconcile ourselves to the recently elaborated doctrine of the quantification of the predicate. In spite of the simplification of logical forms it produces in the hands of Sir W. Hamilton, and the enlargement of their range in those of Mr. De Morgan, its product appears to us but a *quasi-logic* after all; and its method, a development of precisely what is least true in the doctrine as Aristotle left it. So profound is our respect for both these writers, and especially our admiration for the philosophical judgment as well as the vast knowledge of the Edinburgh Professor, that we make this confession with the utmost reluctance, and with full consciousness of the imprudence of dissent from such authority. We can only say that, in this matter, we have not turned sceptic without trying our hardest to believe.

With this discussion of the *dictum* we must take our leave of Mr. Bailey's book. Other topics are treated in its pages, and especially the relation of language to reasoning, with much more ability and success, as it appears to us, than the doctrine of the syllogism. But we have thought it well to confine ourselves to the examination of the author's characteristic tenets; the more so, from their partial coincidence with tendencies impressed by other and more powerful causes on English philosophical opinion. In parting from the authors we have ventured to criticise, we do not forget that the subjects on which they fail to convince us are subtle and difficult. We look back with grateful memory to the rich debt we owe

them for much past training of thought and opinion and remember, with satisfaction, that our closest agreement with them has ever been in matters remotest from metaphysics and nearest to human life.

## PLATO : HIS PHYSICS AND META- PHYSICS.<sup>1</sup>

It is curious that, in spite of the peculiar definiteness attaching to physical conceptions, there are as many undetermined questions respecting the kosmical mechanics of the ancients as respecting their ethics and metaphysics. There is no greater literary paradox than this, that writers trained in the Greek geometry, and thinking in the pure and simple lines of Greek imagination, should have transmitted to our hand treatises on the system of the universe, in which the relations of its primary bodies are gathered into no clear picture. To the well-known question of the "Oxford Examiner," "Does the earth move round the sun, or the sun round the earth?" a discreet desire to be on the safe side accounts for the answer, "Why, sir, sometimes the one, and sometimes the other." But that Plato, on being asked, "Whether day and night arise from the earth's spinning under the heaven, or the heaven spinning over the earth?" should reply

<sup>1</sup> Plato's Doctrine respecting the Rotation of the Earth, and Aristotle's Comment upon the Doctrine. By George Grote, Esq. London, 1860.

The Platonic Dialogues for English Readers. By William Whewell, D.D. London, 1859-60.

Platon's Sämmtliche Werke: übersetzt von Hieronymus Müller, mit Einleitungen begleitet von Karl Steinhart. 7 Bände. Leipzig, 1850-59.

"National Review," 1861.

to Mr. Grote, "Why, sir, from both," is less easy to explain; indeed, is so surprising, that we wonder whether the examinee has been heard aright, and regret more than ever that he cannot be recalled to answer again. How glad he would have been to tell us his thought, and how sagaciously he foresaw the sort of odd opinions that would be fathered on his words, we know from his humorous lament over the imperfection of literary expression as compared with the living voice. "There is this disadvantage, Phædrus, in writing, which brings it into exact analogy with painting. The artist's productions stand before you as if they were alive; but if you ask them anything, they keep a solemn silence. Just so with an author's language; you would fancy it actually charged with the thoughts it speaks; but if you ask it about something which you want to have explained, it only looks at you with the same invariable sign. And, when once reduced to the *litera scripta*, every discourse is tossed about everywhere, in the hands alike of the competent and of those who have no business with it, and cannot tell who ought to read it and who not. And, when disparaged and wrongfully reproached, it always needs its father to help it; for it has no power to defend and help itself."<sup>1</sup> Against the wrongs of prejudice and incompetency, Plato, in the hands of Boeckh, the first of living philologists, and of Grote, the first of living historians, is secure enough; but when such critics are totally at variance

<sup>1</sup> Phædr. 275 E.

with each other about his doctrine of the earth, it plainly "needs its father to help it."

Yet, apart from the disposition to claim too much, or allow too little, to the Platonic astronomy, we doubt whether the *loca probantia*, when cleared of the critical tangle which has grown around them, involve any irresolvable obscurity or contradiction. The most important of them runs thus: "The earth, our nurse, folded round the axis which runs through the universe, He formed to be guardian and maker of night and day, first and eldest of the gods that came into the phenomenal world within the heaven."<sup>1</sup> For the phrase "*folded round the axis*," substitute, with Gruppe, the translation, "*revolving round the axis*," and you make Plato teach the modern doctrine of the earth's rotation. Let the word stand as a description, not of *motion*, but of mere *position*, round the imaginary line from celestial pole to pole, and, with Boeckh, you obtain the picture of a stationary earth at the centre of a daily revolving heavenly sphere. Modify this conception on a single point; crystallize the geometrical axis of the universe into a solid cylinder, carrying the earth's matter as an excrescence integral with itself; and Mr. Grote's doctrine emerges, that, according to Plato, the same diurnal revolution from east to west affected earth and sky, yet caused the alternation of day and night. That this partnership of rotation would annul all relative motion, and sacrifice the phenomenon which it

<sup>1</sup> Τὴν δὲ τροφὸν μὲν ὑμετέραν, εἰλλομένην δὲ περὶ τὸν διὰ παντὸς πόλον τεταμένον φύλακα καὶ δημιουργὸν νυκτὸς τε καὶ ἡμέρας ἐμπαρήσατο, πρώτην καὶ τρεσβυτάτην θεῶν, ὅσοι ἐντὸς οὐρανοῦ γεγόνασι. Timæus (Stallbaum), p. 40, B, c.

is adduced to explain, is obvious enough to our modern physics; but would not, in Mr. Grote's opinion, occur to even the most accomplished philosophers of ancient Greece.

The natural science of the ancients, especially in its dynamical conceptions, must assuredly not be tried by our standards. But their plane astronomy was not so foolish that we may charge them with puerilities without limit; and Plato's evident familiarity with the phenomena of relative motion, and repeated use of them in explanation of celestial appearances, constitute a presumption against Mr. Grote's hypothesis, which only the clearest positive evidence can avail to remove. What, then, is the evidence adduced? It resolves itself, so far as Plato's own writings are concerned, into these two positions: (1.) It appears, from a kosmical description in the Republic (x. p. 616, 617), that the axis of the universe was conceived as a solid shaft, whose movement carried the spheres; (2.) As the earth's matter was supposed to be *packed round* this shaft, it could not escape having the same motion attributed to it. Each of these positions is maintained with ample skill and learning; yet on neither can we rest as thoroughly established.

The sketch of the Kosmos, at the end of the Republic, forms part of a highly wrought myth, descriptive of the retributions reserved for souls beyond the limits of this life. A human witness having been permitted to cross the boundary of death and return to the world without drinking the waters of forgetfulness, relates what he observed in his journey

through the unearthly scenes; and, among other things, he reports the look of the milky-way, and of the several planetary and stellar spheres,<sup>1</sup> seen from an extrazodiacal position. For our present purpose, the most essential sentences are these:—

“Now when they had spent each seven days in that meadow, they were obliged on the eighth to break up, and move on; and after four days more, they reached a spot where they saw spread out from above across the whole heaven and earth, a line of light like a column, or most of all resembling a rainbow, only brighter and purer. This itself they reached with the advance of another day’s journey; and there, in the middle of the light, they saw the ends of the stretched bands of heaven appearing out of it; for this light is the band of heaven, holding together its whole circumference, like the undergirth of ships. And out of these ends, in elongated line, proceeded the spindle of Necessity, by means of which all the revolving bodies perform their circuits; the shaft and winch being of adamant, but the spool a compound of this and other materials. Now the nature of the spool is as follows: in shape it is like what we em-

<sup>1</sup> Spoken of, however, not as “spheres,” but as *drum-like* form, or as *spools*. The zodiacal space, within which all the orbits of the then known planets are found, would present, when seen edgewise from a remote station outside, the appearance of a cylinder’s side. Seen from a station vertically above, the same space would look like a cylinder’s top; or, supposing each planet to mark its path by a track of light, like a system of cylinder-tops, one within another. The different “breadth” of apparent edge, assigned in the text to the spools, depends on the inclination of the orbits, and of the equator to the ecliptic.

ploy ; but, according to his account, we are to think of it as if in the hollow of one large spool, scooped out all through in the interior, were adjusted another smaller one of the same kind, like barrels that fit one within another ; and then, further within, a third and a fourth, with afterwards four more ; for there are eight spools in all, lying one within another, presenting circular edges as seen from above, but a surface quite continuous, as of a single spool around the spindle which goes right through the centre of the eighth. . . . In the turning of the spindle the same revolving motion is given to the whole. But while the whole is carried round, the seven interior circles glide with slow rotation in the opposite direction ; and of these the quickest in its motion is the eighth ; next come, all having the same velocity, the seventh, sixth, and fifth ; after that, as it seemed to them, the cycle of the fourth ; then the third ; and, last of all, the second. The spindle turns in the lap of Necessity. And, carried round with the circles, one resting on the upper surface of each, and uttering one single note were sirens, whose eight voices together compose a harmony. Moreover, at equal intervals around sat, each upon a throne, in white robes and with chaplets on their heads, Necessity's three daughters, the Fates, Lachesis and Klotho and Atropos ; to the Sirens' harmony they sung, — Lachesis, the Past, — Klotho, the Present, — Atropos, the Future. And from time to time Klotho, with the touch of her right hand, turned the spindle's outermost circle, and Atropos with the left, moved in like manner those within ; while Lachesis, with either



hand, touched both in turn." — *De Rep.* x. p. 616 B, p. 617 c.)

This passage undoubtedly sustains Mr. Grote's assertion that the rotation of the stellar sphere is made dependent on the turning of an adamantine axis to which it is attached. And his inference, that all other bodies stuck upon the spindle, including the earth's mass at the mid-point, must share the same motion, seems natural enough. Yet it is invalidated by the very terms of the description just quoted; according to which even the outermost sphere owes its movement, not simply to the spindle, but in part to the touch of Klotho's hand; and all the planetary cylinders, though on the same axis, are actually driven by the finger of Atropos in the reverse direction, with five different rates of speed. The bodies on the axis are not therefore made so fast to it as to preclude their slipping back upon it in all required degrees; and no argument can be founded upon the idea of material cohesion between them and their adamantine bearer. Our citation, it will be observed, does not mention the earth at all; and to fix it at the mid-point of this spindle, Mr. Grote has to import it from the *Timæus*, where no spindle is named. Supposing this fusion of two accounts to be legitimate, is there anything in the earth's attachment to the axis, as described in the *Timæus*, which makes its case different from that of the sliding planets in the *Republic*? Does the word *εἰλλομένῃ*, — "folded," "wrapped," "packed," round the axis, — imply solid compression and integration, or only circular ar-

rangement, of material? The latter we believe to be the essential idea, with perhaps the additional conception of "gathering" or "huddling" together about a given point, as a routed host would gather about a place of refuge. When we have made the most of this "close packing," we get only a condensation of the particles *inter se*, so as to form a solid mass, without any implied incorporation of them with the line of direction around which they collect.<sup>1</sup> The text, we conceive, thus leaves the earth as free as the planetary verticils, upon the spindle that carries them all.

But this "spindle" (*ἄτρακτος*) of adamant, — are we really to accept it, with Mr. Grote, as part of the Platonic physics? On the evidence of this myth (and we know of no other) are we to attribute to a mathematician and idealist like Plato the belief in a solid axillary cylinder running through the universe? If so, we can hardly stop here. The spindle cannot well dispense with the winch; or work, without Necessity, using her hands and "knees," and helped by her three daughters; or serve any purpose, without the planetary drums that keep Atropos so busy. Are all these to be seriously set down as elements in Plato's natural philosophy? If not, why pick out

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Grote's case depends, in fact, not so much on the exact meaning of the single word *εἰλλομένην*, as on the proper interpretation of *εἰλλομένην περί τι*. He does not claim for the verb the meaning "rotatory movement," but deduces the rotation as a secondary inference from the *tight-fastening* or *packing* of the earth on to a solid revolving cylinder. We may fully accept his definition of the word; yet may not feel convinced that to pack material together *round about* a shaft is the same thing as to *fasten it tight on* to the shaft. The packing-stuff of a piston-rod is *εἰλλομένη περί* the rod; yet the rod will slide through it.

the spindle as the only thing which is not to be figuratively taken? The whole composition is evidently a symbolical machinery for reducing the grand relations of the universe within the compass of the imagination, and setting them in a pictorial framework which might serve as a quasi-Kosmos, without falsifying the ratios of reality. Accordingly, the kosmical axis ceases to be a "spindle" (*ἄτρακτος*) as soon as we quit this myth of the republic; and it is not around it, but around a geometrical line of revolution (*πόλος*)<sup>1</sup> that, in the *Timæus*, the earth is said to be disposed. In the passage which speaks of "close-packing," there is no solid axis; and where the solid axis meets us, there is no "packing" round it.

Those who distrust every process of indirect inference, like the foregoing, may be asked to ponder the following sentences, in which Plato discusses the cause of the earth's stability:—

"This, then, is the conclusion at which I have arrived. If the earth is a round body in the mid. heaven, it needs neither the air nor other such external support (*ἀνάγκη*) to prevent its falling, but is adequately secured by the simple equiformity of the heaven all round, and the equilibration of the earth itself. For an equilibrated body set in the centre of something equiform will have no tendency in one

<sup>1</sup> We do not of course overlook the fact that this word, too, had originally a physical meaning. But it had become an established scientific word in Plato's time; and its original sense itself does not help us to Mr. Grote's cylinder; for it meant, not a *shaft*, but a *hinge*.

direction more than in another, but from the balance of its relations will remain at rest.”<sup>1</sup>

Here, surely, the earth appears as freely suspended, and all support or connection which might impair its isolation is distinctly disclaimed. The reasoning of the passage is almost in the spirit of the modern physics; and how to the man who wrote it Mr. Grote can attribute the belief, that the earth was stuck fast as a knob upon a solid kosmical cylinder, is to us incomprehensible; nor is it less so that he should dismiss this passage from consideration with the remark (applicable only to the sequel) that “it is the figure and properties of the earth in reference to mankind who inhabit it, that Plato sketches in the Phædon; he takes little notice of its kosmical relations, and gives no general theory about the kosmos” (p. 23). “Notice” enough is taken “of its kosmical relations” to exclude the hypothesis of a *solid axis*; though not, as Boeckh justly observes,<sup>2</sup> to decide the question of *rotation*. Is it possible that, in order to interpret the Timæus by the Republic, the Phædon, as an earlier production, is put out of court altogether?

But how, we are asked, could Plato call a mere suspended and stationary earth “Guardian and Maker of night and day”? Is not something more denoted by these words than the passive function of obstructing light? Can a body deserve the name of Artificer

<sup>1</sup> Phædon, pp. 108 E, 109 A.

<sup>2</sup> De Platónico systemate cœlest. glob. p. ix.; and Untersuchungen üb. d. kosmische System des Platon, pp. 8 seq.

(*δημιουργός*) by simply sitting still? Let it be granted that the word is more vivacious (as Plato's are apt to be) than we might expect, and that, to satisfy it, we must find something active for the earth to do. What is it to be? Plato himself tells us, the producing of night and day; — effects which would indeed ensue, if, with Gruppe, we could stop our philosopher's gliding heavens and spin his motionless earth; but which would be *prevented*, not produced, by the rotation of an axis carrying both. This, however, Mr. Grote thinks, is just what Plato failed to perceive. Unconscious of the contradiction, he ascribed to the earth the active function of forcibly grasping the kosmical shaft, and serving as a kind of ganglion to the kosmic soul, whence it could keep the main-stay steady and give diurnal motion to the universal sphere.<sup>1</sup> If on other grounds we have seen reason to

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Grote says, "The function which Plato ascribes to the earth in the passage of the *Timæus* before us, is very analogous to that which in the *Republic* he ascribes to Necessity, — the active guardianship of the axis of the *Kosmos* and the maintenance of its regular rotation. With a view to the exercise of this function, the earth is planted in the centre of the axis, the very root of the kosmic soul." And just before, "Plato in the *Republic* illustrates the kosmical axis by comparison with a spindle *turned by Necessity*." We hesitate, from appreciation of Mr. Grote's habitual exactitude and thoroughness, to call this statement in question. But we find no such active function as this — of turning the spindle — attributed to Necessity, or indeed any personal appearance and agency of that mythical figure at all. All the turning processes are assigned to the three Fates; not only the wheeling of the circles by touch of hand, but the direct use of the winch, as where it is said that the conductor of souls "led them first to *Klotho* to have the chosen lot made fast under her hand as she turned the spindle; and having attached it to this, he led the way to *Atropos*, that *her spinning* might make the thread of destiny unchangeable. Thence, without once turning round, he went under the throne of Necessity; and when he had passed through it, and the others had passed too, they all proceeded, through parching and dreadful

dismiss the shaft and the grasping, we shall hardly recall them in order to furnish an occasion of causality to the terrestrial artificer of night and day. A freely suspended earth will serve as well for a central station of the kosmic soul, for a base of the diurnal *nisus* that rolls the heavens; with the advantage, if it be at rest, of not annulling the phenomena in the very act of creating them. Mr. Grote apparently assumes that, because the kosmic soul wheels the heavens and always shares the movements it imparts, therefore the earth, which is its central root, must likewise turn with it from east to west. The inference, however, would mislead us. For the kosmic soul is simultaneously the source of opposite revolutions, of the outermost stellar sphere "of the Same" in the one direction, and of the planetary circles "of the Diverse" in the other; is present with both; shares in both movements; and therefore, in a neutral case where no motion is specified, can give a casting vote for neither. If the laws of its divine nature permit it to accompany at the same moment

heat, to the plain of Lethe," etc. (620 E.) All through the myth "Necessity" is kept in the background and remains invisible, appearing only at second-hand by her "throne," and "lap," and "daughters." This peculiarity we cannot regard as unmeaning. It is consistent with Plato's whole conception of *Ἀνάγκη*, as the passive limit of possibility; which can do nothing, create nothing, but only permit, within severe bounds, the phenomenal manifestation of ideas. The placing of the spindle in the "lap of Necessity" expresses passive dependence; the transit of souls "under the throne of Necessity" denotes passive immutability; and any interpretation of the myth which *sets Necessity to work* appears to us to alter the spirit of the original. If this be true, then, in proportion as Mr. Grote's comparison may be just between Necessity and the earth, must we deny to the latter the active function claimed for it.

the direct course of Pleiades and the retrogradation of Venus, they cannot preclude it from the intermediate state of rest which may be due at some other station. And, after all, the attempt to extort some *active* meaning from the words "Guardian and Maker of night and day," is uncalled for. As Boeckh finely says, "To be the sentinel of the diurnal phenomena, there is no need to stir, but only to stay; let the earth desert her post, and they are lost." And since, interposing her opaque substance, she veils the solar radiance and brings on the night, she exercises, in the strictest Platonic sense, a *demiurgic* function; for she so deals with negative materials as to realize an ideal end, and induces mere blind necessity to yield a beauty and express a thought.

And now a word on the point of chief interest for modern science. Were the sensible effects of combined motions, concurrent or opposite, unknown to the Greek philosophers of Plato's time? And can he really have committed the mistake which Mr. Grote attributes to him? We cannot reconcile such puerile ignorance with the attested facts and extant literature of that age. Herakleides of Pontus, who assigned the diurnal phenomena to their true cause,—the earth's rotation under a stationary sky,—was not only a disciple of Plato, but his deputy in the Academy during his absence in Sicily. In the very circle, therefore, for which the *Timæus* was written, and perhaps before it was composed, the results of relative motion and rest were familiarly known. Nor is that treatise itself destitute of conclusive evidence to the same effect. In treating of the motion of the

planets, it explains their apparent alternations of advance and retrogradation — their seemingly looped or spiral paths — by reference to the superior velocity of the inner planets. The *ἐλλειξ* is affirmed to be the effect of two combined motions of different speed, and in opposite directions.<sup>1</sup> How is it possible to conceive that the same mind which thus traced the consequences of compounding different rates, and of crossing or blending the paths of movement, should fail to discover that two bodies stuck upon one axis must turn always the same face to each other, and miss the alternation of night and day?

The reasons on which we have grounded our dissent from Mr. Grote's ingenious hypothesis, are drawn entirely from the Platonic dialogues them-

<sup>1</sup> Tim. pp. 38 D, E, 39 A. "From the thought and purpose of God with regard to the genesis of time, — with a view to bring it into the phenomenal world, — did sun and moon, and five other heavenly bodies, called planets, arise to mark off and keep the numerical distinctions of time. Their several bodies, when made, he sets in the orbits, — seven orbits for seven stars, — traced in the zone of the Diverse; namely, the moon in that nearest to the earth, the sun in the second; Venus and the so-called star of Mercury in those of equal speed but opposite direction with the sun: the effect of which is, that the sun, and Mercury, and Venus, overtake each other, and in the same way are overtaken in their turn." . . . "When, then, each of the stars required to complete the system of time had got into its proper path, and when, through the twining of their bodies with the tissue of the kosmic soul, they had become living natures and apprehended the function assigned to them, they took their circuits, some in wider orbits and with slower speed, others in narrower and faster, — all in the zone of the Diverse which crosses obliquely the zone of the Same, and is overpassed by it. In effect, the bodies which in the revolving sphere of the Same are carried round at the highest speed appear, while really overtaking the slower, to be overtaken by them. For as its revolution gives to their paths a spiral form in consequence of the simultaneous movements in two opposite directions, the planet that, whatever the distance, most nearly stands still looks closest to the sphere which is fastest of all."



selves. The testimony of Aristotle, and the opinions of his commentators, may be left undiscussed; however valuable as secondary sources of information, they only serve, where the primary evidence is adequate, to introduce new difficulties of their own, without authority to affect our prior conclusion. To us it is sufficiently clear what Plato's conception of the physical Kosmos was. To the earth, as a freely-suspended globe, he assigned the central position. As it had no rotation, it had no poles or axis of its own; but it was so disposed that through it passed the line of revolution for the stellar sphere; and so, by alternately veiling and unveiling the solar light, it was Guardian and Maker of night and day. Within the great celestial sphere, and involved in its diurnal rotation, there moved in opposite direction, and in circles variously distant from the earth, eight planetary bodies, always really slipping back among the stars, but at times, from the composition of movements and rates, apparently stationary or progressive. All were living divine natures, members of the kosmic soul, which moved where there was motion and rested where there was rest; which had its stable root at the venerable heart of things, and its free dynamic presence throughout the organism beyond; and which, itself constituted of mixed elements, — the Same and the Diverse, — was at home in the circles of both, and conducted them on their contrary paths.

Strange natural philosophy, this! not in the style of our Cambridge text-books, or even of the popular manuals of Herschel, and Lardner, and Delaunay!

The *Timæus*, indeed, is far from being an inductive book, and is enough to drive a reader accustomed to the Transactions of the Royal Society out of his wits. Not that its geometrical diagram of the bodies in space is altogether absurd, or its numerical notices of their times and movements entirely wild. The eye for physical arrangement, which it shows, is keen enough; and one is not surprised that out of its school Herakleides stepped at once upon the Copernican conception. But the bodies so disposed have a vivacity about them which in recent centuries they have lost, and the modern reader, familiar with the inertia of nature, is astonished at her difficulty in lying still. Instead of quietly submitting to be analyzed into mass and velocity, or to have her proceedings exhibited in the form  $e = \frac{g^2}{2}$ , she is perpetually starting up to take matters into her own hands; claims something like a soul; and even makes pretensions to music. In short, the *Kosmos* is *alive*; a ζῶν ἔμψυχον ἔνουν τε,<sup>1</sup> with all material things as articulated members of its body, and an imperishable vitality from its participation in the divine intellect. The unity of the whole organism is secured by the presence, all through it and around it, of one undivided living principle,<sup>2</sup> whose conscious action is its sole power. So great is the stress which Plato lays on this conception of the universe as *not dead*, that he guards it on every side. Not content with saying that it is so *now*, he wishes to exclude the suspicion that it could ever have been otherwise; to deny that

<sup>1</sup> *Timæus*, p. 30 c.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* p. 34 B

what expresses the order of life and thought could, antecedently, have been mere blind material; and hence, to secure the right order of genesis, he insists on the position that the immanent soul of the Kosmos was created *not later* than its body, but *earlier*, to be its empress and ruler from the first,<sup>1</sup> coextensive with the space it fills, and forever revolving in herself, to give it the rhythm of thought and beauty.<sup>2</sup> A world thus animate and immortal,<sup>3</sup> which thinks itself out in an eternal geometry and unerring proportions, is nothing less than divine; and though secondary and originated, yet, as self-sufficing and needing for its ends no knowledge or resource other than its own, is truly a blessed God.<sup>4</sup>

In construing statements of this kind, we must not refuse to them the latitude which the author himself claims for them: "Remembering how many teachers with as many doctrines there have been, about the gods and the genesis of the universe, you must not be surprised should it prove beyond our power to lay down positions absolutely self-accordant, and with a finish that leaves nothing to be desired. Should we present what is unsurpassed in probability, you should be content; bearing in mind that we are, — both I who speak and you who judge, — but human; so that it behoves us, when we meet with a reasonable representation of these things, not to push our demand further."<sup>5</sup>

But, with every allowance for the mythical form

<sup>1</sup> Tim. p. 34 B.

<sup>3</sup> Ψυχὴ πᾶσα ἀθάνατος, Phædr. p. 245 C.

<sup>5</sup> Tim. p. 29 C.

<sup>2</sup> Ib. p. 36 E.

<sup>4</sup> Tim. p. 34 B.

of exposition, we cannot mistake Plato's feeling, that living thought, as distinguished from mechanical necessity, pervades and directs the universe. The all-diffused Soul, which was there *before* the visible and tangible material, surely means more than the aggregate of mathematical laws presented by the Kosmos to *our* reason, and is intended to claim an inner principle of intelligence subjective to nature and objective to us; which, preoccupying the scene, takes up and modulates to harmonious ends whatever elements are introduced into it. All phenomena, therefore, spring from thought as well as speak to thought; for blind force there is no room at either end; a mental consciousness is the cradle and the crown of things.

This is the view of nature to the eye of art, as distinguished from the eye of science; with us, hopelessly separated; in Plato and even in Aristotle, still coalescent. If there be an inner meaning to the things we see, interpretation may go by sympathy; the glance of nature catching the glance of man and kindling a mutual intelligence: as the one thinks down into phenomena and the other thinks up into ideas, the progress and regress cannot fail to meet, and flash into communion. To explain how the soul in us and the soul in the world may have a fellow-feeling by which to find each other out, Plato tells us that they are similarly constituted: when they were made, the same ingredients were taken in either case, and mixed in the same vessel by the same rules, only with a result in our case less pure.<sup>1</sup> So at least

<sup>1</sup> Tim. p. 41 D.

it is with the immortal part of the human soul, which alone responds to the living look of the Kosmos; there is, however (besides the body), a mortal part, of lower origin,<sup>1</sup> which muffles and conceals its diviner associate, and intercepts too often the rays of recognition between it and the soul of nature. Still, through all the disguises of its perishable dress, its higher essence will often surprise you by gleaming out. In this respect the human soul is like the sea-god Glaucus, of whom sailors and fishermen caught glimpses beneath the green waters, as he yearly visited their coasts. No one, to look at him, would suspect the immortal nature shrouded in such a form. Disfigured by shell-fish and sea-weed and pebbles clinging to him, he might be taken for a monster rather than a god; and only those who know how he can prophesy, and will follow his oracles, find out what he really is. Just so do the adhesive entanglements of sense and passion grow around the soul, and cover her with an earthy mass, so dense and wild that her primitive divine nature is unperceived. But if you will only notice the insight she can show into the true and good, and the converse she aspires to with the godlike and immortal, then you may imagine what she would be if surrounded by these alone, and how she would appear if lifted out of the gulf in which her life is plunged, and with the unsightly accretions all struck off.<sup>2</sup>

The intercourse then between man and the universe is a communion of soul with soul, the lesser

<sup>1</sup> Tim. p. 69 c.

<sup>2</sup> Rep. x. p. 611 c.

with the greater, drawn together by the instinct of a divine kindred. That the immortal principle in humanity, though "prepared in the same vessel" and "from the same ingredients" as the *anima mundi*, was the later product of the two, does but repeat the rule already followed in the antecedence of the kosmic soul to the kosmic body. The order of origination is never from the lower to the higher, but always downward from the more perfect and comprehensive to the alloyed and limited. Every genesis of things is at once a manifestation of some divine essence and a fall from it. The hierarchy of causality cannot, on this principle, stop here; the world itself, of whose inner thought man's is the feeblest counterpart, is, with all its divineness, not an absolute entity, but a derivative god clothed in a visible system of phenomena. It is but the copy, in its turn, of what is not only living, but Life itself,<sup>1</sup> the perfect and ideal, not immortal only, but eternal; and it is there, to testify of what is beyond itself, — its superior in age and power, — the source at once of its being and its being known.<sup>2</sup> All that is orderly and beautiful in it

<sup>1</sup> The word *αὐτοζῶον*, it is true, is incorrectly attributed by Aristotle (*De Animâ*, I. ii. 7) to the *Timæus* (p. 34 C, 35 A); and its precise meaning, if we accept it as an interpretation, is disputed; Brandis (*de Perditis Arist. Libris*, ii. 7, and *Handbuch der griech.-röm Philos.* ii. 1, p. 319), and Trendelenburg (*Platon. de Ideis et Numeris Doctrina*, p. 87, and *Arist. de An.* p. 222), adopting the sense given by the old commentators, *κόσμος νοητός*; Zeller, on the other hand, rendering it "*die Idee des Thiers*" (*Platonische Studien*, iii. p. 272). The difference, however, scarcely affects our statement, which is sufficiently supported by the repeated assertion of Plato, that the actual Kosmos was made as like as possible τῷ τελέῳ καὶ νοητῷ ζώῳ p. 39 E, p. 30 D.

<sup>2</sup> *Rep.* vi. p. 509 B.

is lent to it from the ultimate model and cause of all good; the *form* given to it is the best possible, — the spherical, which most expresses the completeness of the divine nature; and the *motion* imparted to the vault of the fixed stars is that which alone is appropriate to perfect reason, — rotation returning into itself, — self-uniform and self-identical. — In both respects God frames what bears the nearest possible resemblance to himself; for he is good, and goodness is free, and *grudges nothing*; freely, therefore, he imparts himself, and frames a system reflecting all his communicable perfections. The world is the product of his “*ungrudgingness*;” and however it falls short of him, he is the standard and measure of it all.<sup>1</sup> In him, we reach at last the summit level, disengaged from all shadow that in giving shape gives darkness too, and in the presence of the pure ideals prior to their exile and eclipse amid phenomenal conditions.

All through this construction, in which physics seem to melt away into psychology on the one hand, and theology on the other, there run certain pervading principles, which, as they are highly characteristic, and foreign to modern habits of thought, it may be useful to draw forth.

(1.) Throughout the Kosmos and its contents, all reality, all essence, all permanence, must be looked for in the *thoughts* which it half reveals, half hides. These are the soul that shines through its body, and the divine brilliants for which that soul itself was

<sup>1</sup> Tim. p. 29 E; Phædr. p. 247 A.

created as a setting. It is participation in the supreme intellect that constitutes the stability—the immortal element—of the universe; and the types of idea into which this element breaks alone hold together the passive material, and give determinate form to the dust of phenomena. The constant character which repeats itself in every sample of a natural kind, — which neither wanders into any other kind nor absents itself from any cases of *this*, presented itself to Plato's mind as a unit of ultimate reality, serving as a nucleus for the play of successive change. This constant character not only pervades all the simultaneous individuals of the same order, but perseveres through the generations of organized beings; and, in another aspect, furnishes the standard conception of all the sciences; so as to force upon us the feeling, that it is a determinate form given in the very ground of things, — the look which expresses a single meaning in nature. This configuration of existence, — this rational and invisible image, which lies at the heart of things as their essence and of knowledge as its principle, is an εἶδος or idea; and is variously described as the universal in the individual, — the durable amid change, — the rational in the sensible, — the unit amid plurality. No actual object, as it comes before us in the physical world, is the same that presents itself to our mind when we hear its general name; and if all its attributes were on an equal footing, and no better secured than its individual features, it would be a mere shifting bundle of phenomena, on which thought would have no hold. But so far as the *thing* coalesces with the



*thought*, the essence is present, and rests with one end in our reason and the other in the world. Were it not for these abiding essences, were the evanescent conditions of sense the only sphere open to us, knowledge would be impossible; in truth, there would be nothing to be known. So far forth as the universe is an object of cognizance, and not simply a source of sensations, it is an organism and hierarchy of ideas, where the term of widest sweep touches the acme, and the individual thing stands at the zero, of reality. The ideas being eternal, while assuming transitory concrete forms, had invisible pre-existence in a pure intellectual seat prior to being born into time and space. This is the point,—this transcendency of the ideas beyond nature in addition to their immanence in nature,—at which Aristotle diverges from Plato.

(2.) It is assumed all through that, for interaction to take place between two things, they must be similar; and, should they not be so, they must remain mutually exclusive, till some middle term, resembling them on either hand, interpose to render relations possible. Thus, the eternal ideas could never pass into phenomena, — the real acting in partnership with the unreal, — were it not for the mediation of  $\phi\upsilon\chi\eta$ , which unites in itself both elements, and serves as the meeting-point of the intellectual and the corporeal. Nor again could sense and thought ever communicate with each other, were it not for the mathematical relations of number and dimension which lie between and have their principles in the one field and their application in the other. That

man and the universe conduct dealings with one another arises wholly from this, that both have a soul; of which the rational part speaks to the reason, and the sensible to sense. Vision in like manner would be precluded, if either the outer space or the inner man were dark; but as we steadfastly look, eyelight comes out to mingle with the daylight that comes in, with the joint effect of seeing and being seen; except, indeed, when it is night outside; and then, for want of the counter-current, the eyelids droop and shut in their own light, and leave it, in its solitary play, to paint the scenery of our dreams. Innumerable applications might be drawn from the Platonic dialogues, of the maxim, that opposites cannot be introduced to each other, except in and through a common element.

(3.) Hence, it directly follows, that between thinking and being thought, knowing and being known, there is not an antithesis, but a reciprocity; and that as science in our mind is an organized nexus of ideas, so, too, must be the system of the world which that science reads. Like only can meet like, and mind within has no eye except for mind without. Things, to be cognizable by thought, must be thoughts themselves; and thoughts, to hold of things, must be the essence of things themselves. We do not want then two sets of terms, one to designate the inner, the other to describe the outer world: it is the same world, and the universe does not stand over against the soul with a chasm between; but itself comes up in us in the shape of soul, and looks in its own glass: nature's fixed types and men's general notions being

but two aspects of the same thing. Ideas are subjective facts only because they are objective realities, and in either sphere, the logical and the kosmical, their history and process are the same: human science simply repeating in our consciousness the developments of external being; and the order of deduction being but the photographic transcript of the dialectic reality. To find, therefore, the highest principles of excellence, we must look for the most comprehensive thoughts in the logical hierarchy of our own mind.

The supreme term in Plato's climax of ideas, — the ἀρχὴ νοριω-άτη of thought and things, — is the idea of the good; and there is no more difficult point for the expositor of his philosophy than to determine whether this idea is identified with God, or still extrinsic to him. If, with Stallbaum and Brandis, we were to set the Platonic ideas in the divine mind, as mere subjective states, there need be little hesitation, in spite of the psychological inaccuracy, about treating their most comprehensive term as equivalent to the mind itself that has it; for a thought, in proportion as it tends to be all-inclusive, ceases to be distinguishable from its thinker. It would be an infinite relief to the imagination, to accept this tempting interpretation. A divine mind thinking out into existence conceptions which the human mind reads off into knowledge, presents us with something apprehensible. But we must not, for the sake of an easy solution, make Plato speak the language of modern philosophy; and, without forcing him to do so, it is impossible to construe his "ideas" into states of

God's intellect. They are described as not less *objective* to him than to us; they are the "*patterns*" on which he looks in the process of kosmical construction, not by way of introspection, but of contemplation; they are existences, not powers; the still centres of real being, that, but for an agency other than their own, would remain motionless eternally: in short, a definite stock of immutable entities, like the system of geometrical truths, which are not contingent on being thought, though taken into adoption by all intelligence. To these pre-existent intellectual data, — determinate, quantitative, real, — having beauty, measure, proportion, — stands opposed another realm of mere material conditions, — indeterminate, qualitative, unreal, — the seat of blind necessity: and it is by dipping, as it were, the positive ideal moulds into the indefinite mass of negation that the mixed universe arises, and the ideas become incarnate in phenomena. But where is the *agency* to which they owe this assumption of visible shape? Not in themselves, for they are motionless eternal. Not out beyond themselves, for above them there is nothing higher; they include and exhaust all that *is*, and is divine. It must be confessed that Plato escapes from this dilemma by a stroke of force. He vests in his supreme idea ("the good," for which, however, the word "intellect" is sometimes substituted), a causality which is denied to all the rest; and thus, while treating it dialectically as one of their series, lifts it in effect beyond them, and concentrates in it both logical ascendancy and creative power. Nothing can make this clearer than his own

finely-traced comparison between the idea of the good in the world of reason, and the sun in the world of perception. First, the sun stands apart and does not identify itself with either vision in us, or visibility in things; but mediates between them, and is the cause of both. Equally do subject and object in thought find a common parent in the idea of the good, which puts them into relation by imparting to the knower his faculty and to the known its truth. Nor is this all; for, next, the sun, besides these *visual* achievements, is the source of the very *origin and growth* of visible nature itself; which springs up as well as displays itself under the beams of day. Just so, is the idea of the good the cause, not of the truth only of what is known, but of its existence too; holding a higher rank in dignity and power.<sup>1</sup> If here, without

<sup>1</sup> Rep. vi. pp. 507-510. The following sentences contain the pith of the doctrine: "The sun, then, is not vision, but in being the cause of vision is its object too. "Yes," said he. "I conceive it then to be the product of the good, set forth to be its counterpart; what, in the intellectual realm, the one is in relation to the intelligent subject and intelligible objects, the same, in the visual realm, is the other in relation to vision and the visible" (p. 508 B).

"This, then, which imparts truth to the known and faculty to the knower, let us say is the idea of the good, cause at once of the mind's knowledge and of the truth it knows; and, noble as these are, if you take it for something nobler still, you will not be wrong. As just now we found that light and vision were sun-like, but not sun, so here we are to regard knowledge and truth as both of them like the good, without either of them being identical with it, and are to assign yet higher rank to the essence of the good (p. 508 E).

"Carry the illustration still one point further. The sun, I suppose you will say, imparts to visible things not only their visibility, but their genesis, growth, and nurture, without being itself a case of genesis. And so with the objects of knowledge. They owe to the agency of the good not simply their susceptibility of being known, but their existence and essence too, though the good is not an essence, but transcends essence in dignity and power" (p. 509 B).

emerging beyond the system of ideas, but only standing on its highest step, we have alighted on Plato's source of *power*, elsewhere we find the most distinct and emphatic identification of causality with *mind*, instead of with "*the good*." Thus, the question of questions is raised with great solemnity in the *Philebus*: "All the wise, true to the conscious dignity of wisdom, say with one accord, that mind is king of heaven and earth." "Are we then to say, Protarchus, that chance and the force of accident and unreason administer the collective whole we call the universe? or, on the contrary, as our forefathers used to say, that mind and a certain marvellous intelligence guides what it arranged?" "The difference is infinite, Sokrates," replies Protarchus; "for this new suggestion of yours strikes me as even irreverent; while the doctrine that all these things are ordered by mind is worthy the aspect of the universe, — of sun, and moon, and stars, and all their circuit; and never, for my part, could I say or think otherwise of them." "Our confession, then," continues Sokrates, "you would throw in with the concurrent voice of our predecessors, that so it is; and this, not in mere safe accommodation to the opinions of others, but with resolve to take our share of responsibility and reproach, in face of any grand man who should deny the doctrine, and affirm that disorder reigns."<sup>1</sup> The discussion thus opened is too long to quote. The argument proceeds on the analogy between man as mikrokosm, and the uni-

<sup>1</sup> *Phileb.* p. 28 D, p. 29 A.

verse as *makrokosm*: the former, as dependent reflex, contains no more or other elements than the latter; on the contrary, repeats the same constituents in reduced and abated form. In the *Kosmos* are all the elements, — earth, water, fire, — in pure and mighty store: in the bodies of men and animals, drawing, in fact, on this unlimited supply, they reappear with attenuated virtues. Apply then the same principle to the remainder of human nature: with the body of man is conjoined a living soul (*ψυχή*), dependent in its turn on a greater but similar essence without. The universe, therefore, has its living soul, or humanity could have none; — to say nothing of the evident kosmic intellect and wisdom; and without a psychic nature intellect and wisdom could never become phenomenal. Summing up the reasoning, Sokrates says: —

“Taking then, Protarchus, these four kinds, — the determinate ideas, the indeterminate material, the mixed, and the causal power, which, as fourth, pervades them all, — we cannot suppose that whilst, in our human case, this last provides a living soul, and implants the natural energies of the body as well as its curative reaction under ailment, and effects now one combination, now another, so as justly to win the title of manifold and comprehensive wisdom; yet, where the very same things present themselves in the whole heaven, at once on a mighty scale and with beauty quite unmixed, there the constitution of what is superlatively fair and excellent is due to no design.

“PROT. This would be quite against reason.

“SOKR. If so, we should take the other ground, and repeat what we have often said already. In the universe, there is much indeterminate material and adequate determinate ideas, and over and above these a cause of no mean nature, disposing years, and seasons, and months in the order of beauty, and having every claim to the appellation mind and wisdom.

“PROT. Assuredly, every claim.

“SOKR. But mind and wisdom, we know, could never present themselves without a living soul.

“PROT. Confessedly not.

“SOKR. Then, in the nature of Zeus, you will say, on account of the causal power, there proves to be inherent a kingly living soul and kingly mind”<sup>1</sup> (p. 30 B-D).

Varying the expression, he adds that

“Mind is progenitor of that one of the four kinds which we called cause;”

and that

“Mind, we must remember, is made out to be

<sup>1</sup> That is, “If we did not allow to the nature of Zeus a soul and intellect, we should be left without the requisite causal power.” Διὰ τὴν τῆς αἰτίας δύναμιν assigns the *logical ground* for our assigning intellect to Zeus. Zeller (*Philosophie der Griechen*, ii. § 20) treats this phrase as expressing the *physical cause* of Zeus's intellect, — the dynamic *αἰτία* that produced it; and accordingly understands the passage to teach, that the kingly intellect of Zeus stood *lower down* than the *αἰτία*, and that at the head of all was something other than intellect. This interpretation seems to us against the context, and equally against the construction of *διὰ* with the accusative.



akin to cause, and pretty nearly of the same category" (pp. 30 E, 31 A).

In this remarkable passage, it is quite plain (1) that both the determinate world of ideas and indeterminate world of material are treated as in themselves passive data; (2) that in looking about for the *causal power* which penetrates them without belonging to them, living soul ( $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ ) is named as the immediate dynamical principle; (3) that this, however, is demanded, not as ultimate, but as the needful vehicle for the manifestation of mind; (4) that the final equivalents, therefore, are *causality and mind*. As disposed in the foregoing argument, it is *not* one of the ideas, but enters from beyond; and it *is* "in the nature of Zeus," under whose name we are to understand the whole divine governing principle of the universe, irrespective of the distinction between the kosmic soul ( $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ ), which is originated, and the mind ( $\nu\omicron\upsilon\delta\varsigma$ ), which is the sole originator. As presented in the Republic, on the other hand, causality is made equivalent to the idea of the good, and so retained among the ideas, though at their head. The inconsistency is indisputable. The ascription, however, of *causality* to the supreme idea, practically removes that idea into so exceptional a position as to be tantamount to its elevation into the divinest seat. On the whole, and neglecting the refinements of this or that particular passage, we may say that, with Plato, Mind, Cause, God, and the Idea of the Good, are interchangeable terms.

The original antithesis between the world of deter-

minate ideas and that of indeterminate material carries its effect all through the Platonic doctrines. The causality of God is different according as it applies itself to the one realm or the other; as Disposer of the Ideas, he is *Poet*; as Moulder of the Material, he is *Artificer*; and the mode in which the higher function holds ascendancy over the lower, is finely marked in the statement that the indeterminate mass of material is *persuaded* by him to receive the ideas, so that the sphere of Necessity is prevailed over by the force of Mind.<sup>1</sup> The distinction, again, between a true cause and a mere condition is only another form of the same fundamental contrast. On this distinction Plato lays the greatest stress; and to the neglect of it repeatedly ascribes the dead and disappointing result of a mere mechanical explanation of nature, such as Anaxagoras had rendered familiar. Thus he dismisses a description of the phenomena of reflected light with these words: "Such are some of the conditions (*ξυναρτίων*) which God enlisted in his service, to realize, as far as possible, the ideal of what is best. By most men they are regarded, not as conditions, but as causes of all, as sources of cold and heat, condensation and expansion, and similar phenomena. But these things are good for nothing as vehicles of thought and reason; for of all that exists,

<sup>1</sup> "In what precedes we have set forth pretty completely the kosmical results elaborated by Mind; a parallel account must now be given of the results of Necessity. For this Kosmos has a mixed genesis, from the concurrence of Necessity and Mind. Mind, however, got the better of Necessity by persuading it to let the best direction be impressed on almost all things as they arose; and so at first this universe, sprung from Necessity, prevailed over by intellectual persuasion."—*Timæus*, p. 48 A.

the only thing susceptible of the prerogative of reason we must pronounce to be soul; and this is invisible, while fire and water, and earth and air, all present themselves as visible bodies. The lover of reason and knowledge must direct his search to the causes of intelligent nature, as the primary; and investigate only as secondary those which, being set in motion by something else, transmit the motion by necessity. That must be our procedure. We must speak of both kinds of causes; but must separate those that will intelligently produce what is beautiful and good from those that, empty of intelligence, produce nothing but aimless casualties" (*Timæus*, p. 46 C-E). With still stronger emphasis he discriminates, in a later passage, the functions of the two kinds: "All these things, with nature so constituted by Necessity, the Artificer of what is best and fairest in phenomena took in hand, when he called into being the self-sufficing and most perfect divinity (the *Kosmos*); availing himself of the appropriate instrumental causes, but fabricating by his own direct agency the element of good in all that arose. Wherefore we must by all means keep distinct two kinds of cause, — the one necessary, the other divine. And while, with a view to the true blessedness of life, it is the divine that, as far as our nature permits, we should everywhere seek, yet, as a means to this end, we must investigate the necessary too; reflecting that, without it, the other, on which we are especially intent, must evade our thought and apprehension, and have nothing to say to us till we acquiesce in these terms" (pp. 68 E, 69 A). In sharper

definition, he elsewhere says : "It must indeed be an indiscriminating mind which cannot see that a true cause is one thing, and quite another is that without which the cause could never have causality ; yet this, it seems, is what most men, with thought groping as in the dark, designate as the cause itself, assigning it a name to which it has no right" (Phædon, p. 99 B). Thus we find the great controversy between Thought and blind Force already begun, with full consciousness of its depth and magnitude, and stated in terms singularly approaching the language of modern philosophy. The firm grasp which Plato had of the conditions and of the consequences of that problem attests, far more than his aim to solve it by his doctrine of ideas, the breadth and penetration of his intellect. Critical attempts, like those of Spinoza and Hegel, to hold the balance even between the two types of causality, or to absorb them both in a logical evolution, which, without being either divine or material, was yet Thought and Necessity in one, could never proceed from a mind like Plato's, too full of life and movement to poise itself and the world on an eternal tiptoe of unstable equilibrium. He knew, and proclaimed with as much decision as Comte on the other side, that there could be no compromise ; and that men must make their choice, whether in this universe they were living in the grasp of a blind, delirious giant, or holding, as a child, the gracious hand, and looking up into the clear eyes of Infinite Right and Reason. Either Thought is the last result of blind Force, or Force is the expression of conscious Thought ; there is no third thing possible or conceiv-

able ; and in giving his deliberate verdict (deliberate because his first training had been in the doctrines of the opposite school) <sup>1</sup> on the ideal side, Plato was

<sup>1</sup> There is much uncertainty about the sources of Plato's doctrine, and the order of its construction. Aristotle, however, expressly says (*Met. A. vi. 987 A, B*) that from his youth Plato was familiar with the Herakleitic doctrines, through his intimacy with Kratylos, the pupil of Protagoras; and having brought them with him to Sokrates, founded on them the part of his scheme which had reference to sensation, while stimulated by the new influence to mature his peculiar doctrine of ideas. The Herakleitic maxim, that there was nothing but phenomena, and therefore no rest, but only motion, in the universe, was carried to such extreme by this Kratylos, that he censured the moderation of Herakleitus in saying, "You could never cross the same stream *twice*," and declared, "You could not cross it *once*" (*Ar. Met. Γ v. 101 A*). In the dialogue bearing the name of Kratylos, there is also introduced Hermogenes, whom Diogenes Laertius affirms to have been one of Plato's instructors, and whose connection with the Eleatics raises the question of the pupil's relation to that opposite school. The question cannot be answered by appeal to external evidence, and for its solution waits on another, justly regarded as the most embarrassing problem presented by the writings of Plato, namely, at what period of his life the *Parmenides* was written. If, as both Schleiermacher and Boeckh contend, this marvellous mass of dialectic was thrown off in his youth as a mere intellectual exercise, he had early obtained acquaintance with the doctrines of Parmenides and the writing of Zeno of Elea, and a high respect for the persons of them both. If, on the other hand, we assign this dialogue, with Herman and Zeller, to a much later time, there remains nothing — for on Diogenes Laertius no stress can be laid — to indicate any very early initiation into the Eleatic ontology. Notwithstanding the great authority of the veteran critic of Berlin, we incline to refer the *Parmenides* to the middle period of Plato's literary activity. Under this supposition, it is not improbable that his estimate of the Eleatics was first drawn from Sokrates, who may well have enjoyed in his youth the opportunity assigned to him in the dialogue, of converse with Parmenides and Zeno on their visit to Athens, B.C. 458. The same remark applies to his knowledge of the Pythagorean doctrines, which influenced him more conspicuously than any other antecedent system. There is nothing against the intimation given in the *Phædon* (p. 61), that Sokrates learned from hearsay the leading principles of the Italian school; for at Thebes lived his contemporary Philolaus, their most eminent teacher and first writer, two of whose disciples, Simmias and Kebes, appear among the interlocutors of the *Phædon*, and are questioned by Sokrates about what they have heard from their instructor at Thebes.

well aware that he determined, at a stroke, the character of his science, his ethics, his religion. His subordination, in God, of fabricating skill to poetic origination, — in nature, of phenomenal conditions to intellectual causation, — in human knowledge, of the perceptive to the ideal element, — in morals, of the sentient and expedient to the noble and just, — in the state, of the industrial host to the senate of choice spirits and tested characters, — is all an expression of one and the same fundamental faith, that reason, with its included forms of truth, beauty, right, is the everlasting ground of things; out of which they come, held together by which they live, and into which they must return.

Some of the applications of this general principle to human nature and life are highly curious, and present a point or two of interesting comparison with modern notions of some mark. The souls of men, like the kosmic soul that nurtures them, are in being *earlier* than the body, and, from that pre-existence, assume in turn the conditions of corporeal manifestation. Their antecedent state has not indeed been from eternity; they so far differ in kind from the ideas they are conscious of, and from the Divine Mind that introduced them on the scene: but, once upon the kosmic stage, they are there forever: partaking of the causal spontaneity of the originating intellect, they have the free self-movement which is the dis-

Plato's ultimate acquaintance with Pythagoreanism was too exact to be thus explained, and was enlarged, as we know, by a work of Philolaus', with the remaining vestiges of which Plato's expositions accurately agree. On the whole, it is probable that the only philosophic culture which Plato brought to Sokrates was a familiarity with the doctrines of the Ionic school.

tinctive mark of independent life, and stamps as deathless every kind that has it. Or, if the account of the genesis of souls, in the *Timæus*, be treated as purely mythical, they must be released from even this limitation on their past, and be regarded as no less without beginning than without end; for of Plato's earnestness in assigning them a place both before and after this life, no doubt can be entertained. Whence, then, have they come? and whither do they go? and what traces do they bear now of what was prior, or will they bear hereafter of what is present? From none of these questions could Plato refrain, and to all he ventures some reply, -- in sharp dialectic where he feels his footing and sees his way, -- in picturesque and pathetic myth where reverence and faith carry him consciously beyond the keen Hellenic sunlight of his mind. God, it is said, formed at the outset as many souls as there are stars,<sup>1</sup> on each of which he planted one, to watch from that heavenly station the divine order of things; and then, after a time, to be born into a human corporeal life. This fate is the consequence, according to the *Phædrus*, of a lapse already from the nobleness befitting that starry existence;<sup>2</sup> but is due, according to the later doctrine of the *Timæus*, to a general law, providing for the maintenance of a mortal race, as part of the needful outfit of the world.<sup>3</sup> Whatever be the cause of her descent, the soul brings with her the vestiges of her celestial experience. The divine characters of truth and beauty, however darkened by the film of

<sup>1</sup> *Tim.* p. 41 D.<sup>2</sup> *Phædr.* p. 248.<sup>3</sup> *Tim.* p. 42.

sense, do not irrecoverably fade, but, now and then, as the breath of purer opportunity sweeps over them, gleam out in the surprise of some luminous consciousness. Whatever knowledge and insight we are able to make our own here are no gift or gain of this life, but mere submerged fragments rescued from the wreck of another. The highest order of truth, the apprehension of the inner essence and recondite relations of things, mathematical science, dialectical reasoning, moral appreciation, depend not upon the reports of the outward sense, but on the reflective ✓ clearness of the inward intellect, — are not deposited as an accretion, but evolved as buried treasure. The psychological experiment is well known which Plato tries upon Meno's slave.<sup>1</sup> Without a geometrical notion to begin with, the boy is led on, by mere interrogation of his own intelligence, to discover the relation between a square's side and its diagonal; and from this example, taken as fairly representative of the whole scientific procedure of the understanding, the inference is drawn that all our learning is reminiscence, and bears witness to the past rather than the present. This is the Platonic form of the doctrine of *à priori* ideas; whose modern advocate proceeds, in fact, upon the same data, and uses the same reasoning to bar the empirical explanation, and only stops short of the claim of reminiscence because to him an eternal self-evidence in ideas does not preclude the transient entrance of successive minds upon the subjective apprehension of them. The resulting

<sup>1</sup> Meno, p. 82-86.



lists of notions transcending experience are singularly concurrent in the two cases. Space and time, causation and necessity, unity, substance, beauty, right, and good, are claimed alike in ancient and in modern schools as the irresolvable residuum which no mental analysis can dissipate, or reduce from a divine trust to a human acquisition.

Human life, it is evident, must be, on the Platonic theory, if not an expiation, at least a struggle of recovery, led on by glimpses of the higher mind, and beaten back by the crush and crowd of sentient interests. The eternal forms of thought that hold affinity with the heavenly world lie in the immortal part of the soul, — its rational or divine element. Its mortal part has two constituents, of unequal worth; *courage*, or high spirit, which impulsively sympathizes with the good and honorable, and is an admirable ally of the reason, but in itself has no insight, and needs to serve the power above it; and *appetite*, pleading for the satisfaction of the sentient desires, and grasping at the wealth which gives purchasing power for their indulgence. From this tripartite constitution, — difficult from its unequal balance to bring to symmetry, — may be explained the discord of our powers, and the frequent defeat of the supreme ends of life. How the upward tendency of the immortal reason is imperfectly aided by irregular courage, and borne down by the gravitation of desire, is represented in the celebrated myth which gives to the Phædrus its most conspicuous feature! The Soul, it is there said, resembling in its composition a chariot and its driver, has Courage and Appetite for its steeds, and Reason

for its charioteer; and the difficulty of directing its course arises, in our human case, from this:— that while beings diviner than we have not only the reins in the hand of perfect skill, but horses of best descent and mettle, ours are ill-yoked together, one being good and noble, the other just the opposite; the one akin to the living soul of all, and tending upwards on the wing to catch glimpses of its native heaven; the other, without plumage to sustain it, and always wanting to sink safely home into the rest of bodily existence. The function of the wing is to bear the heavy aloft into the abode of the gods,—the place beyond the heavens, which no poet has ever sung or can sing,—the formless, incorporeal, colorless realm where the essences of thought and justice dwell, and the divine steeds may pasture and grow their plumage on the wise, the beautiful, the good, which are alike the food of gods and men. Once gain that region, and the wings will have new breadth and power; miss it, and seek inferior aliment, and they become thin and waste away. When the great Lord of heaven leads out with his winged chariot, he is followed by the troop of gods and spirits, disposed by his order in eleven trains; and as they make the round of the lower heavenly vault, whoever can and will may join the procession, and survey the glories in whose neighborhood it sweeps. But at last comes the time when the godlike race that leads the way goes to the banquet prepared for them beyond the margin of the lower heaven, and the rim is reached which only the spirits of strong pinion can pass. Here, then, occurs the grand struggle of the soul

While the gods have easily reached the inner meadows of eternal truth, and turned out their horses to pasture on ambrosia and drink of nectar, even the immortal power of the human soul pushes on with difficulty to the mere edge of that upper heaven. A few may so far prevail as to stand just clear above the margin, and look round through the divine space and admire the beauties and sanctities it contains. Others get their head just through, and have a brief chance of gazing round; but have so much trouble with their steeds that they have scarce time to look. There are more who push for an instant through, but are plunged down again by their refractory steeds, so as to see a little, but miss the most. Below and behind these, comes the throng of incapable drivers and stubborn horses, whose sole proof of nobleness is in a vain wish to follow, and who do but jostle and trample one another, and with strife and wrangling hurt a vast deal of plumage, and after all lose the entire vision of divine realities.<sup>1</sup>

When we compare the arrangement in which Plato here disposes the powers of the soul with the psychology of the Republic, a difference presents itself which attests the greater depth and completeness of his later view. Here, in command of the two active forces, Courage and Appetite, Reason holds the seat of power; the same Reason which, among the cognitive faculties, presides with a similar ascendancy over Opinion, or mere "Mother-Wit" (*δόξα*), and Perception. Both the mental and the moral side of our

<sup>1</sup> Phædr. pp. 247, 249.

nature are thus made to culminate in a single intellectual term. In the Republic we notice a change. Reason takes its place side by side with its former steeds, as if co-ordinated with them; and their relations are evidently so conceived, that had the myth yet remained to be written, the chariot of the soul would have appeared, not as a "biga," but as a "triga." The seat, however, of the charioteer would then be empty. And is there, then, no fourth to take the reins? There is. After enumerating the virtues appropriate to each member of the triad,—Wisdom to Reason, Enterprise to Courage, Self-restraint to Appetite,—Plato insists on the need of yet a crowning excellence, whose function it shall be, not to add anything to constituents already there, but to regulate their proportions and keep each to its just place. This superintending and restraining power which is to balance the whole is *Right*, or Justice (*δικαιοσύνη*); whose opposite, *Wrong* (*ἀδικία*), consists in an insurgent condition of some one or other of the parts of the soul; when that which is naturally adapted to serve aspires to rule, and, by throwing the hierarchy of principles into disorder, introduces the very essence of moral evil. For "Virtue," he adds, "is, in this view, a kind of health, beauty, and good tone of the soul; while Vice is disease, and deformity, and weakness."<sup>1</sup> Here, then, the demand is distinctly set up for some authoritative supervision which shall keep even Reason herself to her proper duty, and modulate the whole series of the inner

<sup>1</sup> Rep. p. 441 D, p. 444 K.

*sources* of moral life. This, however, is precisely the function of *Conscience*,—regarded not as a separate member of the system of active powers, but as a judicial consciousness of the relative worth and claims of the several springs of action. And we see in the change of Plato's tone an indication that he had begun to feel the unfitness of a purely intellectual apprehension to occupy the throne of our moral nature, and to foreshadow the primary conception of Christian ethics.<sup>1</sup>

Plato's doctrine of *à priori* ideas was probably an extension, over the whole field of human knowledge, of a principle started by Sokrates in connection with ethics alone. The Sokratic maxims, that "virtue was susceptible of *being taught*," and that "no man was *voluntarily bad*," present at first sight a very external view of morals, and look like sentences of Bentham rather than watchwords of the Academy. When, however, we remember that the "teaching" of Sokrates was not a putting of information into the mind, but a drawing of latent truth out of the mind, we see at once that the didactic process on which he relied for ethical results was a direct appeal to moral consciousness, and founded on the assumption of an inward readiness of human nature to respond to the voice of a true interpreter. The ideal forms of the right and noble, however hidden under the incrustations of sense and evil habit, sleep within; and by

<sup>1</sup> Schleiermacher (Platon's Werke, iii. 1, p. 600) remarks the difference between the Phædrus and the Republic; but, not connecting it with the exposition of *δικαιοσύνη*, finds the fourth and presiding term in the educational reason of the State as opposed to the personal reason of the Individual.

adequate provocation and questioning may be awakened, and brought to vindicate their existence. It is for want of seeing these with the inward eye, or being aware of their divine presence, that a man is apt to be "bad;" once let him really look on the good, with no disguising medium between, and *not* to love and pursue it is impossible; it carries its own persuasion and authority with it; and not till some film steals back over his vision, can he relapse into any unworthiness. In this sense, no doubt, all moral aberration was resolved by Sokrates into mental blindness and mistake; but it was a blindness to the *intrinsic evil* and deformity, not to the *consequences* of wrong desires;—a mistake of ideal (also supremely real) good, not of sentient interests. The "eudæmonist" principles—that moral right and wrong are constituted by natural pleasure and pain; that there is no evil but suffering, and no operative motive but happiness—were completely at variance with the whole character of the Sokratic ethics; and if ever they appear to be sanctioned, it is only under cover of language on which our greater and lesser circles of distinction were not yet traced. And so, when Bentham says that "Wrong-doing is nothing but false reckoning," he means, "Show the perpetrators that by another course they would be *happier* men, and they will not repeat the ill." When Sokrates says the same thing, he means, "Make them realize how much *better* men a different choice would render them, and this new light will change their soul." In the one case, the rule declares the omnipotence of external consequences; in the other, the

subduing suasion of moral beauty and intrinsic worth. There is nothing, indeed, which the Platonic Sokrates treats with more contempt than the only form of conduct contemplated by Bentham as commendable,—right-doing for the sake of its advantages and rewards. All character of goodness is denied to action with a view to outward benefits in this life or in any other. If you dare a little to-day from the prospect else of a greater terror to-morrow, your very bravery expresses only fear. If you refrain from indulgence now, that you may have a richer banquet hereafter, your very moderation is but an investment in greediness. And that can be no virtue which illicitly sets its heart on the very things it professes to renounce, and secretly worships the idols it dethrones. Genuine goodness stipulates for no wages to personal appetite and desire; but accepts the intrinsically good for its own sake, as the sterling coin for which all else may freely be exchanged away. And so far from regarding its entail of suffering as that which makes wrong action evil and ineligible, Plato maintains that to cut off that entail would double the evil; that, next to the supreme ill of guilt itself, the worst that can befall a man is to escape the anguish that belongs to it; that the desire for impunity, the prayer for "salvation," are part of the delusion of his sin; that if he had the true insight of penitence, he would rather insist on taking all the sorrow due, and yield himself the prisoner of eternal justice to be thus, for the first time, set at one with truth. Alas! how far below this pagan moral standard is that spurious Christianity which first appeals to the passionate

desire of escape from penalty admitted to be just, and then encourages men to exult that they are let off through substitution of another's unmerited sufferings!

From the identification of virtue with insight follows another feature of the Platonic psychology; its disparagement of *unconscious* genius and character. The blind force of instinctive life, however healthy, sagacious, and well balanced, Plato treats with none of the admiration lavished on it by Mr. Carlyle. He put no trust in mere unreflective discernment, in the happy hits of natural cleverness, in the gifts of capable but special men,—poets, musicians, orators; but insisted that wisdom began, continued, and ended in open-eyed and self-conscious method, which knew its own ground, and could explain how its way was traced. Many wonderful and beautiful things were done by bees and ants; but the human prerogative was not the doing of such things, but, in doing them, the understanding what was done, and how and why. And so long as this insight was not called into exercise, the soundest nature was without security; right to-day, it might be wrong to-morrow, like the tact of an ill-taught physician, or the mere quick-sightedness of a pilot in a strange sea. To sift every untested conventionalism, to break up the sleep of routine, to compel enthusiasm to think, to force even the best habits to find their solid ground; in short, to convert all life into a work of high art, designed and carried out as God evolved the Kosmos, was the fundamental aim of the Sokratic self-knowledge. Nor was the aim unsupported by the inherent ten-



dency of human nature. That very "frenzy" (*μανία*) and inspired "possession" which in the poet worked by unconscious light was but the first movement of the soul in the pursuit of immortal beauty; and the clear contemplation of the eternal types of being was the philosophic goal of the same impulse. Love, indeed, in all its shapes is the sigh, disguised or open, of the mortal for the immortal;—the fascination with graceful forms,—the passion for beautiful souls, and the interchange with them of noble thoughts,—the thirst for intellectual truth,—are earlier stages through which the mind presses towards the divine beauty in which love dies from having realized its quest. By a happy myth Plato describes this yearning impulse as joint product of the soul's *poverty* and *affluence*, expressing, by features at once of sadness and of hope, the mingling of want and of possession. *Eros* is the child of *Penia* and *Poros*. Nor does he leave it doubtful what *kind* of possession it is to which this yearning owes its life; for *Poros* again is the son of *Metis*: so that we *have* nothing, and can *sigh for* nothing, but what is born of divine wisdom and inherits a spiritual nature.<sup>1</sup>

Such are some of the traces which the soul bears of the pre-existent state. Nor will the continuity be broken by the interposition of death. On the contrary, it will then be found that life—as the secret heart of all men tells them—is a genuine trust; that death strips off the disguises which confound the

<sup>1</sup> *Sympos.* p. 203 seq.; *Phileb.* p. 64 seq.

faithful with the faithless; and that eternal justice has prepared for each a future accurately corresponding with his past. With the inimitable mixture of humor with solemnity which characterizes his deepest myths, Plato tells us that in old times Zeus used to have men judged just before they died. The court, however, got so imposed upon by showy pretensions, and false witness, and decent looks, that Pluto complained of having the wrong people sent to Tartarus, and the islands of the blest remonstrated against the arrival of disreputable company. So Zeus said, "I must put a stop to this; and ordained that for the future the trial should take place after death instead of before, and that every one should be placed at the bar anonymously, and be judged by inspection and diagnosis of the naked soul. No further mistakes were made. The folds of this world's seemliness once fallen away, each appears as he is. "When they come into the presence of the judge,—those from Asia, we will say, into the presence of Rhadamanthus,—he sets them before him, and inspects each soul without knowing whose it is; and often, on addressing himself to the great king, or some other dynastic person, he has found no soundness in the soul, but a mass of stripes and scars,—the vestiges of perjury and wrong,—imprinted there by their conduct, and every feature twisted by falsehood and imposture, and nothing left straight from a life-discipline utterly without truth; and has observed the soul to be full of deformity and disproportion, from luxury, and license, and insolence, and incontinence; and on seeing it, he has instantly dismissed

it with infamy to the guard-house, there to endure the fitting treatment.”<sup>1</sup> By far the most serious and elaborate of these myths is that from which we have already quoted the physical description of the Kosmos revolving on the spindle of Necessity. It is introduced thus :—

“Er, a certain Armenian, of the family of Pamphylus, was once killed in war; and when, after ten days, the bodies of the slain were taken up, already in a state of decay, his was found in perfect preservation. It was carried home for the funeral; and on the twelfth day, as it lay on the pile, he came to life again, and on re-entering life related what he had seen in the other world. He said that on its exit, his soul, in company with many others, arrived at a certain wonderful place, where were two shafts sunk in the earth, adjacent to each other; and, opposite to these, two corresponding ones in the heaven above. Between these were seated judges, who, when the verdict was passed, ordered the departure of the just, with certificates of the matters judged suspended in front, by the right-hand shaft upwards through the heaven; and that of the unjust, — only with their certificates hung behind, — by the left-hand downward shaft. He was told, on arriving, that he was to act as reporter to mankind of what happened there, and instructed to observe by eye and ear everything in the place. So there he saw the souls after judgment go off by each of these two openings

<sup>1</sup> Gorgias, p. 524 E; 525 A.

of the heaven and the earth; and by the other two were souls arriving,—from that in the earth ascending covered with dust and dirt, from the remaining one descending pure from heaven. The ever-arriving souls seemed to come as from a vast journey, and went with joy into the meadow to encamp, as in a great gathering of kindred tribes. And greetings were exchanged by all that knew one another. And while those who had arrived from the earth learned about the realm which the others had left, they told in return their own experience to those new-comers from heaven. And in this exchange of tidings, the terrestrial souls wept and lamented on recalling all that they had suffered and seen on their subterranean way,—it was a journey of a thousand years,—while the celestial souls told of a happy experience, and sights of unimaginable beauty.” . . . “For all his acts of wrong, and all the persons he had wronged, every one had suffered retribution in detail,—ten times for each,—renewed, that is, century by century,—that being the estimated length of a human life; that they might pay tenfold the penalty of injustice. In the case of reverence or irreverence towards the gods and towards parents, and in the case of suicide, he declared that retribution was awarded on a still higher scale. For he was present, he said, when one of the souls asked another where Ardiæus the Great was. Now this Ardiæus had made himself tyrant in a Pamphylian city a thousand years before, having put to death his old father and elder brother, and done many other wicked things. To this question the soul, he said, replied, ‘He has

not come hither, nor will he come ; for among the dreadful sights we saw was this : when we were near the mouth of the shaft, and, having gone through it all, were on the point of emerging, suddenly we beheld him with others, chiefly tyrants, though not without some who in private stations had committed great crimes ; and just as they were expecting to emerge, the shaft refused them passage through its mouth, and uttered a roar when any soul thus incorrigibly wicked, or as yet inadequately punished, attempted to come out. On this appeared instantly at hand, knowing what the sound meant, certain wild beings, of human aspect and fiery to behold, who clasped some of them and carried them away ; but bound Ardiæus and others hand and foot and head, and hurled them down, and rent them by dragging them against thorns along the side-wall of the passage ; explaining at the same time to the passing souls as they went by, for what guilt this torture was inflicted, and how they were on their way to be thrown into Tartarus ; whereupon, greater than all the fears experienced on their journey, the terror seized each spirit there, lest that roar should meet him when he reached the top ; while, if all kept still, he came up with joy. Such was the nature of the punishments and retribution there ; while the blessings awarded were just the counterpart of these.”

After seven days in the meadow, they break up, and move on to the seats of the Fates and Sirens ; the narrative then continues : —

“ Now the souls had no sooner arrived here than

they had to present themselves before Lachesis. First, a prophet disposed them in their order. Then, taking out of the lap of Lachesis a number of lots on the one hand and samples of different kinds of life on the other, he ascended a lofty bema, and said: This is the word of the virgin Lachesis, daughter of Necessity: 'Souls of a day! for the mortal race another mortal course begins; no destiny shall cast lots for you, but you shall choose your destiny; let him to whom the first lot falls select a life, by which then he must abide; the charge is with the chooser; chargeless is God.' This said, he threw the lots among them all, and each took up that which fell at his side, except Er himself, who was not allowed. And on taking them up, every one discovered what number had fallen to him. Next, he put before them on the ground the samples of lives; in number far exceeding the souls present: and all sorts of lives were there,—lives of all kinds of animals, and human lives of every class. The Prophet then addressed them thus: 'Even to him whose turn is last, if he chooses rationally and lives strenuously, there will lie open a life not evil, but desirable: let neither the first to choose be careless, nor the last desponding.' No sooner, said he, had the Prophet finished these words than the bearer of the first lot went up and chose the greatest tyranny: misguided by folly and greediness, he chose without adequate regard to all the conditions, and failed to notice the destiny involved in his decision,—the devouring of his own children and other ills; but when he had contemplated the case at leisure, he beat his head in anguish

and bewailed his choice, unobservant of the Prophet's premonition ; for he charged the evil, not upon himself, but upon fortune, and the gods, and everything rather than himself. Now he was one of the souls that had come out of heaven ; for he had lived through his former life on a well-constituted system ; only his hold on virtue was from custom without philosophy. And in this way (as Er testified) those who had come from heaven were not less taken than others by such false baits, having had no experience of difficulties ; while very many from this world, having both witnessed and felt the struggle with difficulty, did not make their selection on the first impulse. From this cause, together with the cast of the lots, the result to most of the souls was a change from good to evil, or from evil to good. Now as to the way in which the souls severally selected their lives, it was a sight, he said, worth seeing ; pitiable, and ludicrous, and strange ; for most were determined in their choice by some experience in their former life." . . . "It so chanced that Ulysses' soul had drawn the last turn of all, and advanced to make his choice. Remembering his former toils, he now rested from all ambitious cares, and went about for a long time in quest of a private life, remote from the turmoil of affairs. With some trouble he found one lying somewhere, that had been neglected by all the rest : on seeing it, he declared he should have done the same if his had been the first turn, and took it with delight." . . . "So, when all the souls had made their choice, they were brought in the order of their lots before Lachesis ; who sent with each the spirit of

the lot he had chosen, to be the guardian of his life, and the accomplisher of his choice. He led the soul first to Klotho, to have the chosen lot made fast under her hand as she turned the spindle; and having attached it to this, he led the way to Atropos, that her spinning might make the thread of destiny unchangeable. Thence, without once turning round, he went under the throne of Necessity; and when he had passed through it and the others had passed too, they all proceeded through parching and dreadful heat to the plain of Lethe, for it is bare of trees and all that grows upon the earth. Evening having already overtaken them, they encamped by the river Careless, whose water no vessel can hold. A certain portion of the water all were obliged to drink; but those who had no rational self-restraint drank more than the portion; and each, as he drinks, forgets everything. When now they had lain down to sleep, at midnight there came thunder and an earthquake; and suddenly, as with the shoot of stars, they were snatched away in every direction up to the birth. The Pamphylian was not allowed to drink of the water; and how and by what course he came back into the body, he did not know; but all at once, on looking up in the morning, he found himself already lying on the funeral pile.

“And this revelation, Glaucon, has been preserved from perishing, and may be our preservative, if we give heed to it. And then we shall cross the stream of Lethe well, and with immaculate soul. But if my counsel is of any avail, we shall at all times, under persuasion that the soul is immortal and equal to the



burden of every evil and every good, hold on the upward path, and strive in every way after thoughtful rectitude, that we may be in friendship with ourselves and with the gods, not only while abiding here, but when as conquerors we go round and gather in the prizes of our victory ; and that both now, and on the millennial journey we have described, it may be well with us.' ”<sup>1</sup>

With how wise a sadness does Plato say of such passages as this ! —

“ These things will seem to you perhaps the words of a fable, — mere old wives’ tales, — and you will despise them. Nor would such contempt be strange, if by any quest of ours we could find what was better and truer.”<sup>2</sup> . . . “ In these things we must reach one of two results : either learn and discover how the fact really stands ; or else, should this be impossible, at least take up with the best and most incontrovertible human belief respecting it ; and then, borne upon this as in a skiff, venture the voyage of life, — unless we can find a securer and less hazardous passage on the firmer support of some Divine Word.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rep. p. 614 B, end.

<sup>2</sup> Gorg. p. 527 A.

<sup>3</sup> Phædon, p. 85 C, D.

## A PLEA FOR PHILOSOPHICAL STUDIES.<sup>1</sup>

It has been thought proper that the opening of a new department of instruction within these walls should be marked by a few words, addressed less to the students who will stately assemble in the classroom, than to the friends of the two institutions which are happily united under this roof. The late period at which this duty is devolved upon me, renders it unseasonable for me to speak of the auspices and hopes with which Manchester New College, as a whole, has commenced its metropolitan existence. Concurring in every sentiment uttered upon this subject on a more important occasion, and adding only a hearty congratulation on the encouraging experience of the last three months, I retire at once into the particular province assigned me, and will endeavor to explain the relations it bears in a comprehensive scheme of intellectual culture. In doing so, I shall be on my guard against the temptation, which besets every teacher, — not from any vain self-exaggeration, but from the deep persuasions of a limited experience, — to over-estimate his own special field of study. Indeed, there is nothing here to challenge such a tendency into action. Elsewhere, there are

<sup>1</sup> An Inaugural Address at Manchester New College, London, Feb. 7th, 1854.

persons with whom it is a traditional habit to disbelieve all mental and moral science. Others, in the zeal of a new conversion, see in the metaphysician only the lingering ghost of an age found dead upon the shore of time; and assure us that when the pious care of M. Comte has scattered sand enough upon the corpse, the spectre will vanish by the Stygian way. Had I to address judgments thus preoccupied, I might be betrayed into too strenuous a vindication of a favorite pursuit. But I meet here those with whom a respect for philosophy is an inheritance and a necessity; who cannot but honor a study conquered for them by the sagacious genius and illustrated by the noble truthfulness of Locke; whose earnest meditations, both of thought and piety, have been in the companionship of the pure-minded Hartley; who are not less conscious than I am myself of unspeakable obligations to the versatile, comprehensive, and guileless Priestley; and on whose shelves you rarely miss the acute and thoughtful volumes of Price. When I remember how largely the divinity of Dr. John Taylor, of Norwich, was affected by the studies which belonged to him as ethical tutor at Warrington, and how closely the name of Enfield is preserved in conjunction with that of Brucker, and, in general, how much our freer theology owes to the just balance of critical research and speculative reflection, I feel that there are pledges in the past for a worthy appreciation here of philosophical pursuits, and am resolved not to endanger that wholesome predisposition by immoderate and untenable claims. At the same time, there is danger as well as honor in belonging to a

class rich in noble antecedents ; danger of mistaking the heritage committed to our trust ; — of cherishing with faithful pride the particular judgments delivered to us from the past, and letting slip the habits of severe activity, the fresh hopes of truth, the resolve to take a master's measure of the time, which saved our predecessors from merely repeating the symbols of an earlier age. Unless thought perpetually renews its youth, and lifts a seeking eye afresh to the living light, decrepitude and waste befall whatever it has achieved ; for the world's effective wealth is not so much in any deposit of hoarded truths on which the key of preservation can be turned, as in the circulation of immediate thought, based, no doubt, upon that ancient store, but bringing into comparison the products and values of the hour. This is the great difference observable between physical and moral knowledge. The former, once gained, is capable of being embodied in practical arts, and handed over in its uses and applications to men and times quite unequal to its original apprehension ; the latter remains all through absolutely dependent on the minds that deal with it, — lives with their life, dies with their death, — and, though surviving as a habit or a formula, sinks, among the superficial and the unfaithful, from an inspiration to an inertia. You might set up the electric telegraph among the New Zealanders, and train them to its use ; and the Indians and Chinese are said to have command of many mechanical rules and astronomical methods, the grounds of which they have for ages ceased to understand. A people thus the depositary of a transmitted skill may continue,

amid stagnation or decline, to send their messages and construct their almanacs with curious precision, and may profit by the science of the past. But the higher truths of morals and religion have another abode than in posts and wires, and cannot be laid down in cables through the sea; no equation can contain or usage work them. They subsist only for him who discerns them freshly out of himself; they are realized in so far as they are apprehended; and their very use and application being at the heart instead of the surface of our nature, their function is extinct when they cease to be rediscovered and rebelieved, and are only remembered and preserved. In other words, it is the thirst for fresh truth that alone can retain the old; and the intellect, not less than the character, will not even hold its own when it ceases to pray and to aspire. It is the peculiar office of philosophy to sustain this unexhausted energy of hope, this search after a deeper and more comprehensive conception of things. Other pursuits may do more to increase the stock of positive and definite knowledge; but without *this* to furnish impulse and interpretation, their zeal is unspeakably lowered, and their results are but a barren sand-heap of particulars. That in stating this I make no arbitrary assertion, and point not even to any accidental fact, but to a necessary and universal law, may, I think, be made manifest to any moderately reflecting person. All knowledge, it is evident, is a *relative* apprehension of things, a *plurality* of which is necessary to constitute every cognitive act. It involves in every case a process of *comparison*, resulting in a percep-

tion of resemblance and difference. Nothing can be put, as it were, into a mental vacuum, and known in and by itself; but even the simplest affirmation you can make about it, assigns to it a character by which you *discriminate* it from what it else would be. Say it is *red*, and you pick it out from the other colors; say it is *round*, and you shut the door on the remaining forms; say it is *one*, and you imply that it might have been more. The *expressed* term, whatever it be, which you employ, is significant only with reference to another which is *suppressed* and held behind it; and your assertion may, with equal propriety, or at least with identical result, be regarded as an affirmation performed upon the one or a negation upon the other. The negative sphere, however, being indefinite, and required for the moment only as a background to throw out the positive image, is apt to elude attention and perform its function quite secretly; so that many persons may even be unaware of this necessary dualism of thought. Yet it is certain that, if we never look at our background, the objects in front will not show right; and illusion is just as possible by error in the mind's neutral tint, as by a false laying on of the pure color. A *relation* cannot be rightly apprehended till you can take your stand at either end to contemplate the other at will, — till you are equally familiar with both its terms; and that which remains negative to the unreflecting may, in its turn, become positive to you. That this ability to shift the mental station, and deal freely with the two sides of a relation, is the genuine mark of human intelligence as distinguished from animal sagacity,

will hardly be denied. A dog recognizes his master by certain characteristics, the absence or disguise of which would balk his instinct, and so far his intelligence avails itself of the same guidance as ours; but I do not suppose that he gives any account to himself of his grounds of judgment, or can set forth the signs which he observes over against the others from which they are differenced. If you say that he *knows* the person, at all events he does not *know how he knows*. The same character of *immediate*, in opposition to *reflective*, apprehension belongs to all the lower grades of human intelligence. The craftsman who can perform some act of manual skill, he cannot tell you how, — the shrewd observer who reads off a posture of affairs by happy guess, — the arbitrator who reaches a right decision by a path he is unable to explain, — may all of them indeed possess great force of understanding, giving them vast advantage over weaker men, who, with more ability to say what they are doing, have nothing half so well worth telling; but it would assuredly be better for themselves and for the world, could the road of their thought be traced on the permanent map of human existence, and did they move over it with open eye, instead of being carried to their destination in a trance. The utmost attainment reached by this practical class of men is the accidental possession of correct conceptions, unsecured by any mastery of their *grounds*, and unqualified by any sense of the relative merits which other opinions may possess. This itself, even should they never make a mistake, falls far short of that view of things which distinguishes a scientific intellect; it is

an intrusion of brute instinct into a region beyond its proper range; it has all the unsocial, isolating character of a power that can neither teach nor learn, and which, accordingly, the possessor has all to himself; and misses the genial tendency of that broad human intelligence, which, relying on its own like workings in every mind, looks out for mutual communion, exchanges interrogation and reply, learns to confess itself and ask for help, and feels itself in sympathy with the life of the universe and the thought of God. Hence it is men of intuitive sagacity, unsoftened by a large speculative discipline, are usually dogmatical and overbearing; announcing their judgment, but scarcely knowing how they formed it; content, when asked to defend it, with announcing it over again; or else pouring out a torrent of pretended reasons, turbid in itself, and often remarkable for washing their conclusion right away. Indeed, dogmatism, so far as it has its seat in the intellectual habits, rather than in a culpable self-will, seems to consist precisely in this, — that you apprehend your object as immediately given, carrying straight on to it your own preconceptions and forms of thinking, and letting your mind work upon it instinctively and unwatched; and, never dreaming of any possible speck upon your glass, and borrowing another to try again, you insist that the reality is and must be what you see. In such a state of feeling, the circle of relations in which the object is discerned is too narrow, and in each instance is too much contemplated from one end to give scope for that sentiment of wonder and reverence which Plato pronounces to be the beginning of



wisdom, or that sense of the largeness of truth, which is as water to the root of intellectual modesty.

Each of the great departments of knowledge engages itself with its own peculiar system of relations. The *physical sciences*, which investigate *nature*, — the *literæ humaniores*, which study *society* and its products, — *theology*, which seeks for *God*, — severally occupy themselves with comparisons and groupings exclusively within their respective provinces. Under the first, the discrimination of types among integral individuals constitutes, e. g., natural history; the primary attributes of body yield the quantitative sciences; the secondary, those of quality. Under the second, the languages, the literature, the politics, the individual lives, the national histories of men, are brought into a circle and made to strike the lights of mutual analogy and contrast. Under the third, some positive religion (Christianity, for instance) is passed through the series of possible schemes, till it reveals their essence and its own. In every instance the same truth holds good, — that your knowledge consists in the perception of relations; is extensive in proportion as they are numerous; and profound, according as you are familiar with each relation both ways or only one. You understand a particular kind of animated being, when looking inwards you see how its parts constitute a system, and again, looking outwards and around, how this system stands with regard to other types of organized existence. You are acquainted with a literature, when the characteristics of its poets, its historians, its philosophers, co-exist in your conception, and, as the collective ex-

pression of the genius of a people, the whole can be assigned to its place among the products of the human mind. And you understand Christianity as a divine agency in history, when amid its versatile manifestations you can trace the fibres of a common spiritual life pervading all, and can group around it its analogues and contrasts in the series of faiths and philosophies.

But besides these special relations proper to each sort of knowledge, there is *one* which is coextensive with knowledge itself and is constitutive of its very nature; namely, the relation between the knowing faculty and the known object, be it what it may; between the power that thinks and the reality that is thought. Plant the mind where you please on the field of existence, it will carry *itself* thither, — will look out of its own window, and see nature through the framework of its own limits and the shade of its own color. What it perceives must be contingent not less on its own constitution than on the constitution of the object. Whether there is any rescue for us from this dependence, whether we can ever pretend to reach *things as they are*, or must be content with them *as they appear*, it is needless now to inquire. It is plain, at all events, that we make no approach to such rescue by studying more, and ever more, of mere external matters; for should there be illusion at all lurking in the form of thought, it does but multiply itself with our intellectual action, and is only more monstrous in the learned than in the nescient. If there be hope at all, it must be sought in the inverse direction, by turning round upon the inner side

of knowledge, and scrutinizing the mind's act instead of the mind's object; by ascertaining what sort of business this is that goes on in our person, when we perceive and judge and think and will. Certain it is, that it is an affair which is conducted sometimes better, sometimes worse; and if we can only find out where the difference lies, and learn to detect the admitted signs of perversion when we see them, we shall at least get rid of all artificial incumbrance of error, and strip the faculties bare to their native configuration, and watch the undisguised play of their natural action. Is it too much to say, that, all knowledge being relative, it only half exists till you are familiar with this *home*-term of the relation?—that, while you remain fixed upon the *foreign* one, you may have indeed correct apprehension, but no finished insight? This, perhaps, is the ultimate meaning of the Socratic dictum, that *self-knowledge* is at once the condition and the complement of all other; twin-birth of the same instant, placed by kindly nature in the same incunabula, and intended to advance *pari passu* to maturity. Socrates felt that there had been a fatal separation between physical and moral studies, between the quest of nature and the interrogation of thought; and, by making it his art to probe the rational consciousness and bring ideas to the birth, he intended not to set up any rival knowledge, so much as to penetrate to the ground of all knowledge. Nor is it less true now than it was then, that a profound introspection, a systematic psychological vigilance, is needed as a running commentary on the cyclopedia of external fact and history.

I will not say that you may not be a good geometer without appreciating the logical nature of axioms and definitions ; or an excellent astronomer without troubling yourself with controversies respecting force and causality ; for each science is at liberty to build upon its own foundation, as ready-made and given, and has only to state its own first principles, and not to ground them. But though, under these conditions, you may possess yourself of the contents of many sciences, you will understand the rationale of none ; and with ever so perfect an apprehension of the nexus among the parts, the validity of the whole will float in the mist of insecure hypothesis. This state of things is, in the long run, exceedingly hurtful to soundness and largeness of judgment ; and when the time comes for discussion to pass out beyond the professional circle of facts and laws into wider relations, embracing many sciences or transcending all, none are so apt to be bewildered and without a clue, swaying by unsteady impulse into credulity or scepticism, as those who have been imprisoned in a particular province, and have cramped their mental aptitudes to the shape of its special logic. We are constantly told, indeed, by those who imagine the new Organon to have superseded the old, that false metaphysics are the sure parent of false science. But they forget that *no*-metaphysics are sure to be *false*. For what are they ? Their negative name is a delusive mask ; and no man can reason on these matters at all, no man can even rail at metaphysics, without a metaphysic hypothesis at heart ; and the only question is, whether he will reverently seek it by wide

and patient toil, and, consciously possessed of it, call it by its name, or whether he will pick it up among the accidents of another quest, and have it about him without knowing what it is. Nothing is more common than to see maxims, which are unexceptionable as the assumptions of particular sciences, coerced into the service of a universal philosophy, and so turned into instruments of mischief and distortion. That "we can know nothing but phenomena,"—that "causation is simply constant priority,"—that "men are governed invariably by their interests,"—are examples of rules allowable as dominant hypotheses in physics or political economy, but exercising a desolating tyranny when thrust on to the throne of universal empire. He who seizes upon these and similar maxims, and carries them in triumph on his banner, may boast of his escape from the uncertainties of metaphysics, but is himself all the while the unconscious victim of their very vulgarest deception, and does but chase the mirage which they always create when their atmosphere is putrescent with materialism and moral decay. And surely the longer you make the catalogue of offences charged against false philosophy, the more do you complete the argument for the study and the search of true, as the only possible or even conceivable corrective; for it is needless to say, you cannot exclude the ideal theory by chemistry, or encounter Spinoza with geologic laws, and clear the field of David Hume with the widest sweep of comparative grammar. The very mischief and perversions of human judgment which you deplore, and which occupy so large a place in the history of

civilized nations, cannot be appreciated except by a mind sensitive to logical distinctions, and able to see its way amid the shades of deep reflection. The most serious and solemn expression in which the feeling and character of other ages have embodied themselves, — I mean the mythologies and theologies of ancient heathen and Christian nations, — must present a melancholy aspect of absurdity and logomachy to one who has no key of metaphysic fellow-feeling wherewith to enter into their inner significance ; he must remain stranger to the best intellectual feature of the present time, the disposition to study the past developments of humanity in the mood of sympathy rather than of alienation, and to distrust every judgment which has nothing genial in it to abate its scorn ; and must keep his place among those harsh critics, who, scrape as they may at the outside of error and evil, can never find its heart. Speaking to the supporters of a theological institution, I ask, what can any one make of the Nicene controversy and the whole growth of the Trinitarian doctrine, who takes it merely from the modern English point of view, and does not bring to it a mind steeped in that Hellenic philosophy for whose conceptions it endeavored to find evangelic expression ? Or how, without an inner acquaintance with the scholastic realism, can any sense be extracted from the discussions respecting the Eucharist ? Or, again, who can in the least appreciate the Pelagian struggle, and measure the grand figure of Augustine and his shadow stretched upon us still, that shrinks from the great argument of our moral nature, and esteems the dis-

cussion of fate and free-will the proper business only of revolted spirits? Nay, did we even teach our young divines no history at all, — were we content to throw them, with only modern outfit, upon the world of to-day, — the case would scarcely be improved. Of one of them the lot is cast, we will suppose, in a district of manufacturing activity; and on the other side of the street to his little chapel stands the hall of local *Secularism*, where the doctrine of circumstances and the constitution of man are expounded, and the basis of Theism is disputed, and mild proposals are entertained for perfecting the State by superannuating the Church. Another, perhaps, is settled with a society where one or two of the most intelligent members, with habits of thought trained exclusively in the medical lecture-room or the engineers' college, have been reading Comte, and learned to look upon the pulpit as a mediæval relic. A third, in the walks of a London pastorate, finds himself among some generous youths, driven by the meaner aspects of competition, or inspired by Alton Locke, to grasp at socialistic dreams. A fourth, placed on the committee of a Mechanics' Institution, meets with associates afflicted with the Carlylian phrenitis, and given to strong declaiming on the subject of the "Jenseits" and the "personal God." A fifth finds a pleasant and thoughtful neighbor in the young independent minister, who has found in Coleridge and Maurice a blessed emancipation from the rigors of dogma once oppressive, and images of terror once unrelieved. These, I need hardly insist, are not exceptional phenomena which it is arbitrary and far-

fetched to imagine. They are the marking facts, the living characteristics, of our time, — the actual present out of which the morrow will be made. And with these aspects of belief and tendency no one is qualified to deal who is not supplied with some philosophic apparatus of thought, and has not faculties trained by a philosophical gymnastic. If the problems of the time are not to pass us by, if we are to share in the intellectual and moral enterprises on which they are bound, the step must not be reluctant, and the energy must not be slow, with which we resolve to overtake their march. Theoretic studies stand, in our day, among the first of practical necessities. To lament the fact is useless; to change it is impossible; there is wisdom only in adopting it. The greatest adversary of "German mysticism" and German dialectic cannot distrust more thoroughly than I do the soundness, not only of the system which on the continent is ascendant for the hour, but of all the vast schemes for replacing *faith* in the "absolute" by *knowledge* thereof; and it is with deliberate conviction that I profess adherence to the English psychological method, and build all my hope for philosophy on accurate self-knowledge. But this very position can no longer be quietly assumed and supposed to be in our possession; it has been lost by our want of vigilance, as compared with the intense activity of that foreign speculation which now invades us; and it must be won back by a polemic resting on new points of support, and not ignorant of the dispositions with which it has to deal. The metaphysic foe, however barbarous and even pagan you may



pronounce him, will not quit his entrenchments for ever so much scolding; you may have his camp if you will; but then you must go and take it; and for this end some equipment will be needful.

I trust that I have guarded myself sufficiently against any suspicion of one-sided vindication of my particular department. To preclude, however, the possibility of misapprehension, I would add that, if external and historical studies require philosophy for their interpreter and soul, philosophy no less requires them for its body and means of balance. It might seem at first as if, for self-knowledge, the mind would be its own sufficient company, and, shut up in its own communion, would learn the laws by which its faculties exist and act. It will be found, however, that only before the mirror of other minds can our nature truly see itself. By a rule of mutual dependence, we are awakened to self-consciousness by the life of others, whom again we rouse to inward discovery by our own. It is not only that we see in them new facts which enlarge our view of human nature as an object of outward observation, but they reveal us more profoundly to ourselves, by touching springs within us that had slept before; and of the whole compass of our being, the greater part remains latent and unexplored till the light of a kindred experience bursts into it and spreads throughout its depths. Without a large association with the different forms of thought and passion, especially without a studious communion with the genius and wisdom of ages other than our own, mere introspection would be but a barren thing, for there would be little in

ourselves of that which it is worthiest to know. The more we mingle with the noble crowd of poets, historians, statesmen, and philosophers, who, in various dialect and under contrasted civilizations, have uttered the enduring wants and sentiments of humanity, so much the more (provided always we admire and love before we criticise) does the circumference of our nature expand, and answer in its dimensions to the great world assigned us to understand. But the value of such learning is contingent on its really *coming home to you*, and finding out in you the very seats of feeling and conception from which it sprung, till it does this, and you are conscious that in knowing more of mankind you know more of yourself, it remains little else than an assortment of archæologic lumber, and makes you *heavier*, but not *larger*. The efficacy of all erudite attainment is not realized till it carries you to the *genesis* of the human phenomena with which it brings you into contact, and you apprehend them as the form and development of an inner life. The true principle of a perfect mental culture is perhaps this; — to preserve an accurate balance between the studies which carry the mind out of itself and those which recall it home again, — between attention to matter given it, and reflection on its own processes and laws. The several departments of knowledge, prosecuted singly and exclusively, fulfil this condition in very different degrees. Speaking generally of the three great divisions, we may say, that the physical sciences violate it at the one extremity, by giving overwhelming preponderance to outward observation and induction of necessary laws;

that theology and metaphysics violate it at the other extremity, by giving too much substance to the forms of inner thought and feeling, and encouraging the student to coerce nature into the arrangements of a speculative framework; while literary pursuits, engaging us as they do with men's affairs, — the human with the human, — occupy the middle place, and afford us objects, to know which is to lose a portion of our self-ignorance. And among these central studies, it is easy to see why *language* occupies the very focal place, and has been justly recognized as supplying the faculties with their most effective discipline. For here the equipoise between external attention and internal reflection is maintained more perfectly than is possible elsewhere. Who can say whether language is an outer or an inner fact? It is evidently both. As a realized object of sense, transmitted from point to point of space, and recorded from age to age of time, it is manifestly external, and spreads its relations visibly before the eye, and lies open, like any material product of physical nature, to the simultaneous notice of innumerable observers. On the other hand, as the mere passage of thought and feeling out of silence, the direct out-come of our intellectual and spiritual life, it is a primary function of the inner mind, the mere incarnation (so to speak) of our highest energy. Accordingly, it has no significance, it is not an object of study at all, except on the condition of self-knowledge; its distinctions, its classifications, its shades of relation, its forms of structure, are the very distinctions, and classifications, and relations, and architecture, of thought it-

self; and whoever engages himself with them, does but see his own intelligence externalized. Dealing with a fact of physical nature, you have to collect or guess its place and meaning in the system of things from its grouping or its look; but in handling the phenomena of language, you invert the proceeding, and carry into it from your own consciousness the idea that gives it shape; having the essence at home, you interpret by it the foreign form. I believe it is this necessary action and reaction of acute observation and thoughtful reflection, to which a philological discipline owes its peculiar advantage for training the faculties with less distortion than any other single pursuit. But the desired end is gained in a much higher degree by a plurality of studies; and especially, if an addition be made on the mathematical and physical side to the grammatical centre of gravity, is it important to annex on the other side the counterpoise of psychological and ethical philosophy. Even in the teaching and management of each of these separate departments much may be done to maintain the equilibrium of mental exercise; and as the historical studies of this place are conducted, I well know, with constant reference to philosophical truth, and penetrated with a profound philosophical insight, — so will it be my endeavor perpetually to check and test philosophical theory by regard to historical fact, and construct it less on the narrow base of egoistical reflection, than on the broad area presented by the recorded consciousness of mankind.

To the pursuits which I am appointed to represent, I can scarcely anticipate that the objection will *here*

be made, that is sometimes advanced against them, that they deal with problems which an express revelation has settled; into which it was indeed inevitable that reason should look, when no better guidance was at hand; but the further discussion of which is superseded for Christians. The objection, it is plain, even when limited to *ethics*, mistakes the nature both of moral science and of revealed religion. Upon no theory that I ever heard of, is the thing revealed the same that our science wants to know; nor does revelation, even upon its own ground, in any way interfere with the simultaneous aspirations of philosophy. Whatever truths, whatever duties, are first opened to us by Christianity, are either authoritatively announced, or brought out by the silent and continuous operation of its spirit upon the soul. If they are simple oracular deliveries, they are presented without their grounds, and those grounds remain yet to seek; and though implicit obedience may be due and may be given in any case, whether we succeed or not, there is surely an additional consent, and (may we not say?) an additional beauty before the eye of God, in a service rendered no longer by a blind docility, but with brightened look and full power of the undivided and understanding soul. And if there be any provision in Christianity for the growing evolution of divine truth and human discernment, then does this very process constitute a new fact in the history and experience of humanity, — a fact whose law and whose moral traces it is the business of a reverential philosophy to follow. Indeed, Christianity, it is plain, does not come to us as to

godless and irresponsible animals, but presupposes the faculties by which we attain to faith in God and a sense of duty, and addresses us as beings to whom sin and sorrow, prayer and trust, are not unknown. To justify these faiths which revelation assumes — to interpret this conscience to which it appeals — remain, therefore, in any case, offices in attempting which philosophy does not pass the forecourt of our religion. And even then, whatever we learn beyond this, is still, if it be truth, something having reality in the universe, — something that cannot, therefore, be without its trace and its manifold relation; and, once knowing it, we may expect to detect its look where else we had not suspected it, and may hope, by its light, to read off the significance of the world and of our life more profoundly than before. To do this, is in exact accordance with the aim of moral research. In truth, the larger the universe of our faith, the more copious are the phenomena delivered to our philosophy. So that Christianity, far from contracting the compass of our science, rather expands it to its own sublime proportions.



















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