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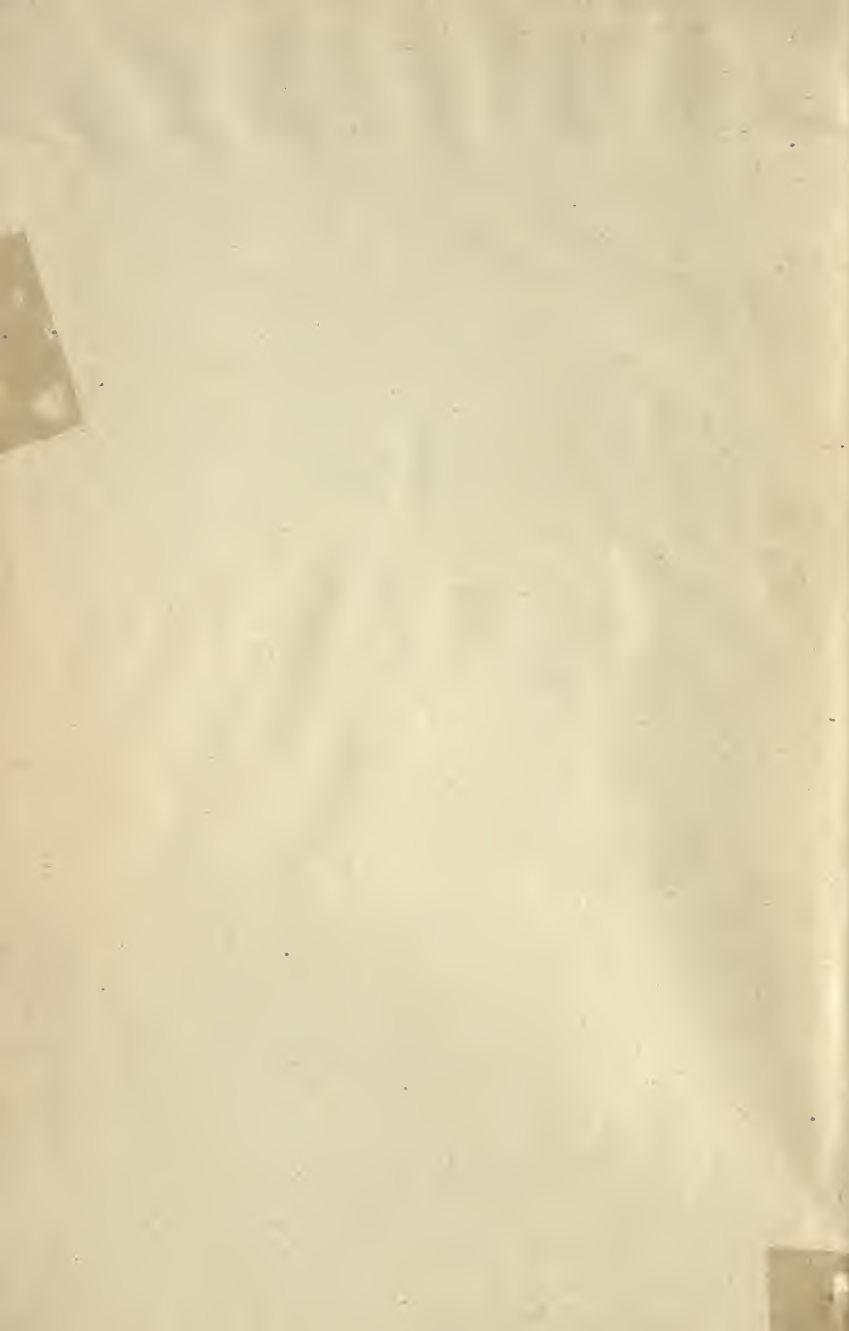
THE PHILOSOPHY  
OF  
RALPH GUDWORTH  
LOWREY.

Philos

No. 3

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THE PHILOSOPHY

OF

RALPH CUDWORTH.

A STUDY

OF THE

TRUE INTELLECTUAL SYSTEM OF THE UNIVERSE.

BY

CHARLES E. LOWREY, A.M.



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AN ESSAY,  
Presented to the Faculty  
OF THE  
DEPARTMENT OF LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND THE ARTS,  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN,  
BY  
CHARLES E. LOWREY, A.M.,  
AS A  
Candidate  
FOR THE  
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY.





## PREFACE.

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It is acknowledged by the best authorities upon philosophical literature that the merits of Cudworth have been too little recognized by his own countrymen. The first part of his "Intellectual System" was published in 1678, after seven years of obstruction in consequence of the bitter animosity of the courtiers of Charles II. The work took the form of a reply to the popular materialistic writer, Thomas Hobbes; yet it was too catholic in its spirit to escape the charge from the majority of contemporary theologians of being atheistic, heterodox, and heretical in its tendencies. The two parts remaining of the great design were completed only in outline and left in manuscript by the author. Two of these manuscripts have been published: "Immutable Morality," 1731; "Free-will," 1838.

The encyclopædic character of the "Intellectual System" has not been favorable to its study in more auspicious times. The work has graced the libraries of learned divines rather as a book of reference and suggestion than as an eminently logical treatment of the problems of philosophy. The marked tendency in Cudworth to regard simply as inadequate the various systems that he combats, indicates his thor-

ough comprehension of the significance of the history of philosophy. Despite the quite universal neglect of Cudworth, largely in consequence of his labored style and erudite phraseology, it is questionable if any English philosopher has conceived the articulation and explanation of the universe with more rational insight than Cudworth. Several of his manuscripts are preserved in the British Museum. Says Prof. R. Flint: "It is not to the national credit that, with the exception of the *Treatise on Free-will*, edited by the Rev. Mr. Allen, in 1838, they have not only not been published, but no adequate account or summary has been given of them."

This *Study* of the "Intellectual System" is designed to present the principal features of philosophy as developed by Cudworth in a form sufficiently comprehensive for the general student, and properly introductory to a more extended investigation of our author. It is hoped that this presentation has reflected the spirit of Cudworth sufficiently to show the vigor of his thought, the value of the same to the student of philosophy, and the need of a suitable examination of his manuscripts for the benefit of the public.

CHARLES E. LOWREY.

ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN,

*August*, 1884.

# CONTENTS.

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	PAGES
ANALYTICAL TABLE...	8-23
LIST OF AUTHORITIES.....	24, 25
INTRODUCTION.—Life and Works of Cudworth.....	27-36
CHAPTER I.—The Hobbes-Cartesian Movement and its Relation to Cambridge Platonism.....	37-65
Section 1. Des Cartes.....	37-46
Section 2. Hobbes .....	46-59
Section 3. Cambridge Platonism.....	59-65
CHAPTER II.—Cudworth's Argument Against Atheism.....	66-147
Section 1. General Outline.—Classification of Atheists and a Statement of Atheistic Objections..	66-84
Section 2. Proof for the Validity of the Idea of God...	84-110
Section 3. Proof that <i>Ex nihilo nihil fit</i> supports the Doctrine of Creation.....	110-117
Section 4. Proof of the Necessity of Incorporeal Substance or Spirit.....	117-132
Section 5. Proof that Natural Justice is the Source of all Authority both Civil and Divine.....	132-147
CHAPTER III.—Characteristics of Cudworth's Philosophy....	148-202
(In General:)	
Section 1. Cudworth's Platonism.....	148-158
(In Particular:)	
Section 2. A. Plastic Nature.....	158-163
Section 3. B. Interpretation of Pagan Polytheism.....	163-168
Section 4. C. Immutable Morality .....	168-202
In General, Part I.....	168-176
Science of Knowledge, Part II.....	176-202
1. Sense.....	176-186
2. Knowledge.....	186-202

# ANALYTICAL TABLE OF CONTENTS.

## INTRODUCTION.

### Life and Works of Cudworth.

	PAGE
Parentage .....	27
Early education ....	27
Residence at Cambridge as a student.....	27
Vicissitudes connected with his post-graduate studies.....	27
Financial embarrassment.....	28
Finally settled as Master of Christ's College, Cambridge ....	28
His relations with John Thurloe.....	28
Titles of manuscripts not published.....	29
Discourse on Good and Evil,—why it was not published; Henry More's modest part.....	30
The <i>first principle</i> is eternal reason, or an intellectual system..	31
The extent and character of the "Intellectual System of the Universe".....	32
Its reception, and the defamation of Doctor Cudworth by the clergy, and by others .....	33
The "Immutable Morality," its purpose.....	34
The tractate on "Free-will.".....	35
The general character of Cudworth's writings.....	35
Mosheim's appreciation of them.....	35
The purpose of the present <i>study</i> .....	36

## CHAPTER I.

### The Hobbes-Cartesian Movement and its Relation to Cambridge Platonism.

#### SECTION 1. DES CARTES.

Des Cartes's intellectual precedence.....	37
The problem of philosophy for Aristotle and Plato.....	38
To relate mind and matter, the problem of philosophy for Des Cartes .....	38

# CONTENTS.

9

	PAGE
<i>Cogito ergo sum</i> as a first principle, recognizes conscious self, but knows nothing except thought in the abstract.....	38
Matter and thought cannot interchange.....	39
Philosophy is taken up at the stage of the opposition of mind and matter.....	39
Thought is the simple without difference; matter is the com- plex without intelligence.....	39
Necessity of a <i>Deus ex machina</i> .....	39
Through the consciousness of God externality is known.....	39
The logical result, that <i>Cogito ergo sum</i> is not a first principle.	40
By still retaining it as such, Des Cartes reasons in a circle...	40
Des Cartes fails to comprehend his own suggestion, that <i>being</i> and <i>thought</i> are one in God.....	40
Consequently, his proof of the existence of God from his <i>idea</i> is open to objections from his own point of view.....	41
The <i>infinite</i> is reality; formally, then, the <i>finite</i> is an illusion..	41
Arbitrary will of God has precedence both in time and in nature.	41
The physical universe is explained by conceiving a fixed quan- tity of motion imparted to dead matter.....	42
All vitality excluded.....	42
Animals are pure automata.....	42
In man, mind and matter are in artificial union.....	42
Cudworth objects to mechanism without a mixture of life....	42
He also regards final causes as essential to theism.....	43
To the same effect, Aristotle and Plutarch.....	44

## SECTION 2. HOBBS.

Hobbes carried the philosophy of Des Cartes to its materialis- tic extreme .....	46
Hobbes, the father of English sensationalism.....	46
His arrogant self-assertion.....	47
His definition of philosophy.....	47
Thought, pure reckoning.....	47
The subject-matter of philosophy is body.....	47
Method without design.....	48
His science of knowledge.....	48
Definitions of physical concepts, Cartesian.....	48
No break between the <i>mechanical</i> and the <i>vital</i> .....	49
Individualism arises at the beginning of particular motions...	49
The facts of consciousness explained as compounds of inherent motion and local motion.....	49

	PAGE
Imagination, decaying sense.....	49
Marks, signs, and words, for communicating and remembering sensations.....	50
Universals are mere names.....	50
God <i>is</i> , but he is inscrutable.....	50
This is atheism in the garb of philosophy.....	51
According to Hobbes, we have no true notion of the divine perfections.....	51
Application of the mechanical theory to society, and to the State.....	52
Pleasure and pain respectively as helps and hinderances to vital action.....	52
Hence, also, animal motion.....	52
Free-will, a delusion....	53
Conscience, simply joint knowledge of external fact.....	53
By nature, no just and unjust, no <i>mine</i> and <i>thine</i> .....	54
<i>Jus naturale</i> , man's power of self-preservation.....	54
<i>Lex naturalis</i> , a prohibition conducive to self-preservation....	55
Necessity of a commonwealth, to prevent men from destroying one another.....	55
Religion, an instrument of the State.....	55
Belief in immortality, a scarecrow, a subversion of civil authority.	56
So also any conscience, save the law of the State....	56
The prohibitions of the decalogue have no force, except as en- acted by civil authority.....	56
Hobbes's inconsistencies.....	57
Mosheim's judgment concerning them.....	57
Summary of Wuttke's opinion concerning Hobbes and his system.....	57
Tendency of Hobbian teaching.....	58
Immediate effect of the same on society.....	59

## SECTION 3. CAMBRIDGE PLATONISM.

The <i>coterie</i> of distinguished men to which Cudworth belonged.	59
The spirit of toleration at Cambridge.....	59
The Cambridge Platonists and their works.....	59
Whichcote.....	59
John Howe.....	60
John Smith.....	60
Henry More.....	60
His generous interpretation of Des Cartes.....	60



# CONTENTS.

11

	PAGE
Henry More: His influence upon Cudworth.....	61
His philosophical views.....	61
Richard Cumberland.....	62
His reply to Hobbes.....	62
The opinion of Cumberland's opponents concerning it....	63
In his method he separates from Des Cartes and the Platonists.....	63
Comprehensive character of the work of Cudworth.....	63
It excited the opposition of friend and foe.....	63
Cudworth anticipated the adverse criticism of his opponents, but was surprised at that of his friends.....	64

## CHAPTER II.

### Cudworth's Argument against Atheism.

#### SECTION 1. GENERAL OUTLINE.

Aim.....	66
Method.....	66
The proper notion of Deity.....	66
Idea of God innate.....	67
Why the necessity of the present argument.....	68
Atheistic cabala. The inverted order of the universe.....	68
Classes of atheists: (1) Anaximandrian.....	68
(2) Democritic.....	69
(3) Stoical.....	70
(4) Stratonical.....	70
Atheists mutually destroy each the other's arguments.....	70
The strength of the various classes indicated in a table.....	71
The Democritic fate preferable.....	71
Why the atomic physiology is adopted by Cudworth.....	72
The original import of the atomic physiology.....	72
Atomism, a logical part of philosophical development.....	72
The atomic physiology involves more than mere mechanism..	73
<i>Ex nihilo nihil fit</i> is the principle that gave rise to the atomic theory.....	73
How pre-existence and transmigration may easily be regarded as essential from this principle.....	74
Cases in which the atomic theory indicates the reality of incorporeal substance as well as that of corporeal substance, so called.....	74

The fatal defect in the system of Democritus.....	75
The defect supplied by Plato and Aristotle....	75
Cudworth misinterprets Aristotle in reference to corporeals and qualities.....	76
A reconciliation of the conflicting opinions suggested.....	76
Concerning hylozoism.....	77
The pretended grounds of reason against Cudworth's conception of a perfect Being, as presented by Democritus and his successors down to the present time.....	78
I. Against the <i>idea</i> of God.....	78
II. <i>Ex nihilo nihil fit</i> , supported to remove the necessity of a Deity.....	78
III. Deity, an incorporeal phantom.....	79
IV. Deity, an imaginary ghost of the world.....	79
V. There can be no corporeal Deity save senseless matter..	79
VI. Understanding is a child of matter.....	79
VII. An <i>animated</i> world is impossible.....	79
VIII. Were there a God, because of necessary mortality, we could not be happy.....	80
IX. <i>Quidquid movetur ab alio movetur</i> , against God as the first cause.....	80
X. An understanding being is unhappy from the consciousness of dependence.....	80
XI. No knowledge or conception before the world as its cause.....	80
XII. Against a Deity from the imperfections of nature. ....	80
XIII. Against a Deity from lack of providence.....	81
XIV. Against a busy Deity.....	81
XV. The absence of any explanation of existing things, an argument against a God.....	81
XVI. Belief in a Deity destroys man's happiness.....	81
XVII. Belief in a Deity overthrows civil government.....	81
Conclusion: A Deity is superfluous on the Democritic hypothesis.....	81
Why atheism exists, and the purpose of refutation.....	82
Cudworth's digressions on plastic nature and pagan polytheism are essential, and will be treated below.....	83

## SECTION 2. AGAINST THE FIRST ATHEISTIC OBJECTION.

Refutation of the first atheistic objection against the <i>idea</i> of a God.....	84
---	----

	PAGE
In general, to deny the <i>idea</i> of a God is to be blind to the self-evident.....	85
We do not require a complete notion to assert existence.....	85
A question capable of discussion suggests the existence of the conception.....	86
The lemma, <i>some things are made and something is uncreated</i> , is universally accepted.....	86
The nature of this uncreated substance, whether it be conscious or unconscious, is the question in dispute.....	86
There are those, also, who assert a multiplicity of first principles, all co-ordinate.....	86
This opinion arises from an incomplete notion of the Divine Goodness.....	87
The complete <i>idea</i> of God anticipated and stated.....	87
Ditheism and tritheism arise from attempts to explain apparent evil.....	88
In illustration, Marcion and Plutarch.....	88
A statement of Plutarch's philosophical views.....	89
The specific objections of atheists to the <i>idea</i> of God considered.	90
A. <i>Sense</i> cannot be <i>knowledge</i> on the principles of atomism...	90
Power to image cannot be the test of existence.....	91
Of itself, sense reaches not to reality.....	91
B. The incomprehensible is not necessarily a nonentity.....	92
The inconceivable is, indeed, nothing for man.....	92
We apprehend truth and participate in it.....	93
God, from his perfect intelligence, is the most conceivable of all things.....	93
To declare that there are contradictory particulars in the <i>idea</i> of God, is either to deny the <i>infinite</i> or to profess the ability to comprehend it.....	93
C. Infinite is not indefinite.....	94
To deny that there is any <i>infinite</i> is to deny <i>Ex nihilo nihil fit</i>	94
Infinites of which we have no phantasms mathematically demonstrable.....	95
Distinction between grammatical infinity and philosophical infinity.....	95
The latter denotes immutable perfection, which inheres in a perfect nature.....	96
Finite and infinite do not exclude each other.....	96
Our conception of an absolutely perfect Being enables us to detect imperfections and to discover a scale of entities in nature	97

	PAGE
D. Theology in itself is thoroughly consistent; incorporeal Deity is not a contradiction, and the attributes of Deity comprise a harmonious unity .....	97
E. Religion is not accounted for on the supposition that it arises from fear, from ignorance of causes, or from the craft of politicians .....	98
The most religious have the most confidence in God's goodness.....	99
The wicked, as an excuse for their vices, pervert God's attributes, and attempt to eliminate real verities from the universe....	99
Religion is not the child of fear, but a natural prolepsis which reason dictates to the sober.....	100
A knowledge of physical causes strengthens faith in a noumenal cause; <i>e. g.</i> , Newton and Boyle.....	101
In the last resort, "in God," or the "Unmoved Mover," "we live and move and have our being".....	101
Mechanism and "unconscious life" cannot account for harmonious existence, and find their proper sphere only when they are subject to perfect mind.....	102
If this <i>idea</i> is a political fiction, whence did sovereigns obtain it? how was it transmitted?.....	103
This <i>idea</i> is not feigned, for the ideas of the imagination have possible entity.....	104
It is not an amplification, for, on the atheistic <i>hypothesis</i> , <i>all is passion from external objects</i> .....	104
God's existence demonstrated, not on the principle of causality, but by necessary inference.....	104
Des Cartes errs in denying certainty to axioms.....	105
Truth, as pertaining to the essential nature of mind or perfect Being, is necessarily existent, and is distinct perception or knowledge.....	105
Omnipotence could not make it otherwise.....	106
Sense is in its very nature relative; but the ideas of the reason are archetypal and universal.....	106
The Word is the pattern of truth, and we participate in that truth.....	106
Cudworth's strictures on Des Cartes's arguments for God's existence.....	107
One of Cudworth's arguments for the existence of a God, and Leibnitz's approval of the same.....	107

# CONTENTS.

15

Knowledge is prior to things in order of nature.....	PAGE 108
Singulars of sense are known only by the universals of intelligence.....	109
Eternal verities exist and are comprehended in an Intelligible, which is none other than the All-wise.....	109
Through participation, we reflect His image as the dew-drops that of the sun.....	109

## SECTION 3. AGAINST THE SECOND ATHEISTIC OBJECTION.

That <i>Ex nihilo nihil fit</i> is an eternal truth in accord with divine creation, and opposed to atheism, is proposed for solution .....	110
I. 1. It is impossible for that which was not <i>to be</i> without efficient cause .....	111
2. The thing produced cannot exceed the perfection of the cause; <i>e. g.</i> , motion requires self-activity as an adequate cause; new substance requires perfect Being .....	111
3. Natural generation produces no new substance .....	111
4. Souls are creations of Deity, or dependent emanations of the same.....	112
II. To deny any entity from antecedent non-existence, is to conceive <i>Ex nihilo nihil</i> in an impossible sense. On such an hypothesis, there would be no cause, no motion, no rational account of sensibles in their various modes. Men are led to assert it, however.....	112
(a) From confusing this sense of the principle with the causal sense.....	113
(b) From extending by analogy a principle of physics beyond the limits of matter to philosophy.....	113
(c) From reasoning <i>ad hominem</i> in reference to the creation of substance. Is it not, however, as rational to suppose that uncreated being can create dependent substance as that created being can originate thought? Dependent substance is substantially emanative.....	113
III. <i>Ex nihilo nihil</i> demonstrates the impossibility of atheism. ....	115
(a) In that qualities cannot be explained without motion. ....	115
(b) In that unconscious self-moved matter cannot account for mind.....	115
(c) In that mind is not a mode of matter.....	115



	PAGE
The inconsistencies of the atomists in denying that qualities inhere in matter, while they declare mind to be a modi- fication of matter.....	116
How the derivation of sensitive souls from matter smacks of atheism, especially in those who regard mind as a <i>tabula</i> <i>rasa</i> .....	116
Deity demonstrated from <i>Ex nihilo nihil</i> .....	117
SECTION 4.—AGAINST ATHEISTIC OBJECTIONS, THIRD TO EIGHTH IN- CLUSIVE.	
Incorporeal substance can be demonstrated .....	117
All atheists are corporealists, save those Democritic atheists who admit the incorporeity of space.....	118
In the admission of incorporeal space, they virtually acknowl- edge an incorporeal Deity.....	118
By an appeal to the ancient philosophers, Cudworth proposes to answer the corporeal atheists.....	119
I. 1. The ancient philosophers, in favor of a substance, unex- tended and indistant or spiritual .....	119
Plato quoted.....	120
Mosheim's criticism of Cudworth.....	120
A possible reconciliation again suggested.....	120
Quotations from Aristotle.....	121
Philo, the Jew, on a double substance.....	122
Plotinus, to the same effect.....	122
Porphyrius.....	122
2. (a) Greatness and smallness by way of quantity are not attributes of incorporeal energy .....	123
(b) Place is not an essential of thought. Imagination, rather than active powers, demands magnitude and position. It is only by rising above the imagination, that we behold the <i>intelligible</i> , even in the objects of the sensible world.....	123
(c) As an attribute of Deity, <i>whole</i> or <i>unity</i> is indivisible.	124
(d) It is perfectly logical to assert a similar illocality to human souls, and the limitation of souls is accounted for from their character as particular functions of the universal activity.....	124
3. Such incorporeal substance may be asserted from the in- ability of the contrary hypothesis to explain conscious inextension in ourselves.....	125



# CONTENTS.

17

	PAGE
External sensations cannot be explained on the hypothesis of an extended percipient soul.....	126
Internal sensations strongly indicate an unextended soul	127
The rational operations of soul prove the indivisibility of the primal objects of thought .....	127
The incorporealists conclude that thought, indistant and unextended, must be acknowledged, or pure agnosticism accepted.....	128
II. The assertion of an incorporeal extension, and that also of a possible union of the two methods of refutation, in the judgment of Cudworth, all tend to the same result.	129
The fourth atheistic objection, answered by maintaining that a spiritual Deity is not fancy.....	130
Eternal essences are not abstract, but objective intelligibles of universal mind.....	130
The fifth atheistic objection, based on the supposition that bulk is a first principle, is not valid.....	131
Not more forcible is the sixth objection, that supposes senseless atoms to be principles of life.....	131
The seventh objection answered.....	131
The eighth objection, answered by showing the incorruptibility of life, and the reality of happiness.....	131

## SECTION 5.—AGAINST ATHEISTIC OBJECTIONS, NINTH TO SEVENTEENTH INCLUSIVE, AND CONCLUSION.

To answer the ninth objection—There is no unmoved mover, because of the infinite succession of causes in phenomena—it is necessary only to reiterate that this objection is the offspring of the false supposition that local motion and body are the only first principles.....	132
The supporters of the tenth objection—Self-activity and happiness are each contradictions—simply assert and, when they attempt to prove, reason in a circle.....	133
The eleventh objection—The object of knowledge is primal knowledge—arises from mistaking reality for nonentity, and <i>vice versa</i> . .....	134
Some speculations concerning immortality.....	135
There is absolutely no foundation for the twelfth objection to a Creator from the imperfections in creation. Atheists have no standard by which they can make such an assertion.....	136

	PAGE
The true origin of evils, the necessity of imperfect being.....	137
The explanation of the significance of the thirteenth objection from the delay of judgment upon the wicked.....	137
Human wisdom can scarce rise to the position of judge in the affairs of individual conscience.....	137
The fourteenth objection to a God, urged on the ground that his concern in the government of the world would destroy his happiness, arises from connecting happiness with inactivity, whereas perfect activity and perfect happiness are correlates.....	138
The queries presented in the fifteenth objection owe their origin to anthropomorphic conceptions of the Deity, drawn from the superficial and the mechanical relations of phenomena.....	139
The sixteenth objection to a Deity, proposed in the interest of peace and of hope for man, is amply confuted by showing that the fear and knowledge of God is, indeed, wisdom, and "to depart from evil is understanding".....	140
The final objection to a Deity—Civil government is subverted by belief in the existence of such a Being—is a slander on human nature and civil sovereignty.....	142
Hobbian philosophy, as a system for the explanation of the existing social relations of the race, is decidedly atomic and devoid of continuity.....	142
Reasoning in a specious circle is a characteristic of Hobbes's logic.....	143
In reply to Hobbes, <i>natural justice</i> is urged as the basis of all authority.....	143
Authority presupposes obligation.....	143
Justice—a common rule and a determinate measure of action upon which all authority, both divine and civil, rests, and without it we should have anarchy.....	144
The judgment of conscience, in a proper significance of the terms, is of a common nature, based on the essential and immutable laws of God.....	144
By following the dictates of conscience and religion, we discover the moral unity of the universe, of which the conserving power is <i>love</i> .....	145
Cudworth finally decides that reality, eternal truths of reason, and perfect Being, are in a realm essentially vital and spiritual, and that this conclusion supplies the necessary basis for a rational <i>system</i> of the universe.....	146

CHAPTER III.

Characteristics of Cudworth's Philosophy (in General.)

SECTION I. CUDWORTH'S PLATONISM.

	PAGE
Cudworth attempts so to interpret Plato as to exhibit the Platonic system as a support to the claims of Christian philosophy .....	148
Against popular opinion, he favors the Neo-Platonic attempt to reconcile Plato and Aristotle.....	148
Cudworth writes largely under Platonic influence, yet not entirely after the manner of the current interpretations of the doctrines of Plato.....	149
Plato's notion of the Good, as the supreme activity, furnishes Cudworth with the spiritualistic conception of perfect Being	149
Cudworth does not read dualism in Plato, but rises to the conception of absolute spirit.....	150
The apparent dualism in the <i>Timæus</i> .....	150
This is partially explained, in accord with Cudworth's opinion, by Chalcidius and Boëthius in their commentaries on the <i>Timæus</i> .....	151
The universe is perpetual, but God is eternal.....	151
The work of God is free from change; its origin is causative and not temporary.....	151
Plato's <i>Good</i> , a concrete unity.....	152
Matter, a potentiality, devoid of quantity and form.....	153
The Platonic Trinity, its philosophical and religious significance as interpreted by Cudworth.....	153
The agreement of the Platonic Trinity with the Christian Trinity in nearly every essential.....	154
Of what nature, the Platonic Trinity.....	154
The Platonic conception, as an example of the providence of God in the evolution of intelligence.....	155
How the phenomenal world, according to Plato, participates in the Trinity.....	156
Plato's <i>ideas</i> , their nature, their relations to <i>sensibles</i> .....	156
Influence of Platonic <i>ideas</i> upon Cudworth.....	157
Plato's notion of <i>soul</i> , the foundation of Cudworth's notion of a <i>plastic nature</i> .....	157
Plato's triplicity of virtues, based upon <i>natural justice</i> , the ground or common notion on which Cudworth sustained the harmony of the "Intellectual System".....	157

### Characteristics of Cudworth's Philosophy (in Particular.)

	PAGE
A. Plastic Nature, or "Philosophy of the Unconscious".....	158
B. Pagan Polytheism Interpreted, or "Science and Philosophy of Religion".....	163
C. Immutable Morality, or "Science of Knowledge".....	168

#### SECTION 2. PLASTIC NATURE.

Cudworth adopts <i>plastic nature</i> as a device of method—similar to his assumption of the atomic theory—to refute atheists, both atomic and hylozoic.....	158
In asserting such a <i>nature</i> , he considered himself in consonance with the results of the best investigations into the nature of spirit from Heraclitus to Aristotle.....	159
<i>Plastic nature</i> is simply mental or final cause.....	159
It acts from within, outward.....	159
It is the living signature of the divine wisdom.....	160
It is divine art, ectypal.....	160
It acts from the secret whisperings of the Almighty....	160
It has a certain sympathy or correlation with that upon which it acts.....	161
It insures, in unconscious vital action, the realization of the <i>εἶδος</i>	161
Proclus counts it, that by which corruptible things are eternal in their species, and by which inanimate things partake of a kind of life.....	161
Properly understood, <i>plastic nature</i> can be a ground of atheism no more than atomism can be so regarded.....	162
Cudworth's <i>plastic nature</i> is consonant with Christian theism..	162

#### SECTION 3. INTERPRETATION OF PAGAN POLYTHEISM.

The digression on <i>pagan polytheism</i> has deeper significance in the light of the modern advance in the science and philosophy of religion.....	163
Cudworth's merits, shown by the annotations of his critic....	163
Cudworth's position required an exhaustive treatise on the history of religion to sustain it.....	164
Perfect Being, as an explanation of Christianity, must be the basis and the natural cause of all religion.....	164
The harmony that Cudworth fairly found in all the literature of the ancients, in predicating the Supreme Being, supported his hypothesis.....	165

## CONTENTS.

21

	PAGE
The unity of the Supreme Being is not disproved by pagan polytheism.....	165
Investigation shows that all the pagans worshiped one Supreme God, with a less adoration for inferior deities and heroes.....	165
Causes for the multiplication of pagan deities.....	165
Proof that the ancients almost universally recognized a Supreme Being.....	166
An apology for the worship of deities and images.....	167
Cudworth's reply, that such worship is dissonant with the spiritual nature of God.....	167
One object of God in the introduction of Christianity was to abolish idol-worship.....	167
Another object, to open the way of faith to the unlettered....	167
And still another, to present in Christ a perfect example of the application of the philosophy of Spirit.....	168

### SECTION 4. IMMUTABLE MORALITY.

#### PART I.

##### *General Remarks.*

The "Immutable Morality," a grand summary by which Cudworth proposes to establish the completeness and the concrete spiritual unity of the universe, under the love of perfect Being.....	168
The "Immutable Morality," a vital part of Cudworth's great work, and it cannot be fully comprehended out of connection.....	169
Cudworth conquers his adversaries by revealing that there is a germ of supreme perfection in imperfect being.....	170
Cudworth, his own interpreter.....	171
The significance of the first part of the "Intellectual System"	171
The place of honest doubt in the search after Truth.....	171
The concretion in the "Immutable Morality".....	171
The significance of potentiality and actuality for Cudworth...	172
The relative, or phenomenal, and the immutable are correlated.	172
Cudworth on Will.....	173
Liberty of choice.....	173
Preference of better or of worse.....	173
Will is characteristic of rational imperfect being.....	174
How a thing indifferent may become obligatory.....	174

	PAGE
Plato and Aristotle, in accord with Cudworth, in reference to the nature of God's Will..... ..	175
Save in reference to the atomic theory, Cudworth replies to Protagoras in the same spirit with Plato.....	176

## PART II.

### *Science of Knowledge.*

Cudworth's purpose in presenting it, to establish the necessity of eternal verities.....	176
--	-----

#### 1. *Sense.*

In itself it is not knowledge. What, then, is it?.....	177
Sense is the result of local motion and more.....	177
Sensation is a vital sympathetic passion of a soul united to a body.....	177
The relation of soul and body.....	178
Sources of sensation.....	179
Sensation is a dull perception.....	179
The nature of sense is "suffering.".....	179
How subject and object are one in knowledge, but not so in sense.....	180
Sense, psychologically considered.....	182
Sensation, a bodily affection; its cause, however, is not necessarily external.....	183
Imagination, a kind of inner sense.....	183
Its images, sensations.....	183
Cause of insanity proper.....	183
Ethical and educational bearings of Cudworth's doctrine of sense.....	183
A plea for the philosophy of Life as "practical.".....	186

#### 2. *Knowledge.*

The signification of the relation of <i>inward</i> and <i>outward</i> in Cudworth.....	186
Knowledge is the result of self-activity.....	187
Knowledge, the most intimate domestic kinship of subject and object.....	187
The intelligible idea and the knowing mind are <i>one</i> .....	187
The secondary objects, through sense, are known in their essence by mind and its intelligible ideas.....	188



# CONTENTS.

23

	PAGE
The mind is never weakened by activity.....	188
The relations of <i>noēmata</i> and <i>phantasmata</i> .....	189
The intelligible ideas are real and living; otherwise there is no causality save blind force, even in the judgment of sense.	189
But sense is no judge, and the very strength or reality of objects in nature are these ideas of relation.....	190
Sense is simply the ectypal impress of the divine archetypal mind upon finite mind, as an <i>occasion</i> by which the self-activity of the finite mind may become the perfect echo of Divine Goodness....	191
The clearest sense-perception, however, is not adequate to knowledge.....	193
It requires intelligible conceptions to which it is referable.— Illustration: tetrahedron.....	193
Significance, or place, of "thing".....	194
We know color even, through intelligible ideas.....	194
Our <i>idea</i> of a triangle does not arise from the repetition of sensibles.....	194
Knowledge begins with universals, and ends with individuals.	195
Immutable essences are not individual material "things in themselves".....	196
Immutable essences are in mind, and are eternal.....	196
To grant the truth of these essences is virtually to acknowledge the eternal existence of God.....	197
Materialism is the philosophy of darkness, let it cry <i>God</i> never so loud.....	197
Clear apperception of the mind itself is the criterion of all truth.....	198
Hasty assent to that which is but partially understood is the source of all error.....	198
The relative or passive energies of the soul's activity are a necessity of the soul's large potentiality, and they are but kindly leadings to something better.....	199
The noëtical energies are living relations and eternal verities.	199
Conclusion.....	200

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All editions are out of print; this edition is, by far, the best. It contains the "Intellectual System" proper, and the "Immutable Morality." It is supplied with an Index. Dr. Mosheim has brought the highest scholarship to verify the numerous references to the ancient authors, and in most cases has succeeded. His notes, also, are full of perspicuous criticism, and add greatly to the interest of the study. Mosheim's notes do not extend to the "Immutable Morality." This edition has been largely used in the preparation of this monograph, and to its paging the references to Cudworth correspond.

**Intellectual System of the Universe; Immutable Morality; True Notion of the Lord's Supper, and two Sermons,** 1 John ii, 3, 4, and 1 Cor. xv, 5-7; with life of the author. By Thomas Birch, M.A., F.R.S. 2 vols. Andover: Gould & Newman. 1838.

This edition has an extensive table of contents of 140 pages, and is valuable where Mosheim's edition is not available.

**Intellectual System of the Universe.** Printed for Richard Royston. 1 vol. folio. London. 1678.

This edition contains simply the "Intellectual System," and the earliest works of Cudworth referred to above. Its frontispiece is not less suggestive than that of Hobbes's *Leviathan*, which the work is supposed to refute.

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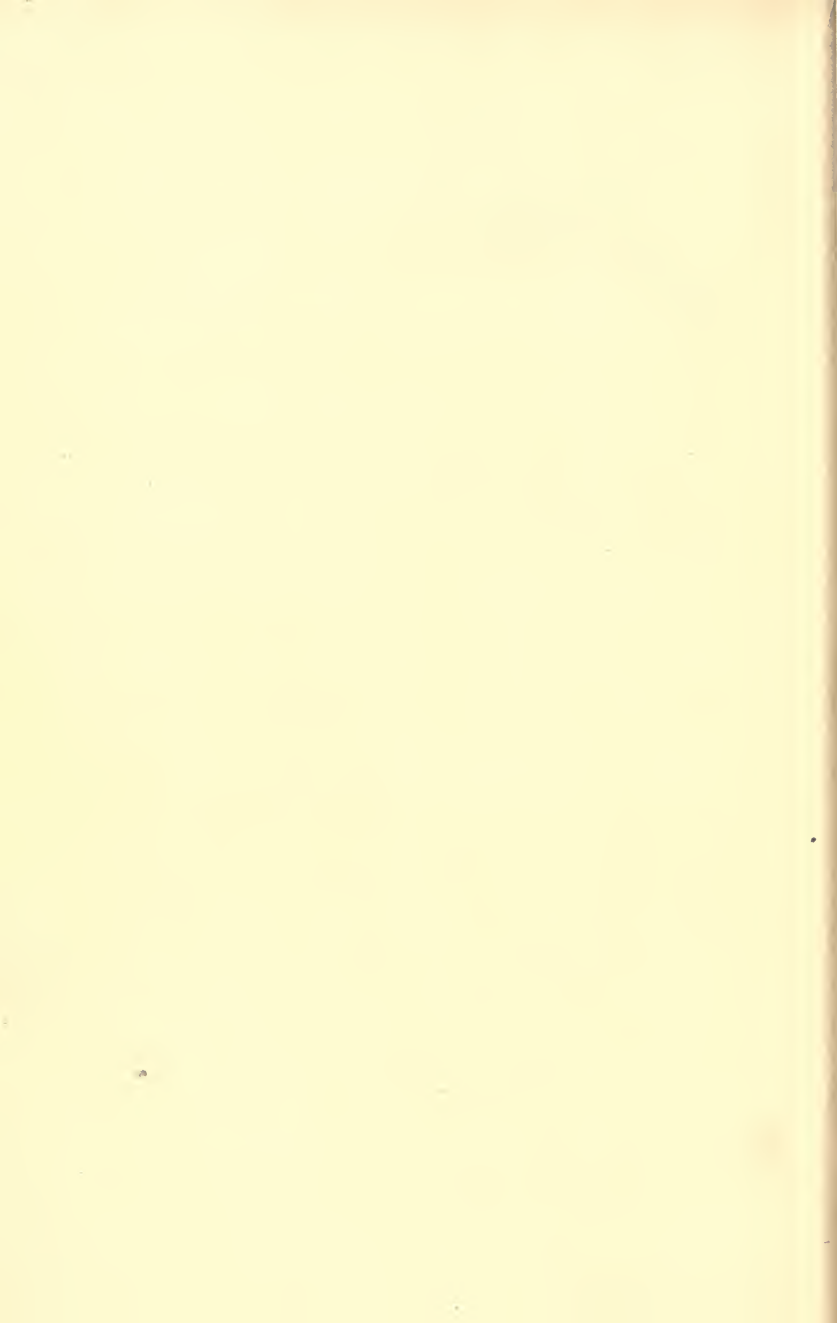
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## INTRODUCTION.

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### Life and Works of Cudworth.

**R**ALPH CUDWORTH, born 1617, was the son of a chaplain of James I., whose wife had been nurse to the king's eldest son.

His father died in 1624, and his mother married Dr. Stoughton, who applied himself with great diligence to the education of his step-son. From 1630 to 1639 Cudworth was connected as a student with Emanuel College, Cambridge. Gradually he had gained standing in consequence of his vigorous application to all parts of literature, and took his Master's degree with honor in 1639. Soon after this he was chosen *fellow* of his college, and attracted an almost unprecedented number of pupils to himself. Then he accepted a rectory, and during this time published two religious discourses. He took the degree of Bachelor of Divinity in 1644. On that occasion he supported two theses:

*Dantur boni et mali rationes æternæ et indispensables ; Dantur substantiæ incorporeæ suâ naturâ immortales.*

This was the beginning of his great but incomplete work, the "True Intellectual System of the Universe," the first part of which did not appear until thirty-four years later.

The career of Cudworth is one of steady intellectual

development in the midst of temporal vicissitudes, sometimes very embarrassing, at least financially.

He was appointed master of Clare Hall, Cambridge, in 1644. He occupied the honorable position of Professor of Hebrew at Cambridge from 1645 to 1651. In 1651 he received the degree of Doctor of Divinity. The revenue from the position at Cambridge was not sufficient to support Cudworth. We learn from the private letters of Mr. Worthington, one of the "Cambridge men," that Cudworth, despite his untiring efforts during twenty-one years of almost continuous residence at Cambridge, in which he gains the highest academic honors, is compelled to deprive the University of his services.

After a few years of seclusion, concerning which his biographers maintain an ominous silence, we find his friend again writing, in 1654, as follows: "After many tossings Dr. Cudworth is, through the providence of God, returned to Cambridge and settled as master in Christ's College, and by his marriage more settled and fixed."

This position he occupied during the remaining thirty-four years of his life, and died at Cambridge in 1688, in the seventy-first year of his age.

Cudworth shared the friendship of John Thurloe, Secretary of State for the Cromwells, and was often asked to suggest names of persons fitted to be employed in civil affairs. His letters in reply are models of discreet recommendation, and not less discreet was his letter to Thurloe, in which he expressed a modest wish to publish a defense of Christianity against Judaism. By presenting this work to the public he hoped to strengthen Christians, or at least to give an



account of the manner in which he spent his leisure. The title of the work was "Daniel's Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks." That the production is extant only in manuscript is sufficient evidence that Dr. Cudworth submitted this matter "wholly to the prudence of his friend" to no purpose. Dr. Henry More considered that the chronological demonstration therein contained was of as much price and worth in theology as either the circulation of the blood in medicine or the revolution of the earth in natural philosophy. Through the modesty of our author, we may say, this work is not yet known to theologians.

Among Dr. Cudworth's unpublished manuscripts we may mention the following:

Daniel's Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks, just referred to, two volumes; Liberty and Necessity, 1,000 pages, in folio; Hebrew Learning; Verity of the Christian Religion against the Jews; Creation of the World and Immortality of the Soul; Explanation of Hobbes's Notion of God and the Extension of Spirits; Morality in Explanation of the Philosophy of Hobbes; Moral Good and Evil, 1,000 pages, in several folios.

The last-named *discourse* was commenced in 1665. In his earlier years Cudworth had published a few religious discourses, among which were "The True Notion of the Lord's Supper," and "The Union of Christ and the Church a Shadow." Since receiving the degree of Doctor of Divinity, in 1651, Cudworth had not appeared in print.

The world of readers had already commenced to grow weary from their long waiting for Dr. Cudworth's proposed works. It is instructive to notice the care with which the "circle" to which Cudworth belonged took pains to respect one another's feelings, and in particular this supposed weakness of

Dr. Cudworth, possibly on some occasions, however, with only affected grace and patience.

Nothing illustrates this fact more aptly than the epistolary courtesies engaged in, whereby the "Enchiridion Ethicum" of Dr. Henry More was published in 1669, while the parallel and more extensive treatise of Dr. Cudworth, on "Moral Good and Evil," shared the fate of much that he proposed. Bishop Burnet's remarks, that Cudworth "was a man of great conduct and prudence, upon which his enemies did very falsely accuse him of craft and dissimulation," may assist in rendering the following episode appreciable:

Dr. Cudworth is master of Christ's College, of which Dr. More is *fellow*. Dr. Worthington, one of the "circle," a common friend, formerly master of Jesus College, now of London, is interested together with some publishers in manipulating the great authors of Cambridge to the advantage of the public.

Dr. Cudworth writes Mr. Worthington, in substance, as follows: "You know I have had a design of Natural Ethics a great while. I commenced to write a discourse about a year ago; no one exhorted me to it so much as this friend, (More.) About three months ago he informed me that he was writing to the same effect. The next day I imparted my mind more fully to him in writing. He then came and told me that he could not tell whether I would finish it or no, because I had been so long about it; that Mr. Fullwood and Mr. Jenks had solicited him to do this, and that you were very glad he would undertake it; that, if I were resolved, he would desist and throw his into a corner. All this I impart to you privately as a common friend."



Dr. More to Dr. Worthington, as follows: "The master [Cudworth] showed again his disgust to a friend who spoke inadvertently of my work. He declared that if I persisted in the publication of my book he would desist from his, though he had most of it then ready to be sent up to be licensed that week. I pray you, spur him to the press. I entered the task against my will to serve the public, and yet I have finished it all but a chapter; *when* I shall publish it, I shall have leisure enough to consider."

Again Dr. More writes to the same: "I thank you for your freedom, both to him and to me. It never came into my mind to print this 'Enchiridion' till his book was out, unless he would have professed his like of the project. Mr. Fullwood and Mr. Jenks would transcribe it for their present satisfaction in seeing it. But if they should do so, and it be known, it would, it may be, disgust Dr. Cudworth, whom I am very loath in any way to grieve. But if you have a mind to see it, and could get a fair and true copy transcribed of it, I would willingly pay the transcriber, and the copy should be yours; for I am loath that what I have written on so edifying a subject should be lost."

Our author appeared perfectly willing to abide his time. The work for which Cudworth is justly renowned is the "True Intellectual System of the Universe," wherein all the reason and philosophy of atheism is confuted and its impossibility demonstrated. This work was published in 1678. Cudworth, in a truly philosophic manner, sets about impartially to present all the arguments of all classes of atheists and of imperfect theists.

From lowest to highest, then, he shows the inadequacy of the systems of the universe upon which these arguments are based. This work is, in fact, a critical history of philosophy, and the first worthy of the name by an English writer. He feared not to meet, on their several grounds, Epicurean, materialist, ritualist, dogmatist, and fatalist. He judged that each had a partial truth to communicate, and consequently must be heard with attention.

In the light of eternal reason, however, Cudworth makes these partial truths perform their proper functions in the revelation of their mutual reconciliation, and in the demonstration of incorporeal substance, or free spiritual activity, as the life of the "Intellectual System."

He thereby establishes the reality of an omnipotent, understanding Being, essentially good and just. He proves that there is something in its own nature immutably and eternally just and unjust, and not so by arbitrary command, and that we are so far principals of our own actions as to be accountable to justice for them.

This task was undertaken avowedly to strengthen those weak in faith. Cudworth's direct purpose was to refute Hobbes, Des Cartes, and all fatalists. The work was never completed. The two thousand (2,000) octavo pages of Mosheim's edition include probably not more than one third of the original design. The "Immutable Morality," or, in the language of modern philosophy, the "Science of Knowledge," was published over forty years after Cudworth's death. It is, no doubt, a fragment of the second part of the "True Intellectual System." A tractate on "Free-will"

has since appeared;\* this is virtually the thesis of the third part of Cudworth's great work.

This work met with great opposition from the courtiers of Charles II. From the first they used all their influence to destroy its reputation.

On the side of the Church, a Catholic opened the attack against the opinions expressed in the "Intellectual System." More particularly did he object to the effort made by Dr. Cudworth to prove that the pagans worshiped the true God, and not men alone, and that the "unity of God was a prime article of their creed."

Cudworth fares far worse at the hands of the Protestant clergy. John Turner tells us, "We must conclude Dr. Cudworth to be himself a Tritheist, a sect for which I believe he may have a kindness, because he loves hard words; or something else without either stick or trick, which I will not name, because his book pretends to be written against it." †

Says Dryden: "Cudworth has raised such strong objections against the being of a God and Providence, that many think he has not answered them." ‡

Another gives the following warning: "You know the common fate of those who dare to be fair authors. What was that pious and learned man's case who wrote the 'Intellectual System of the Universe?' I confess it was pleasant enough to consider, that though the whole world were no less satisfied with his capacity and learning than with his sincerity in the cause of the Deity, yet was he accused of giving the upper hand to the atheists for having only stated

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\* 1838. Edited by Rev. Mr. Allen.

† Disc. of Messiah, pp. 16-18.

‡ Dedie. Trans. *Æneid*.

their reasons and those of their adversaries fairly together." \*

The merit of Cudworth's work, the popular disapprobation of it, and the effect upon our author's zeal of this almost universal criticism, is thus vividly portrayed by Warburton: "With a boldness uncommon, indeed, but very becoming a man conscious of his own integrity, and of the truth and evidence of his cause, Cudworth launched out into the immensity of the 'Intellectual System;' and at his very first essay he penetrated the very darkest recesses of antiquity to strip atheism of all its disguises, and to drag up the lurking monster to conviction. Where, though few readers could follow him, yet the very slowest were able to unravel his *secret purpose*—to tell the world that he was an atheist in his heart and an Arian in his book. However, thus ran the popular clamor against this excellent person. Would the reader know the consequence? Why, the zealots inflamed the bigots:

'Twas the time's plague, when madmen led the blind.'

The silly calumny was believed; the much-injured author grew disgusted; his ardor slackened, and the rest and far greatest part of the defense never appeared." †

The "Immutable Morality" was first published in 1731, concerning which the editor, Dr. Chandler, says: "This work proves the falseness of the consequences with respect to natural justice and morality in God, deducible from 'theologic fate.' It is a proper antidote to the poison of those writers who re-

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\* Earl of Shaftesbury, *Moralists*. † *Disc. Leg. of Moses*, vol. ii, 10, 11, 12.

vived in that age the exploded opinions of Protagoras, and took away the essential and eternal discriminations of moral good and evil, just and unjust, and made them all arbitrary productions of divine or human will. Dr. Cudworth's book is a demonstration of the truth of the contrary opinion, and is written with a beauty, clearness, and strength of language that must delight as well as convince the reader."\*

The treatise on "Free-will" was published by John Allen in 1838. In simplicity of thought and diction, it is said to surpass Cudworth's other works.†

To present even a table of the contents of that which Cudworth has left us, would exceed the limits of our present purpose. It is with extreme difficulty that we can select important and interesting points "without expanding into unexpected bigness," to use Cudworth's quaint expression.

As in large portions of the work, page after page, fairly bristling with thought, all of which seems essential, is read, it soon becomes apparent that nothing short of a personal acquaintance with this monument of the capacity of the human mind will ever convey an adequate conception of its contents.

And more, while the superficial reader may be led to regard a book so replete with quotations from the ancient philosophers as merely a pedantic show of erudition, it takes but a second and more critical glance to reveal the originality and the independence of our author's thinking, and the richness of his suggestions.

No higher compliment could be bestowed upon

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\* I. S. U., vol. i, Life, p. 23.

† Ueb. Hist. Phil., vol. ii, 358.



this work of Dr. Cudworth than that paid to it by the great German scholar, Dr. Mosheim. In translating it into Latin he found it so fertile in suggestion that his annotations are more extensive than the original text. Dr. Mosheim is wont to excuse these expansions by the remark that they are necessary to enable the general student to understand the full significance of Cudworth's concise statements.

Careful study only strengthens the conviction that England, at least, after the lapse of one hundred and fifty years, had not yet produced his equal as a philosopher, in the comprehensive use of that term. It is certainly pitiable to think that, while so great a man as John Stuart Mill was landing Hobbes as one of the clearest and most consecutive thinkers that England or the world ever produced,\* he could have been ignorant of or could have failed to appreciate the vastly superior mind of Cudworth.

The purpose of this essay will, in a large measure, be accomplished, if it shall influence any to investigate more thoroughly, and in the light of the latest philosophical criticism, both the published writings and the manuscripts of our author.

A presentation in an attractive form of the results of the philosophical inquiries of Cudworth would certainly assist materially in the movement against the Protagorean tendencies in English and American speculation and social life.

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\* Mill's *Logic*, book i, ch. v, par. 2.

# THE PHILOSOPHY OF CUDWORTH.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE HOBBS-CARTESIAN MOVEMENT AND ITS RELATION TO CAMBRIDGE PLATONISM.

IT is quite essential, as preparatory to a proper consideration of the philosophical views of Cudworth, to note some of the characteristics of the two phases of the movement that it was the especial purpose of Cudworth and his colleagues to criticise.

It is the gift of the philosopher alone to be able to breathe the life of philosophical systems through brief epitomes. We trust, however, that Cudworth himself, before we have done with this sketch of his philosophy, will enable us to clothe these imperfect abstracts in appropriate dress, and to comprehend the true relation and significance of this *movement* in the solution of the philosophic problems of the universe.

#### Section 1. Des Cartes.

Although Hobbes (b. 1588) was the senior of Des Cartes, (b. 1596,) his intellectual development occurred later than that of his great contemporary, whose physical theories Hobbes shared.



Des Cartes is regarded as the originator of modern philosophy, or, rather, the first in modern times to ask for a restatement of philosophy, and to demand that each one solve its problems for himself.

The problem of philosophy for Aristotle and Plato had been, How can the *one* be combined with the *many*? how by the reason can a synthesis of the manifold of sense be possible?

Des Cartes asked, "How can mind relate itself to matter? how, in Kantian phraseology, can the categories be applied to the manifold under the forms of space and time?" \*

The ancient movement had been from implicit unity of the early natural philosophers to universal skepticism of Pyrrho. Des Cartes commenced where the skeptics ended. He began with a doubt that tried to make itself absolute. *De omnibus dubitandum est* resulted in the negation of every thing, save *cogito ergo sum*.

In Des Cartes's attempt to substitute a rational system for opinion, he discerned *thinking*, *thought-activity*, or *I am conscious*, as the first principle of philosophy. Des Cartes was on the border of an adequate first principle, so near that his *dictum* may be interpreted as such; he caught glimpses of the "true light," but he failed to maintain continuous vision. His principles failed to do service as self-determined and self-determining thought-activity in actuality. He was right in asserting that the world, as an intelligible world, exists only for the conscious self or thought. To assert, with Hobbes, that *thinking* is a property of matter, is to go out of the intelligible

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\* Caird's Phil. of Kant, pp. 385, 386.

world for an explanation of the intellectual; it is to ask for knowledge prior to knowledge. But Des Cartes does not adhere to that which his own statement evidently implies. His first principle loses rather than gains by application. He makes thought a part of thinking substance, which directly apprehends nothing save thought. The principle at once sinks into a finite position. Matter and thought, by their very natures, cannot interchange without ceasing to be matter and thought respectively. Mind is that which, in all its perceptions, preserves its unity with itself; matter is that which, in all its connection of parts, preserves its difference. Des Cartes thus takes up philosophy at the stage of the opposition of mind and matter; the one is simple, the other is infinitely extended, infinitely divisible. Des Cartes seeks the clear and distinct, as thought, in contrast with that which is felt or imagined. His *simple* soon passes into that which is without difference, without complexity. Des Cartes *does* feebly recognize that the *thought* which shall comprehend both reality and ideality, cannot stop at abstraction; mind and matter must be reconciled at the hazard of introducing a *Deus ex machina*, an element that is no less independent and abstract than those which it connects.

Des Cartes argues somewhat as follows: Only in the consciousness of God can we know externality. Non-essentials we can properly exclude from any conception, as only in arbitrary union with it. If our faculties do not deceive us, by this principle, mathematical truths are at once known. There must be a truthful Creator. We cannot get the *idea* of an all-wise God

from our imperfect existence. The ground of our *idea*, then, must be sought in the actual existence of such a Being. This Infinite is not the negation of the finite, but its perfection. A finite self-consciousness presupposes an infinite self-consciousness; otherwise, how could developing finite being *desire*? We could not think a series of approximations were not the *idea* of the Infinite present as a goal. Every want implies the supply for the same. If we had not the consciousness of ourselves as finite in relation to the Infinite, we should be conscious of ourselves as infinite, or not at all conscious.

To be conscious of limit is, indeed, to transcend limit as self-consciousness, and to recognize that our individual life, so-called, is part of a universal life that is both immanent and *transcendental*. Des Cartes, then, must defend his first principle. He grants that in "some sense" the idea of God is prior to that of self. His critics ask him, If *cogito ergo sum* is used to prove the existence of God, how can the truth of *cogito ergo sum*, as a first principle, depend on the contingency of God's truthfulness? As though he conceived God, truth, and self to be in accidental relation simply, Des Cartes admits that it is only when we turn from clear evidence that doubt of these fundamental truths can arise. Such a reply indicates that *cogito ergo sum* is a first principle only so far as self-consciousness is identical with God-consciousness. Des Cartes fails, however, to comprehend his own suggestion, *i. e.*, that *being* and *thought* in God as the first principle are, in his concrete actuality, one and the same. To make God's existence, apart from God's thought, assume a causal relation to our *idea*,

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is to make God an objective and finite existence simply; is to deprive the proper conception of Him of its purely spiritual nature. Des Cartes's argument, that the *idea* of God involves existence, is true only as *thought*, as *reason*, is conceived to transcend abstract thought and existence, as well as to be immanent in them.\*

Des Cartes always regards the Infinite as positive, as actuality, and the finite or finitude as virtually negative,—the source of our errors.† The formal deduction from this might be that the finite self-consciousness, as opposed to its positive non-self, is an illusion; that the universe is God.

Des Cartes, however, is too true to the spirit of Christianity to allow such a judgment. He declares, therefore, that there is nothing in the nature of the Infinite which should exclude the finite.‡ His God is a monotheistic Deity, not pantheistic. Mind and matter are foreign *res*, created by God and acted upon from without.

Following the *dictum* of the Parisian theologians of his times—the decrees of whom were regarded as equal to divine revelations,—he declares that there is nothing, either in time or in nature, before the will of God. § Self-consciousness is one thing and truth is another; the two are united by the arbitrary will of God. To use the words of Cudworth, “God is so omnipotent and infinitely powerful that he is able to destroy or to baffle and befool his own wisdom, which is the very measure of his power.” ||

\* Eney. Brit., Art. Cartesianism. † Med. Quarta. ‡ Resp. ad. sec. object.

§ Resp. ad sex. object. ad Meta. Med.; I. S. U., (Intellectual System of the Universe,) vol. iii, p. 537.

|| I. S. U., vol. ii, p. 533.

In presenting an explanation of the physical universe, Des Cartes conceives that a fixed quantity of motion, which has neither increased nor diminished, was originally imparted to *dead matter*. From this *matter* all vitality must be explained away as a false reflection from mind. Nothing that savors of self-determination in matter must be admitted. All animal life is but a complex machine. Every thing save mind is material. The materialist of to-day, in the last resort, is very much inclined to conceive matter as animated; but by Des Cartes animals are considered *automata* as strictly as watches are so regarded.

Henry More, on this doctrine, acknowledges the penetration of Des Cartes's logic, but he trembles, he says, at the fate of the animals, deprived of all sensation and instinct.

In man, mind and matter are in artificial union.\* Des Cartes is compelled to acknowledge that there is an unexplained residue between intelligence and matter, *e. g.*, appetites, passions, sensations, perceptions from the senses, etc., which appear to result from a union of mind and body; and his hypothesis to account for it is far from satisfactory to the mind of Cudworth. Says Dr. Porter: "There is scarcely a single position which Des Cartes accepted or taught which Cudworth did not call in question."† It may be safely added that most of his criticism is made in the light of a more comprehensive philosophical insight than Des Cartes possessed.

Cudworth could not refrain from designating Des Cartes a theist, with an undiscerned tang of mechan-

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\* Prin. I, p. 60

† Ueb. Hist. Phil., vol. ii, p. 358.



ical atheism. Even though Des Cartes may have denied final causes rather in appearance than in reality,\* Cudworth saw the consequences of a formal interpretation of Des Cartes's denial; he saw no reason for an infinite mind in the system of Des Cartes, if that mind be not allowed to act. To make God an idle spectator was very "distasteful" to him.† The motive power in the corporeal universe is not the "carpenter's wooden hand, moved by strings and wires,"‡ but rather the living hand, possessing "a mixture of life and mechanism."§

Cudworth was in full sympathy with the remark of Bayle: "Those of Des Cartes's followers who attribute much to motion, yet betake themselves to the doctrine of a universal mind to explain, by I know not what law, the forming of bodies."|| We shall see later how our author thought that an intermediate "plastic nature" might be posited, as an unconscious agent in the divine economy, to assist those affected with "hylomania." Such a supposition, however, is simply an instrument to remove difficulties for minds in an incomplete stage of spiritual development.

Des Cartes did not wish to bring God "on the stage" as a direct agent, and consequently, to be consistent with his own system, he must exclude Him from the world.

Cudworth, therefore, regarded Des Cartes superior to Epicurus, in that Des Cartes conceived a God to give the first motion to atoms and thus to define the laws of their motion. But in Des Cartes's foolish at-

\* Janet, *Final Causes*, pp. 253, 254.

† I. S. U., vol. i, p. 220.

‡ Arist. *De Part. An.*, lib. i, cap. i.

§ I. S. U., vol. i, pp. 220, 222.

|| *Diet. Hist. et Crit.*, tom. 1, vid. *Cainites*, p. 718: I. S. U., vol. i, p. 219.

tempt to set aside final causes, he saw theism betrayed by a professed friend. He perceived that Des Cartes took away the grandest argument for a Deity, in giving no account of that which is the most sublime of all phenomena, τὸ εὖ καὶ καλῶς, "the orderly regularity and harmony of the mundane system."\*

Mosheim† summarizes as follows: "Des Cartes made many guesses in reference to the causes of physical phenomena, and in order to stop inquiry as to why God had so constituted nature, declares that questions of that kind are irrelevant in the investigation of physical science. His opponents took this as a ground for attacking the notion of God's existence."

Des Cartes then goes further, and holds that we cannot discover any cause whatever of the works of a Deity;‡ nor can it be imagined that any ends of the Deity are more evident than any other possible ones; for all are alike concealed in the inscrutable depth of His wisdom.§ Des Cartes fears lest the presence of God's power in the world may invalidate his "discoveries," and holds that weights and velocities inhere in his laws of motion.

The objector inquires, How can uses be known and not ends? In that the uses of many things are known to us, we certainly cannot be utterly ignorant of the purpose of the things that, on the very supposition of the existence of laws, must have been created by God with a design? Is not the rational use of any thing to be regarded as among the designs of God? If any human architect be wise enough to produce a

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\* I. S. U., vol. i, p. 276.

† I. S. U., vol. ii, pp. 616-619.

‡ Resp. ad Objec. Gassendi; Gassendi's Works, tom. 3, pp. 359-361.

§ Cf. Mr. Spencer; Bacon's Adv. Learn., lib. 3, cap. 4.



well-framed building from the motions he occasions in the materials at hand, and be aware of the purposes to which this house will be applied by the future inhabitants, is he not very properly said to build that house for those purposes and uses? Why, then, does the author of motion distinguish between uses and designs, and insist that the former are known and that the latter are unknown by us?

To the same purpose, Plutarch says: "If no part of the universe were affected contrary to its nature, but each lay just as it was produced, requiring no motion or alteration, even from the very beginning, I wonder what is the duty of Providence, or of what the creative Father and chief artificer, Jupiter, can be the maker? In an army there would be no need of tactics, if every soldier knew his own rank, place, and station which he ought to take and to keep; nor would there be any need of gardeners and builders, if water would flow to the plants that required it, and if the bricks, timbers, and stones would, by natural turns and motions, take their own proper place, and harmonize with one another."\*

Des Cartes, in his "Principles of Philosophy," frequently hints that the world is not the best. This view Cudworth attacks very vigorously; he regards it as anthropomorphic, and not much, if any, better than a declaration, that the world was not made. Cudworth is convinced, also, that the proof of a God from His *idea*, referred to above, is inadequately stated by Des Cartes.† He considers that Des

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\* Plutarch, *De Facie in Orbe Lunæ*, tom. 2, p. 927.

† I. S. U., vol. iii, pp. 31-48; Morris's *Lect. Hist. Phil.*; *Med. Meta. Quarta et Quinta*.

Cartes's argument has force only as *necessity of existence, impossibility of non-existence, and actual existence* are regarded as belonging to the very essence of a perfect Being; in this case the "antecedent necessity" must be accepted as the necessity of His own perfect nature.

To a corporeal universe infinitely extended, Cudworth further objects.\*

Des Cartes had been led to his mistake concerning the nature of animals, on the one hand, by a supposition that there is no scale of entity and perfection in nature one above another;† on the other, from fear of that "lesser absurdity," the immortality of brutes.‡ Cudworth sees that it is but a step further to make all cogitative beings *automata*; § and, accordingly, he likens Des Cartes and his followers to Anaxagoras, save that they are far less consistent than he.

Sufficient has been presented to indicate where Cudworth regarded Cartesianism especially vulnerable, and we turn now to the immediate antagonist of the Cambridge Platonist.

## Section 2. Hobbes.

Thomas Hobbes carried the "new philosophy" to its materialistic extreme. Des Cartes does not deny incorporeal or spiritual substance. Hobbes not only does deny this, but also the immortality of souls, and all natural morality. It is against the spirit of Hobbes's writings that Cudworth directed the burden of his "argument." Many critics have regarded Hobbes as the father of English sensationalism; it is

\* I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 480.

† I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 441.

‡ I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 419.

§ I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 115.

certain that he sowed the seeds from which have sprung many of the "theories" so rife in English speculation; and most concede that he was the first to grasp the mechanical theory in its entirety.

Whether Hobbes was sincere or not, there can be no question that he used all the human wisdom practicable to impress the minds of men with the importance and with the certainty of his conclusions. All assailable arguments are clothed in that insidious form of flattery: This may appear absurd to the unreflecting, but, on examination, the fact will be found to correspond with my description. By self-assertion he inspires confidence. He never betrays a doubt of the utility of his theories, and of the benefit that their promulgation is conferring upon mankind.

In the language of blank description, he defines philosophy as "such knowledge of effects or appearances as we acquire by true computation from the knowledge we have, first, of their causes or generation, and, again, of such causes or generation as may be from first knowing their effects."\* Computation is simply addition and subtraction. Thought is reckoning. Cause is mere sequence in phenomena; it is ascent or descent from one phenomenon to another, without regard to the nature of the process.† The universe is a mechanical aggregate of things natural; it has no design belonging to it. The end of philosophy is not the triumph of thought, but the aim of knowledge is power.‡ The sphere of speculation is the calculation concerning some action or thing to be done, regarded in the purely mechanical sense.

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\* Elem. Phil., vol. i, p. 1.      † Elem. Phil., pt. 4, cap. 26.

‡ I. S. U., vol. ii, p. 606.

Method is simply the registering of preceding or succeeding phenomena, as the case may be, in reference to any particular event. Hobbes, indeed, includes the manner by which causes work effects as essential to an adequate knowledge of effects, but there is nothing *essential* in this *manner*—it comes not from the higher realm of ends and of design.

His science of knowledge is after the fashion of that which is so well known nowadays as empirical psychology. The first beginnings of knowledge are the images of sense and imagination. Composition and resolution are the crude shadows of synthesis and analysis. We proceed, says Hobbes, from the particular to the universal by the analytic method; the cause of universals is *motion*. *Motion* is the rule by which Hobbes solves all the riddles of his system. By movement, geometry is generated; by the movement of a body that comes in contact with another, the philosophy of motion or physics.

His definitions of the physical concepts are after the manner of Des Cartes :

Cause is the sum of all the accidents, by experiment, found necessary to produce a propounded effect.

An accident is the manner in which we conceive body.

Body is that which, without having any dependence on our thought, is co-extensive and coincident with some part of space.

Space is the phantasm of a thing existing without the mind, with no accident save *outness*.

Time is the phantasm of *before* and *after* in motion.

Motion is a continual relinquishing of one place and acquiring of another.

Place is a fixed point in space.

*Materia prima* is body considered universally.

There is no break in Hobbes's description between that which he regards as purely mechanical and that which we look upon as vital. Sensation is identical with image or phantasm; it is identical with "*conatus*," or an endeavor of the active function of the organism toward objects. The subject of sensation is man as a whole; the sense-qualities are not in bodies, they are in ourselves, but human sensation is nothing save the motion of corporeal particles occasioned by the external motion of things.

Mutation, whether of subject or of object, implies motion. Every act that is possible will be produced. Things are contingent only in regard to those things on which they do not depend. Power and act are related as cause and effect. Individualism arises at the beginning of motion, in that which we call a particular thing; *e. g.*, any man has his individuality by virtue of the fact that his actions and thoughts proceed from the same beginning of motion; any river gains identity which flows from one and the same fountain, "be the water the same or other water or something else flow from thence." In some sense, all resistance is endeavor opposite to another endeavor, but it is not that reciprocity which exists between the parts of an organic whole.

Sense is an image arising from reaction and endeavor outward, caused by endeavor inward from an object, and this image remains for some time, more or less.

Imagination is decaying sense. The inward motions caused by the object do not cease, but are covered up by new motions.



We gain experience by sense, imagination, and memory, through the assistance of marks, signs, and sounds. Understanding in man or beast is imagination expressed by words or by other signs. The understanding peculiar to man consists not only in will,(?) but also in those thoughts and conceptions which arise from the "contexture" of the names of things into affirmations, negations, and the other forms of speech.

Universals, then, are nothing but names, and reasoning is simply the computation of the consequences of these names; in the use of words and in organization only does man differ from the brute.

Whatever we imagine is finite; we have no thought that represents any thing not subject to sense: hence, we must consider every object of thought as in place, as possessed of magnitude, etc. The infinite, then, is simply a name for that which we have not the ability to conceive; there is no phantasm of the infinite.\*

Of the Deity, Hobbes says: "Forasmuch as God Almighty is incomprehensible; it follows that we have no conception or image of the Deity, and, consequently, all his attributes signify simply our inability and defect of power to conceive any thing concerning his nature; after the manner that a man born blind knows fire, we know that God *is*, but not *what* He is."† Effects certainly do include a power for their production, this presupposes a prior existence, and this existent another, *ad infinitum*; the trend of thought leads us back into the maze of eternity, incomprehensibility, and omnipotency: these all men conceive by the name of God. There is no such

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\* Lev., cap. 3.

† Lev., cap. 24.

entity as *spirit*. The love of abstract names, which are names of nothing, has led men to call these empty symbols incorporeal substance or attributes of the same. To attribute immateriality to God is one step toward nothingness, and is dangerous.

In the advocates of such opinions as these, Cudworth saw atheists in the insinuating garb of theists. They affirm that we can have no idea of God; that He is not finite; that He is not infinite; that no understanding or knowledge can be attributed to Him. They announce a corporeal Deity, and yet in the same breath the principles of the Democritic or atomic philosophy. Thus, they reject all qualities and forms of body, and still regard all things as body.

This method of procedure Cudworth very properly styled a "Titanical attempt to dethrone the Deity by explaining the phenomena of the world without the assistance of a God." He saw in it "atheism openly swaggering under the glorious appearance of wisdom and philosophy." \*

It may be said that Hobbes does assert the existence of God; of an evanescent, corporeal Deity. The names by which he designates this Deity,† however, are not attributes; omnipotence, unity, infinity, and eternity, are purely negative; goodness, justice, mercy, holiness, simply denote how much we admire Him; we have no true notion of the Divine perfections. It is difficult, indeed, for Hobbes to be consistent. At one time he declares that the attributes of God signify neither true nor false, nor any other opinion of our brain, but the reverence and devotion of our hearts; and, therefore, that they are not

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\* I. S. U., vol. i, p. 106.

† Lev., chap. 12.



sufficient grounds from which to infer truth or to convince of falsehood. On another occasion he maintains it to be evident "from our notion of the Divine mercy, that the torments of the wicked shall have an end." \*

Hobbes has attracted to himself more especial notice in consequence of the application he makes of his mechanical calculation in explaining man's moral nature, and his relations to society and to the State. He held that there are in the organism called man two kinds of motion: one, inherent natural power; the other, motion arising from the objects of sense. Pleasure and pain, so-called, occur when the action of the *sentient* from without, or the external action, helps or hinders, as the case may be, the vital action of the heart. That which is known to be pleasant the limbs approach voluntarily; this is appetite. In like manner the troublesome by hinderance causes aversion. The ebb and flow of these, or, more properly, their alternation, give rise to the swelling and relaxation of the muscles; thence we have animal motion. When living creatures have appetites and aversions for the same thing, as they think it may benefit or injure them, the series is called deliberation; this lasts as long as they have it in their power to abstain from that which displeases and to obtain that which pleases. Appetite and aversion are so called only so long as they follow not deliberation; but if deliberation has gone before them, the last act of it, if it be appetite, is called *will*, or if it be aversion, *unwillingness*.

The freedom of *willing* and *non-willing* is the same

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\* Lev., cap. 44; I. S. U., vol. i, p. 109.

in man as in the other animals; for, where there is appetite, there is the entire cause of appetite, *i. e.*, a harmony of the external motion with the vital motion has preceded, and, consequently, the act of appetite could not choose but follow—it has of necessity followed. Therefore, such liberty as is free from necessity is not found in man or beast. Says Hobbes: “I can do if I *will*; but to say I can *will*, if I will, I take to be absurd speech.”

Somewhere, in his reply to Bishop Bramhall’s assertion, that *free-will* is a belief of all mankind impressed by nature, he says further: “A wooden top that is lashed by the boys and runs about, sometimes to one wall and sometimes to another, sometimes hitting men on the shins, if it were sensible of its own motion, would think that it proceeded of its own will, unless it felt what lashed it. And is man any wiser, when he runs to one place for a benefice, to another for a bargain, and troubles the world with writing errors and requiring answers, because he thinks he does it without other cause than his own will, and sees not the lashings which cause that *will*?”

It is against such mechanical fatalism as this that Cudworth turns all the energy of his great mind, for he saw in it the perversion of all proper motive to morality.

From appetite and aversion are derived all the passions of the mind, save pleasure and pain, which possess in addition a certain fruition of good and evil; *e. g.*, anger is aversion from some imminent evil, but such as is joined with an appetite for avoiding that evil by force. We shall see presently what significance *good* and *evil* have for Hobbes. In the following quaint way he accounts for conscience: “When

two or more men know one and the same fact, they are said to be conscious of it one to another; and, because such are fittest witnesses of one another, it was, is, and ever will be a very evil act for a man to speak against his conscience."

It is *conscience* simply as common knowledge among individuals, not as any thing essential in the fact, that obligates.

"Afterward," Hobbes continues, "men applied this term, metaphorically, for the knowledge of their own secret facts; and, lastly of all, men in love with their own new opinions, though never so absurd, obstinately bent to defend them, gave these opinions the revered name of conscience, and thus pretended that they knew them to be true, while at most, they could only think them so." Conscience, then, is simply opinion of evidence.

Men are by nature equal; two men of equal ability hope for the same end that one alone can obtain; they become enemies; strife or war arises; there is no just and unjust in this war—neither *mine* nor *thine*; that is every man's which he can get, and for so long a time as he can keep it. This is the condition of mere nature. From this condition man can be "bound" partly by passion and partly by reason. The passions leading to peace are fear of death, desire for the things necessary for comfortable living, and the hope of obtaining the same by industry. Reason suggests articles of peace whereby men may be induced to enter into an agreement.

*Jus naturale*, or *right of nature*, is man's use of his power of self-preservation, and liberty is the absence of impediments.

*Lex naturalis*, or *law of nature*, is a precept found out by reason by which man is forbidden to do that which is destructive of his own life, or takes away the means of preserving it.

That *natural right* which gives man even the life of another diminishes his own chances of living out his allotted time, and, consequently, we have the first law of nature: Every man ought to endeavor to have peace, as far as he has hope of obtaining it, and, when he cannot obtain it, he may seek and use all the helps and the advantages of war; or, in other words, "Seek peace and follow it, but, by all means, we are to defend ourselves." The second law is the negative expression of the "golden rule," and so on to the nineteenth law. For Hobbes these laws constitute moral philosophy. They are not properly laws, but simply conclusions concerning what is conducive to man's preservation and defense. The "race of life must be supposed to have no other goal nor other garland, but being foremost, and in it."\*

A commonwealth is necessary in order to compel men to keep their covenants, and to prevent them from destroying one another. "For this purpose, Immortal God generated Leviathan, a mortal god, that he may use the means and strength of all as he shall think expedient for their peace and common defense."

Religion, according to Hobbes, is not philosophy, but depends on the laws of each particular state. Cudworth, with proper indignation, calls such a conception the mere larva of religion.† Perpetual fears of future evils accompany mankind in their ignorance

\* Hum. Nat., cap. 9, ad. fin.

† I. S. U., vol. ii, p. 638.

of causes, and, consequently, there is nothing upon which they may lay the blame of their bad fortune, save some invisible agent.\* Men are only subject to God because they have not sufficient power to resist Him.†

This philosopher, who very properly reduces his own thought to a mechanism resulting from the contexture of atoms,‡ and holds "mind" to be "movement in some parts of the organized body,"§ regards also belief in immortality but a scarecrow to affright men from obeying the laws.

Hobbes declares that subjects cannot sin in obeying the commands of their sovereign; that it is impossible for the commonwealth to stand where the subjects may have any judgment concerning good and evil, just and unjust, or may have any other conscience than the law of the land. ||

We have already seen, that in a state of nature there is no just and unjust; where no power is, there is no law. Sensuality, then, in that sense in which it is condemned, has no place in ethics until there be laws. An injury is simply a kind of absurdity in conversation, and an absurdity is a kind of injury in disputation.¶ Desires and passions are, *per se*, not sins. The prohibitions of the decalogue have no force, save so far as they are the laws of the State. When men sign away their privilege under compacts, Hobbes holds that they transfer their *right* to the State. Cudworth contends that, if such be the case,

\* Lev., cap. 12.

† I. S. U., vol. i, p. 315.

‡ I. S. U., vol. i, p. 214; Dr. Seth Ward, *Exercitatio Epistolica*.

§ I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 115.

|| Lev. cap. 29.

¶ Elem. de Cive, cap. 3, sect. 3.



a man may again at pleasure reclaim the liberty which he has before renounced, and that without natural justice covenants have no force to oblige. Hobbes is aware of this objection, and flees to one of his laws of nature, namely, that men stand by their pacts and covenants.

"The *laws of nature* are not properly laws, but are made so by holy writ, and are most commonly called laws because the sacred Scripture is the speech of God, commanding over all things by greatest right."\* But the authority of Scripture depends upon the will of the civil sovereign? Very applicable are the remarks of Dr. Mosheim at this juncture: "We are merely mocked by this flagitious man who is nowhere consistent, but is perpetually contradicting himself, the more easily to elude the attacks of his adversaries. If you ask him, Whence springs the right of magistrates? He replies, From compact. Whence the right of compact? From law of nature. What is a law of nature? Right reason. But is this obligatory of itself? By no means. From whence, therefore, does the law of nature derive its authority? From Scripture. And whence does Scripture receive the force of law? From the civil magistrate." The conclusion evidently is, that the magistrates derive all their power from themselves.

A recent German writer on ethics has given the following very just estimate of Hobbes: "Only what we experience through the senses is true and real. Human action has not a purpose, but a determined ground in sensuously-material reality; hence moral law is identical with law of nature. Good or evil is

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\* I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 504, note.



the agreeable or disagreeable state of the individual person, and the person is the sole judge of his feelings and his experience. In striving to have the most possible feeling of pleasure, he is rational and moral. Self-love, in the most isolated sense, is the highest moral law, but the logical consequence of this law—a war of all against all—leads Hobbes not to the proof of the unreality of his moral law, but to the necessity of the *State*. And the State, also, because it lacks a universal and valid basis of morality, can rest only in the unlimited despotism of a single individual. In order that this ruler bring harmony into the chaos of individual strivings, all must submit themselves unconditionally to the arbitrary will of this absolute sovereign, whose pleasure is always right, and whose decrees are the unassailable law and conscience of all the citizens of that State. All religion in the State depends upon what the king declares as good and true, and sin is simply contradiction to the king's *will*. Whatever is not forbidden by him is morally indifferent. We cannot deny to this system full consequentiality, and the unabashed nakedness of the same is at least more honest than those more recent views which seek to bemanter the very same ground-thoughts with more moral forms and disguises.” \*

Hobbes attempted such a universal construction of human knowledge as would bring society and man within the same principles of scientific explanation that Des Cartes had found applicable to the world of physics. Had he succeeded, the divine and absolute sovereignty of the whole world would logically have been transferred to the arbitrary will of his Leviathan.

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\* Wuttke's Ch. Eth., vol. i, p. 3, *sub voce*.

When the opposition of small men, like Bramhall, aroused more by Hobbes's paradoxical expressions than by his doctrines, had subsided, when the "bear" had driven off "all the young dogs which the clergy had pitted against him to exercise them," to use the figure of Charles II., and a dissolute aristocracy were deriving solid comfort from the soothing words of their pugilistic prophet, it became the duty of Cudworth to probe anew the natural spring of moral actions by making a philosophical exposition of the moral nature of man.\*

### Section 3. Cambridge Platonism.

It would be misleading to assign no importance to the "lesser lights," who wrote prior to the publication of Cudworth's great work, with the same purpose and in the same spirit. The rather, it was probably due to the rich grains of truth scattered broadcast by "this nation of writers born in a day," as Milton expresses it, that Cudworth possessed the material for his book and the inspiration to undertake it. But Cudworth owed his intellectual acumen largely to the kindly criticisms of his immediate associates at Cambridge. It is worthy of note that, in the literary circle to which Cudworth belonged, Cartesianism found attentive listeners and considerate interpreters. Aristotelianism and Cartesianism were compared with an approximation to the true philosophical spirit. Whichcote, Cudworth, Henry More, John Smith, and John Howe were philosophers.

Whichcote, the acknowledged leader of this *coterie* of distinguished men, encouraged his friends to

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\* R. Flint, *Antitheistic Theories*, p. 78.

supplement their investigations of Aristotle and of Des Cartes by the study of Plato, Cicero, and Plotinus. With these great leaders of human thought as guides, critical students could scarcely fail of some high degree of intellectual vision.

John Howe, in his "Living Temple," \* became the first Englishman to confute the doctrines of Spinoza. If nothing more were known, the title itself suggests that philosophic criticism was employed in the reply.

In a style that renders his work classic in English literature, John Smith gave his companions the results of his study of the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle concerning the soul as a proper introduction to the comprehension of the "true way of attaining to divine knowledge."

To Henry More we are indebted for that philosophic criticism of Cartesianism which enables us to read in the declarations of Des Cartes the germs of a "living philosophy." More was able, from a higher point of view, to indicate the way in which Des Cartes might lift the limits that he had placed to his inquiries, and launch out into the broad realm of spiritual actuality.

Save where there was palpable error, More confuted Des Cartes not by direct answer. His method of criticism showed his greatness and true manliness; he expands the statements of Des Cartes in the direction of true philosophy, and is generous enough to believe these interpretations of his own to be in the spirit of the Cartesian philosophy.

Some one has suggested † that Cudworth and John Norris, ‡ a writer who confuted Locke's Essay in Platonic fashion, were the only persons that could

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\* Published 1675. † Ueb. Hist. Phil., vol. ii, p. 366. ‡ 1657-1711.

appreciate More. The rather, every broad and candid thinker who has come to know him, has esteemed him for his well-earned merit. More was catholic as well as great, and thus conciliated his opponents. The same spirit that led More to declare, if he gave up his own philosophical opinions, he preferred those of Des Cartes, induced Hobbes, in spite of his arrogance, to admit that, if he forsook his own position, he would accept the views of his most severe and yet generous critic, Henry More. A careful consideration of More's purely philosophical disquisitions cannot fail to excite admiration, and will reveal why many, not without reason, looked to him as the philosophic anchor of his times. It is very doubtful if Cudworth excelled More in philosophic insight in a single particular in which More was great. Cudworth is greater, rather, because his more extensive erudition, sagacity, and independence of thought led him to accept fewer of the follies of his times. He thus gave to his philosophical system a more distinct claim to universality. Indeed, the defects in Cudworth seem to arise in those places where he has been unable entirely to free himself of some of More's especial idiosyncrasies. More and Cudworth were powerfully influenced, each by the other. If we take pains to criticise Cudworth in the light of this fact, and in connection with the corresponding opinions of More and of others esteemed great in his time, we are inclined to think that Cudworth will rise wonderfully in the estimation of the critic.

More's views on the vital questions of philosophy were not essentially different from those of Cudworth. In his "*Enchiridion Metaphysicum*," he seeks to establish

a knowledge of the existence of incorporeal or spiritual substance, and to define its attributes. In proving his thesis, he discovers that space is not material, that matter is contingent, and that the changing phenomena of sense must float on the bosom of an unchanging reality. More argues for the existence of God from his premise concerning the moral nature of man. He qualifies Des Cartes's doctrine concerning the physical location of the soul; he gives the soul the power of diffusion without the possibility of "discription." As to moral goodness, it is simple and absolute, and "right reason is the judge of its nature, essence, and truth;"\* but there is, however, a moral sense that determines the attractiveness and the beauty of this goodness. All moral goodness is properly termed intellectual and divine. By the aid of reason we are able to state the principles of ethics in propositions, and from these propositions we derive special rules.

Richard Cumberland ushered in a new method of confuting materialism, quite the reverse of More's. He wrote "A Philosophical Inquiry into the Laws of Nature; in which their form, order, promulgation, and obligation are investigated from the nature of things; and in which also the philosophical principles of Hobbes, moral as well as civil, are considered and confuted."† Says Dr. Chambers: "This work contains many sound, and at the same time novel, views on moral science, along with others of very doubtful soundness. The laws of nature he deduces from the results of human conduct, regarding that to be commanded by God which conduces to the happiness of man."‡

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\* Ueb. Hist. Phil., vol. ii, p. 359. † Ency. Eng. Lit., vol. ii, p. 357.

‡ Cf. Wuttke's Ch. Eth., vol. i, p. 305.



In his attempt to rise from the point of view of sensuous experience to moral and religious ideas, we are afraid Cumberland's argument is not so successful a confutation of Hobbes as he imagined.

A follower of Hobbes speaks of Dr. Cumberland's work as follows: "The excellent treatise on the 'Laws of Nature' is deservedly esteemed the best book of its kind; indeed, its author is the only one of Mr. Hobbes's antagonists that understood the advantages the old man had, as appears from his choosing a fresh ground, and disputing in a manner quite different from the rest." \*

It may be questioned, however, if this praise did not arise from the consciousness that, in the premises, Hobbes could assert and his opponent deny without any possibility of the presentation of convincing proof in either case. In Cumberland we see the first departure of a prominent Cambridge man from English Platonism, and he has been lauded, "because he saves himself from the indefiniteness of Herbart, Des Cartes, and the Cambridge men." \*

As we have observed, Hobbes was always ready to refute any charges made against certain portions of his work by self-complaisant appeals to other parts not written in the spirit of his own principles, but based upon the presuppositions of his opponents. In fact, it was not till Cudworth had presented, in definite outline, all that at heart Hobbes meant to say, and had exhibited with fairness all the arguments ever used in the defense of the same, that materialists were willing to admit that Hobbes had been done full justice. Indeed, never has any atheist stated his objec-

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\* Autobiog., Hobbes, notes.

† Ueb. Hist. Phil., vol. ii, p. 363.



tions more clearly, and the arguments in support of the same more comprehensively, than Cudworth has presented them. Further, he did not fail to find, despite all this, the goal of man's self-realization in the development of a rational faith: yet he aroused the opposition of all those who were not able or were not disposed to rise to this grand synthesis, of the one party, because he demonstrated that their faith could be doubted; of the other, that their doubts must be removed, or they be convicted of desecrating that gift of reason in the interest of which they professed to doubt.

Dr. Cudworth was fully aware that his arguments, however convincing, could not persuade men against willful ignorance, and he gave this explanation: "We believe *that* to be true which some have affirmed, that were there any interest of life, any discernment of appetite and passion, against the truth of geometrical theorems themselves, whereby men's judgments might be clouded and bribed, notwithstanding all the demonstrations of them, many would remain at least skeptical about them." \* "Wherefore mere speculation and dry mathematical reason, in minds unpurified, and having a contrary interest of carnality and a heavy load of infidelity and distrust sinking them down, cannot alone beget an unshaken confidence and assurance of so high a truth as this—the existence of one perfect understanding Being, the original of all things. As it is certain also, on the contrary, that minds cleansed and purged from vice may, without syllogistical reasonings and mathematical demonstrations, have an undoubted assurance of

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\* I. S. U., vol. i, Preface, p. 45.

the existence of a God, according to that of the philosopher, 'Purity possesses men with an assurance of the best things.' It makes no difference whether this truth or doctrine "be called divine sagacity, as by Plato and Aristotle; or faith, as in the Scriptures. For Scripture faith is not a mere believing of historical things, and that, too, upon inartificial arguments or testimonies only, but a certain higher and diviner power of the soul that peculiarly corresponds with the Deity. Notwithstanding this fact, knowledge or science, added to our faith, will make it more firm and steadfast, and the better able to resist the assaults of sophistical reasonings that shall be made against it.'

## CHAPTER II.

## CUDWORTH'S ARGUMENT.

## Section 1. Arguments of Atheists.

AS we have already stated, Cudworth's design was threefold:

I. To refute atheism, or the material necessity (*ὑλικὴ ἀνάγκη*) of all things.

II. To maintain for man an innate criterion of justice and morality, (*discrimen honestorum et turpium.*)

III. To demonstrate in rational creatures a liberty (*sui potestas*) from necessity.

By this investigation he hopes to reveal a personal God as the first principle of the universe. Cudworth very properly guards us against any expectation of a brief formal demonstration of the Deity. There is no short road to the rational explanation of His actuality by finite mind.\* We must reach God's actuality by necessary inference from undeniable principles of our own rationality. These principles must be such that all rational creatures in the healthy exercise of mind will admit their validity. Those born in the image of the Father need but seek the rational explanation of themselves to find God. They shall find that, in his proper *idea*, this Deity excludes the existence from eternity of an independent primal matter. Those

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\* I. S. U., Preface, p. 45.; I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 29, foll.

who believe an uncreated matter essential to explain the existence of evil, have not risen above the conception of God simply as the most perfect animal.\*

The true *idea* of God is that of a being absolutely perfect. It is this alone to which necessary existence is essential, and of which it is demonstrable.

Absolute perfection includes in itself perfect knowledge, omni-causality, and *infinite power*; neither matter nor any thing else can exist of itself. God is the sole principle and source from which all things are derived. We must observe that infinite power signifies simply perfect power (*ὅλη δύναμις*) devoid of impotency, a power of producing whatever is conceivable, and conception is the only measure of power and of its extent.

And again, *sine bonitate nulla majestas*. Men worship, love, and adore the Deity from his justice, and God's happiness consists largely in the morality of God.

It is on this account that every man has as much of happiness as he has of virtue and wisdom.

There is a certain moral disposition of soul that is supreme; it is much more deeply and thoroughly satisfactory than either sensuous pleasure, or all knowledge and speculation whatsoever.†

When hard pressed, even the supporters of polytheism admit a Supreme Deity. In fact, the conception of the unity of a Supreme Deity is innate: not that the notion is as clear in some as in others; not that it does not need attention and diligence to polish and to purify it; not that the innate light of the soul may not be suppressed and extinguished by

\* I. S. U., vol. i, p. 306.

† I. S. U., vol. i, pp. 304-315.

the voluntary indulgence of natural depravity, and by the neglect of the mental faculties; but rather, our Platonist will tell us, that our soul resembles a field in which a few grains of wheat are mingled with a great many tares. If we suffer the tares to grow, what becomes of the good seed? While they come to perfection, they choke and disfigure the wheat till scarce a vestige is left.

To apply this figure, if we should find men almost destitute of the *idea* of God, their souls would be like to a field grown with brambles. This state of affairs must be charged to the neglect of the husbandmen. It does not prove that the notion of God was not implanted at the beginning. We simply deplore the condition of the souls in which the divine knowledge has been smothered by passion. To say that there is a democracy of gods, even among pagan polytheists, is a slander on mankind. What, then, is the necessity of the "argument" embraced in the present chapter? Why this refutation of atheism? No need, indeed, were it not that many have allowed their spiritual life to become so diseased that it no longer reflects the normal self. The spiritual no longer has supremacy. In reflection, an inverted order of the universe is exhibited to such minds. For them chaos or matter becomes both the source and goal of all things. From chaos all things have arisen from less to greater perfection, so that elements, brutes, men, gods,—all are in order of matter before God, and there is no other order. It is not, then, that this order does not exist; but atheism appears in the declaration, *It is the only order.*

For example, Anaximander is not accused of athe-



ism, because he declared for τὸ ἄπειρον, or *the infinite*, from which to derive all the qualities of finite things, but because he stopped short of an adequate explanation of the method by which this differentiation took place. Therefore, in the estimation of Cudworth, *the infinite* of Anaximander sunk to a physical category, to an indeterminate formless matter, from which forms and qualities arose by the creation of something out of nothing in the impossible sense. To posit a formless material universe as the receptacle of independent finite things from which by chance these finites are generated, and into which with no more explicit recognition of law they are resolved, is, indeed, the first step in philosophy. But when this is announced as the only explanation of the universe, we have the first phase of atheistic materialism. Its philosophical weakness appears in the fact that, in the omission of the law of transition from the *infinite* to the *finite*, and *vice versa*, it really does leave a place for the Deity.

Democritus, indeed, is possessed of more rational insight into the problems of philosophy. He comes forward with a system arranged to relieve the defects of that of Anaximander. The *void* must possess distinctions, and these differences are atoms or contextures of atoms. There is no need of an explanation of the secondary qualities, so-called. Such qualities do not exist. Every thing that *is*, is the result of magnitude, figure, position, local motion, and rest, in the atoms. There is no spiritual energy in the universe. Thus the above is no expression of the reason for phenomena, or for their unity. Necessity continues that which chance initiates, until chance again



annihilates. There is no adequate explanation of mental phenomena in all this philosophy, and, although rational in its conception, by failing to recognize its limitation, it yields atomic atheism, and presents the universe as a dead mechanism destitute of any source of motion. In positing a *void*, this form of atheism has really introduced a spiritual category, however, that gives it an advantage over other forms of materialism.

And, again, that other view which seeks to relieve the system of Democritus of its limitations by explaining all phenomena, all motion, and all regularity as the expression of an immense plastic soul, fails in that it recognizes not the relation of the parts to the whole, or the consciousness of the whole.

Strato supplements this cosmoplastic system, just mentioned, with one that endows each particle of matter with plastic life. Every thing that *is*, is made by certain inward natural forces and activities. He is not successful, however. He grants no common directive life. All things are a mixture of chance, and of the individual plastic life of each of the parts of the matter. Although more rational in form, this system is not less insidious than the preceding one. It makes no place for consciousness, save as unconscious life in its own strength is conceived to produce consciousness.

We see that all these systems of atheism have common ground in denying the supremacy of the intellectual order of the universe, or, indeed, the existence of such an order. Somewhat as follows Cudworth also conceives that they mutually confute one another :

ANAXIMANDRIAN and DEMOCRITIC *versus* STOICAL and STRATONICAL.

The *first principle* is *stupid matter*. All life and qualities are generable. Plastic life is as absurd an assumption as that of a Deity.

ANAXIMANDRIAN *versus* DEMOCRITIC.

The atomists, after trying to solve the phenomena of nature without form and quality, finally fall back into them by necessity.

The forms and qualities of the hylopathians are more absurd than Divine creation and annihilation.

The *first principle* is a *vital matter*. This is essential to explain the phenomena of the world, source of motion, nature of animals, etc.

STOICAL *versus* STRATONICAL.

The hylozoists give no reason why the whole might not conspire to form God as well as a part conspire to form an animal or man.

The cosmoplastic atheists give no reason why there may not be a rational soul as well as a plastic soul; it is impossible to derive the former from the latter. To posit life in the world without bestowing life upon the parts is to admit incorporeal substance in fact, while denying it in word.

Of these, the Democritic is the more logical.

DEMOCRITIC DOCTRINE.

Matter alone is primal. Reason and understanding arises from a contexture of atoms, or from peculiar combinations of magnitude, form, position, etc. There is nothing but local motion and mechanism.

Of these, the Stratonical is the more logical.

STRATONICAL DOCTRINE.

Matter is vital. Life, cognition, etc., are entities distinct from mechanism, but yet they are nothing save matter.

This conception blends matter with life; it regards matter and life as inadequate conceptions of a substance to which there pertains a natural, unconscious life. Sense and conscious reason are accidental modifications of this fundamental life of matter.

Both of these forms are refuted by proving:

I. "That life and intelligence are not essential to matter as such.

II. "That they can never rise out of any mixture of dead and stupid matter whatsoever." \*

The most complete system in opposition to the acknowledgment of a Supreme Intelligence is that which is called by Cudworth "the Democritic perversion of the atomic physiology." He finds that the Democritic form, by virtue of its own superiority, has silenced all other systems of atheism. If, therefore,

\* I. S. U., vol. i, pp. 200-215.

he can prove his theses against this form, the remaining task is insignificant.

Our author adopted the "atomic physiology," and sought thereby to lead the inexperienced in philosophy to grasp some conception of spiritual reality, to acknowledge by the vigor of rational insight the verity of incorporeal substance or spirit, and no longer to regard phenomena as the whole of experience, but through reason to read in them their eternal significance.

By making *body* the background of reflection, and by limiting it to magnitude, figure, position, and local motion, devoid of qualities and not self-moved, the atomic physiology had shown itself the instrument of reason.

Cudworth maintains that there have been two classes of atomists in the history of philosophy: the one, atheistic; the other, religious. Only as the founder of the former, can Democritus lay claim to the first scientific statement of the atomic hypothesis.

Prior to the time of Democritus the doctrine of atoms had not been regarded as a complete philosophy in itself, but only as the lowest member of the whole philosophical system. Its use was simply to explain that which was purely corporeal or external in the physical world when viewed as statical. Besides this mere mechanism there was posited life and self-activity, or incorporeal substance. The "summit" of this system is the Deity.

The Parmenidean doctrine, "that no real entity is either made or destroyed," rightly interpreted, is a grand fundamental principle of the atomic physiology.\* Further, there is an innate principle of reason

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\* I. S. U., vol. i, p. 42.

in support of this atomic way of "physiologizing," but that very principle also compels every one who thoroughly understands the intrinsic nature of this method to acknowledge something else besides body. The inward vigor of reason overcomes the "prejudice" of sense, and asserts two things—passive matter and active power. To the latter is attributed thought and the power of moving matter, be that power conscious or unconscious. That which suffers, on the other hand, is conceived to receive its motion from the active power or self-activity. Says Aristotle: "That from whence the principle of motion is, is one cause, and the matter is another."\* In the material principle the reason very properly sees nothing save magnitude, form, position, and local motion in mechanical combination. Viewed at this stage of progress, whatever is in bodies, is a mode of sensation from bodies in ourselves, mistaken for things really existing without us. In the elements of body we discover the true nature of corporeal or material things, *i. e.*, their absolute relativity. In the fancies of the senses we recognize the self-activity of mind, and every thing is explicable by mechanism, or life, or a mingling of the two. To account for the changes in bodies without violation of that instinctive principle of reason, *Ex nihilo nihil fit*, adds Cudworth, the ancients found it helpful to invent "atoms, unqualified save by magnitude, figure, and motion, as the principles of bodies. Thus they regarded all forms and qualities as distinct from matter, and resolved corporeal phenomena into mechanism and fancy."† And,

\* Arist. Phys., lib. 2, cap. 3.

† I. S. U., vol. i, p. 58; cf. Wallace, Aristotle's Psychology.

further, most of the pre-Socratic philosophers, following the light of this very principle, discerned, with various degrees of definiteness, that men and animals are not machines. Between living being and "dead carcass" there is this difference also: a spirit actuates the body of one; in the other we observe no such substance. On the principle that no substance vanishes, the early philosophers regarded this spirit, immortal. Not only past-existence but also pre-existence was confidently asserted by many. "Nothing dies or utterly perishes." "The living were as well made out of the dead as the dead out of the living." "Who knows whether that which is called living be not, indeed, dying; and that which is called dying, living?"

Indeed, Cudworth admits the force of the argument for pre-existence, and suggests that the grounds for the doctrine of transmigration of souls were as logical as those for that of immortality, did we not suppose souls to be created by God directly, and to be infused at generation—did we not regard this incorporeal or spiritual substance as well as all substance in the world, save the Deity himself, to be created by God, who is the fountain of all.

The doctrine of incorporeal or spiritual substance is deduced from the correct interpretation of the "atomic physiology." Among other reasons for this judgment Cudworth mentions the following:

1. The atomic theory allows nothing to body that is not included in the notion of a thing impenetrably extended, or of a mode of it. No modes or combinations of modes can render life and thought qualities of body. They must, therefore, be granted to be attributes of a substance distinct from body, or spiritual.



2. No other action is granted to body but local motion, and local motion is always "hetero-kinesy."\* Since body cannot first move itself, there must have been something else in the world besides body to institute motion.

3. According to this philosophy corporeal phenomena cannot be solved by mechanism without fancy; but fancy is no mode of body, it is a mode of being in ourselves and is incorporeal or spiritual.

4. The sensations that we have from sensible objects, as hot and cold, sweet and bitter, in that they do not exist in objects, imply the self-activity of the soul; and if self-active, of necessity it is incorporeal.

5. Further, this philosophy judges by something superior to sense, by a higher self-active vigor of mind, which plainly speaks of incorporeity.†

The atomic theory renders the corporeal intelligible to us; and, "by settling a distinct notion of body," it prepares the way for the demonstration of incorporeal substance. Democritus, indeed, explains corporeal phenomena, but in his attempt to explain the far more important facts of spiritual being, Cudworth judges that he acts rather the part of a madman than of a philosopher. Cudworth regards Aristotle's system, with which Plato's substantially agrees, to be right and sound in those essentials in which the system of Democritus is defective.

The Aristotelian system asserts incorporeal substance; makes a perfect incorporeal intellect the supreme mover of all; decides that nature, as the instrument of this intellect, does not act according to

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\* A Cudworthian term; Gr. *ἕτερος*, *other*, and *κίνησις*, *motion*.

† I. S. U., vol. i, p. 85.



the necessity of material motions, but for ends and purposes, though unknown to itself; maintains the essential and living character of morality; and declares the freedom of the will. Democritus presented the skeleton; Plato and Aristotle, the soul and spirit, without making sufficient use of that convenient vehicle, the atomic physiology. Cudworth thought that Aristotle confounded *corporeal* and *incorporeal*. Mosheim suggests that Cudworth has simply failed to understand Aristotle, in that he does not distinguish the proper signification of the Aristotelian terms, *ὑλη*, *matter*, and *σῶμα*, *body*.\* Cudworth urged upon Aristotle his own conception, that *body* and corporeal thing or atom are the same; on the contrary, Aristotle regarded *matter*, in that it possessed parts and had magnitude, as in some respects corporeal, but form and qualities must be added to this *first matter*, or, in other words, *matter* must be endowed with life, or, at least, must possess other affections and properties aside from those first mentioned, before it becomes *body*. Concrete objects or bodies or things, then, are a mixture of the material and the spiritual, of the potential and the actual in mutual correlation. Cudworth and Aristotle, in the last resort, are not essentially at variance. By denying that qualities inhere in corporeal substance, Cudworth reduces his conception of body to a notion not less abstract than Aristotle's notion of matter; in Cudworth's various gradations of incorporeal substance,† we discern Aristotle's causes, efficient, formal, and final; the correlation of corporeal and incorporeal, of causes, material, effi-

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\* I. S. U., vol. i, p. 88.

† Cudworth translates *οὐσία*, *substance*.

cient, formal, and final, Cudworth calls a *system of reality*, Aristotle designates it *body*, or *σῶμα*. Cudworth, then, is not at variance with Aristotle in excluding qualities from his notion of corporeal substance. Aristotle is philosophically in accord with Cudworth in affirming that qualities inhere in his notion of *σῶμα*, *body*, or concrete reality.

We have seen that, in the judgment of Cudworth, hylozoism, or the "philosophy of the unconscious," is next in importance after the atomic atheism. With a proper interpretation, he acknowledges that there is ample ground for theism on this hypothesis also; only its perversion, as in the case of atomism, is atheistic. There is usually some ground in reality for these hypotheses. Each presents a different phase of the same universal truth, and a proper interpretation shows the relation of each to the other, and to the whole. We find, however, that Cudworth regards pure atomism as cognate to incorporealism or spiritualistic philosophy, and hylozoism as more nearly allied to corporealism. We may believe that there is a God and that nature is incorporeal, and yet we may conceive that God has concealed plastic power in the particles of matter. But if we regard the atoms as possessed simply of unconscious natural appetite, and, by reason of this spermatic life, we hold that they form themselves "artificially and methodically" to their greatest advantage, and that thus they improve themselves into universal reason and knowledge; then, we declare for that "mysterious nonsense—a thing perfectly wise without any consciousness of itself," for an innumerable number of independent co-ordinate first principles over which no mind rules.

We have now before us our author's interpretation of the position of his opponents, and of the relation of his own views to the same. Cudworth commences the direct refutation of atheism in general, and of atomic or Democritic atheism in particular, by making a concise statement, first, of the atheistic arguments against a God, and, secondly, of the atheistic explanations of the phenomena apparently opposed to such exclusion of the Deity. Or rather, the "arguments" are presented, first, in succinct outline, accompanied by hints at the "explanations," which are treated more fully throughout Cudworth's direct reply.

The atheistic arguments may be briefly summarized as follows:

I. We have no *idea* of God.

In accord with the opinion of Hobbes, the notion is "simply the compilement of all the imaginable attributes of honor, courtship, and compliment which the confounded fear and astonishment of men's minds made them huddle up together without any sense or philosophic truth. It is an incomprehensible nothing, because we have no phantasm of it, and cannot fully comprehend all that is included in its notion." \*

II. There is no creation out of nothing.

This objection applies with especial force to those theists who would have substance, matter, and form, *all*, created by the Deity out of nothing. On the contrary, all real entity is from eternity uncreated. Only modifications of pre-existent matter can be produced. Motions, concretions, and secretions of atoms do this without any creation of distinct entity out of nothing. If no substance can be made, but all, what-

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\* I. S. U., vol. i, p. 108.

ever is, will be, and can be, was from eternity self-existent, then creative power and the attribute of omnipotence can belong to nothing.\*

III. The theist's notion of God requires that he be incorporeal. Either God is an unextended nothing, for the atheists assert that extension is the essence of all existent entity, or, if he be extended in a way different from our *extension*, but not incompatible with it, while he may co-exist with bodies, he cannot act or be sensible of any thing. To suppose incorporeal Deity is to make empty space the creator of all things.†

IV. After the notion of Hobbes, again, to make an incorporeal mind the cause of all things, is to make our fancy a reality.‡

V. By the principles of corporealism, matter is the only substance. All things else are differences in bodies—corruptible accidents. No rational being, consequently, can be incorruptible. The Deity, then, if he exist, was never made, and is essentially indestructible. But these attributes belong to senseless matter alone.

VI. All sensitive rational animals are made from irrational principles. Mind and reason are the creatures of matter and motion. It does not help the case to give antecedent life to matter; for, then, every atom is an animal, and every man is a “heap of innumerable animals.” §

VII. Rational being, as a result of the contexture of atoms, cannot rule over primal matter. The concreted bodies of animals, sense, and intellect, as appendices of human shape, are simply qualities arising

\*I. S. U., vol. i, p. 110.

†I. S. U., vol. i, p. 112.

‡I. S. U., vol. i, p. 114.

§I. S. U., vol. i, p. 119.

from the various combinations of atoms. The world has neither animal form nor human. There is no reason, except in human form. There is no soul, or mind superior to man, controlling the world.\*

VIII. A perfectly happy being, immortal, is impossible. The only incorruptible things are empty space, the single atom, and the "*summa summarum*" of all atoms in infinite space.\*

IX. God cannot be an immovable mover or first cause, for nothing can act otherwise than it is made to act by an agent without it, acting upon it. There is no first in the order of causes; there is no God. ‡

X. Says Hobbes: "Nothing takes beginning from itself, but from the action of some other immediate agent without." No thinking being could be a first cause. All knowledge implies dependence on something else as its cause; a perfectly happy rational being is, in consequence, a contradiction or a non-entity; there is no action but local motion.

XI. "All conception of the mind is a passion from things conceived, and their activity upon it." Mind is, therefore, junior to things. How could God have any knowledge of men before they were made? How could a God understand the force and possibility of principles before, from creation, the *nature of things* had given a specimen?

XII. The world cannot be the work of a Deity, because it is so full of imperfections. Poisonous herbs and destructive animals make the condition of man inferior to that of the beasts. The existence of evils,

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\* I. S. U., vol. i., p. 124.

† I. S. U., vol. i., p. 125.

‡ Hobbes's Elem. Phil., part. 4.



if there were a Deity, would imply that he is impatient or envious, or both.

XIII. In human affairs all is chaos and confusion. Things happen alike to the good and the evil, the wise and the foolish, the virtuous and the vicious.

XIV. It is impossible for one being to manage all things at once, and, if it were possible, it would be inconsistent with his happiness.

XV. If nothing was wanting to God's happiness, why was the world made? Did he make superfluous things? If he desired companionship, why did he wait so long? Did his happiness require that men adore him? What tools did he use to make the world?

XVI. Belief in an over-ruling arbitrary power causes constant fear of impending evils; and fear of punishment after death takes away all the solace of life.

XVII. The introduction of a source of fear greater than *leviathan* is a step toward the dissolution of the body politic, and toward the state of nature or barbarism.

The *conclusion* is, that the universe did not have its origin in a rational nature; but that all things sprung from senseless nature and chance—from the unguided motion of matter. All the modifications of matter arising from the movements of atoms are natural and necessary, but fortuitous in that they are devoid of design.\*

It has been necessary, for the sake of clearness, to state thus in detail the propositions against which

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\* I. S. U., vol. i, p. 138.



Cudworth directs his argument in the confutation of the atomic atheism.

Cudworth's *design* in presenting these objections in detail, and his description of the state of mind in those who could regard such objections valid, may be interesting.

Atheism is generally a dull, earthy disbelief in the existence of things beyond the reach of sense. The tendency of atheistic doctrine is to immorality; but all dogmatic atheists do not become so by intemperance, sensuality, and debauchery.

Those who are endowed with strong memory and quick wits, when they fall into atheism and at the same time are carried away by lust, become the "debauched ranting and hectoring atheists." But there is a class of "civilized atheists" who "delight in the society of the fair and just." These men are tempted to hold atheistic opinions from an affectation of singularity, or of seeming wiser than the generality of mankind. A certain grievous ignorance is the condition of these men, which, notwithstanding, has the appearance of the greatest wisdom, and their hypothesis is *that* which to many seems to be the wisest and the most profound of doctrines.\*

In all ages atheists make great pretense to wisdom and philosophy, and many are tempted to entertain atheistic opinions that by so doing they may gain a reputation for wisdom. "This was," says Cudworth, "one reason that the rather induced us nakedly to reveal all the mysteries of atheism. We observed that, so long as these things are concealed and kept up in a hugger-mugger, many will be apt to suspect that there

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\* Cf. Plato, De Leg., lib. 10.

is some great depth and profundity of wisdom lodged in them, and that it is some noble and generous truth which the bigotic religious endeavor to smother and to suppress." \*

It is of no small moment to show that those who hold atheistic opinions "grossly fumble" in their reasoning; therefore, Cudworth continues, "we hope to effect this in our present undertaking, to make it evident, that atheists are no such conjurers as (though they hold no spirits) they would be thought to be; no such gigantic men of reason, nor profound philosophers, but that notwithstanding all their pretensions to wit, their atheism is really nothing else but ἀμαθία τις μάλα χαλεπή—a most grievous ignorance, sottishness, and stupidity of mind in them. Wherefore, we shall, in the next place, conjure down all those devils raised in their most formidable colors; or, rather, we shall discover that they are nothing else but what these atheists pretend God and incorporeal spirits to be, mere fantastic specters and impostures, vain imaginations of deluded minds utterly devoid of truth and reality. Neither shall we only confute those atheistic arguments, but we shall also assault atheism, even with its own weapons, and plainly demonstrate that all forms of atheism are unintelligible nonsense, and absolutely impossible to human reason; we shall likewise occasionally insert some—as we think—undeniable arguments in favor of a Deity." †

Cudworth makes two important digressions to open the way for the proper refutation of atheistic hylo-

\* I. S. U., vol. i, pp. 277-279.

† I. S. U., vol. i, p. 279.

zoism, and for a conclusive answer to the first objection of the atomists.

The first is his discussion of "plastic life" as a useful instrument in the explanation of phenomena. The second is the remarkable chapter on the philosophy of religion in support of our author's assertion, that the *idea* of a perfect rational Being, self-existent from all eternity and the First Cause of all things, underlies every form of pagan polytheism; and that its universality is a proof that this *idea* of one Supreme God is natural and proleptic in the human race. This digression on the philosophy of religion covers not more than one third of its intended compass, if we may judge from the complete table of contents which introduces the chapter; and yet it occupies no less than eight hundred and forty pages of the "Intellectual System of the Universe."

To say that this long digression is not interesting would be to declare our inability to appreciate the importance and the deep significance of the loftiest branches of modern philosophic speculation—a science and philosophy of religion, of which this chapter treats.

As it is proposed to consider these digressions, together with other characteristics of Cudworth's philosophy, in a separate chapter, only such mention is made of their contents in this connection as has seemed essential to the continuity of the "argument."

## Section 2. Against the First Atheistic Objection.

### THE IDEA OF GOD.

The foregoing *general outline* will have revealed that Cudworth intended a thorough and exhaustive consideration of his subject, and we can give but the

briefest sketch of his argument in reply to the atheistic propositions already enumerated.

In general, Cudworth\* contends that to affirm that we have no idea of God is equivalent to the assertion that there is no conception of the mind answering to that word, or that the name is an empty phantasm or sound. It is so self-contradictory to conceive what is self-evident as a phantasm, that many may regard it ridiculous to attempt the refutation of such an assertion. "The plainest things can least be proved." "He who believes all things to be demonstrable, takes away demonstration itself." Are there not, however, different words for God in the several languages corresponding to the same notion? Surely these words must have more in them than the mere sounds or the phantasms of sounds! Statements to the contrary imply monstrous stupidity or prodigious impudence; they are due, certainly, to a double *ἀπονέκρωσις*, or *ἀπολίθωσις*, of the soul. They are plain cases of besotted intellectuals and of lack of shame in morals. This "shameless impudence is admired by the ignorant as profoundness of wit and learning."†

But possibly Cudworth is too sweeping. May we not hold that there is no image of God, innate? The atheist, even then, cannot deny God on this ground any more than he can deny sun, moon, and stars, because we do not possess in our ideas the exact images and forms of these objects.

Who does not know that many things exist of a certainty, the nature of which we only partially

\* I. S. U., vol. i, p. 293; I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 30.

† I. S. U., vol. i, p. 295.

understand? Shall any deny the existence of God on that account? Do we deny the existence of eternity because our weak minds may not grasp the notion of eternity? What state of mind leads men to remark, "If there is a God?" Do not men often regard insensibility as an exhibition of strength of mind? If atheists did not have a conception of God, when they deny God's existence, they would simply deny the existence of *nothing*. But they have the conception, because they deny the theist's conception of Him.\* There is a *something* in dispute. What is this idea of God, or *something*? The lemma that must be accepted, then, by all is:

"As it is generally acknowledged that all things have not existed from all eternity, but that some were produced, there must be something that is self-existent from all eternity and unmade, ἀγέννητον.

This, therefore, is the cause, or *ground*, of that which is made. Its existence is necessary, for, if it happened by chance to exist from all eternity, it might by chance cease to be. The question is, What is this ἀγέννητον? Some hold that it is the lowest form—senseless matter; others, that it is the highest form and best—a perfect conscious, rational nature. The former are atheists; "for atheists are none else than those who regard the first principle of all things to be unconscious."† No atheist believes in a conscious animality in the universe. With him the animal is a mere quality educed from nothing, and reduced to nothing again.

There is, indeed, a third class, who hold that neither God nor matter is the sole cause of all:

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\* I. S. U., vol. i, p. 296.

† I. S. U., vol. i, p. 300.



1. The Stoics conceive two corporeal principles, active and passive;

2. Others regard God and matter, co-existent and distinct from eternity;

3. Still others hold God as the sole principle and matter as derivative from Him; either (*a*) matter has flowed from God, as light from the sun, from everlasting to everlasting, or (*b*) matter was always stored up in God, but was cast forth at a certain definite time.

The existence of this class suggests the propriety of a statement of Cudworth's complete description or definition of his idea, or notion, of the Deity:

God is a being, absolutely perfect, unmade or self-originated, and necessarily existing. He has an infinite fecundity in him, and virtually contains all things. He has also overflowing love, uninviciously displaying and communicating itself, together with an impartial rectitude or nature of justice. He fully comprehends himself and the extent of his own fecundity, and, therefore, all the possibilities of things, their several natures, and the best system of the whole. He has also infinite, active, and perceptive power; he is the fountain of all things; he made all things that could be made and were fit to be made, producing them according to his own nature—essential goodness and wisdom—and, therefore, according to the best pattern, and in the best manner possible for the good of the whole, and reconciling all the variety and contrariety of things in the universe in one most admirable and lovely harmony. Lastly, he contains and upholds all things, and governs them after the best manner also, and that without any force



or violence, for they are all naturally subject to his authority, and ready to obey his law.\*

This somewhat prolix definition expresses or implies most of the philosophical views of Cudworth, and it may be regarded as a fit preliminary statement or anticipation of the conclusions he will reach by his argument. It also plainly shows Cudworth's divergence both from ditheism and from tritheism.

The ditheism indicated above and the tritheism that arises, when man adds an *irrational soul* to the God and the matter of ditheism as an essential factor in the production of the world, have their origin not in the primitive impulses of the heart, but in an attempt to reconcile the apparent evil in the world with the existence of a God whose essential attribute is *perfect love*.

It was this attempt that led the Gnostics, in the second century of our era, to distinguish the God of Moses and of the prophets from God the Father of Jesus Christ; to regard the former as *just*, and the latter as *good*.

Marcion, (A. D. 160,) indeed, pushed this distinction to an opposition of nature between the God of the Jews and the Supreme God, the Father. The latter he regarded as the "God of Light," to whom Christian consciousness now offers adoration. The former was the "Creator of the world," the earth-ruler that executed law and spared no one; he was not good, since he was the author of evil works; he was bloodthirsty, changeable, and full of contradictions. Jesus Christ was sent to abrogate the law and

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\* I. S. U., vol. i, p. 317.

to introduce a reconciliation of the former antagonism by announcing the victory of the God of love. Surely our "silver-tongued infidel" had a predecessor, who was more devout than he.\*

Cudworth combats Plutarch as the main advocate among the ancients of a necessary evil principle. He represents Plutarch as maintaining that God is simply the harmonizer of the universe; that an irrational soul and a disorderly matter existed before organization; and that God simply strove to harmonize the self-existent elements. Thus, Cudworth contends, Plutarch makes the "evil spirit" co-rival of God and unmade. Cudworth prefers atheism to such an interpretation of the relation of God to the world.

Mosheim thinks, however, that Cudworth misconstrues Plutarch in part. Therefore, with ample illustration, the critic summarizes his interpretation of Plutarch's philosophical views, in substance, as follows:

1. There is no evil from God.

2. Matter without quality was in existence from eternity.

3. There inheres in matter a "maleficent soul," a "contrary and maker of contraries," an "unharmonized soul," destitute of counsel, knowledge, and reason. This soul works evil, not by design, but by the necessity of its nature as bound by no law.

- 4 At a definite time God proceeded to form the world out of matter, by disposing it in proper order

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\* Mr. Ingersoll. The reference is to the "Mistakes of Moses." Ueb. Hist. Phil., vol. i, pp. 280-284.

and position. He then gave *soul* a portion of his own essence, sufficient to direct the various motions to the production of the greatest beauty in all things, and to develop an admirable harmony of the universe. God appointed *this substance*, made orderly by the imposition of necessity in the senses, and made prudent by the gift of the capacity for self-control in the *mind*, as ruler of the universe.\*

Whether Cudworth was justified in his criticism of Plutarch we may now leave others to judge, and we revert to the specific "atheistic pretenses" against the idea of a God:

A. We have neither idea nor thought of any thing not subject to corporeal sense. We have not the least evidence of the existence of any thing but from the same.

According to this philosophy man can have no thought not subject to sense.† "Knowledge is sense."‡ "Sense is original knowledge." If this were the case, he who sees light and color would understand them, and so in reference to all sensibles. But men desire to know more; they question whether the affections of sense be qualities in objects or sensations in us. If sense were the highest faculty, there would be no suspicion of this *sense*. All sense on this hypothesis must be true, and one organ of perception cannot check another. That sense alone is not knowledge is proved from the atomic physiology itself:

I. Sense takes notice of the outside and of its own passion, not of essence.

\* I. S. U., vol. i, pp. 327-340; Plutarch's *Psychogonia*.

† Hobbes's *Lev.*, cap. 1.

‡ Plato's *Theætetus*.

II. Reason and understanding discover to us that there is nothing in objects similar to "sensible ideas," but they resolve these into intelligible principles.

The notions of these principles are native to the soul, and not passions of the soul,—no passion can judge concerning other things or of itself.

Democritus himself was compelled to call the knowledge obtained by the senses, *obscure*; that by the mind, more hidden and recondite. Color, he says, is only opinion; atoms and vacuum alone are truth and reality.

The atomic discovery is, that the only true intelligibles in body, so called, are *magnitude, figure, position, motion, and rest*. Of these we have both *sensible ideas* from without, passively impressed, and *intelligible notions* actively exerted from within the mind itself. The latter are often confounded with *sensible phantasms*, because sensible phantasms may accompany these notions. But we have notions of which there can be no image; *e. g.*, we have no sensible phantasms of the intelligible content of a book that we understand; further, we have no phantasms answering to the words, *substance, absolutely perfect, infinitely good, wise, powerful, necessary, self-existent, cause, all, other, things*, etc.

Even of corporeal Deity, the essence or mind could not fall under corporeal sense any more than thought can. "We grant that the evidence of particular bodies, existing *hic et nunc*, without us depends upon the information of sense; but yet the certainty of this very evidence rests upon the union of reason and understanding with sense." "Sense is only relative, subject to delusion." How are we to

distinguish imaginations of the soul and sensible objects? Atoms and vacuum are first principles for atheists, but vacuum is incorporeal; can its existence be known then through corporeal sense?

We cannot handle our souls or those of others, but we assert their existence in both cases (a) from an inward consciousness of our own cognitions.

If the existence of souls is admitted, there must be a perfect mind, the Creator of imperfect ones,

like { ours, (b) from the principle of reason that *nothing* is incapable of action.  
those of others, (c) from effects on their respective bodies, their motions, actions, and conversation.

Mosheim asks Cudworth for a distinction between those who regard *sense* simply as an incentive to reflection, and those who regard all to be corporeal.\*

We shall see how Cudworth draws this distinction in the consideration of the "Immutable Morality."

*B.* Since theists acknowledge God to be incomprehensible, we may infer that such a God is a nonentity.

The premises of this argument are, what is incomprehensible is inconceivable, and what is inconceivable is *nothing*. The second may be granted as true for man. Aristotle is more consistent than Protagoras in saying, not that individual man is the measure of all things, but that *ψυχή πως πάντα*—rational mind is in a manner all things; *i. e.*, the mind is able to frame some conception of all actual and possible existence from highest to lowest. Mind is, as it were, a transparent sphere, or notional world,

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\* I. S. U., vol. ii, pp. 508-515.



that has a ray, or image, in it corresponding to whatsoever exists in the real world of being. In this way, whatever in its own nature is absolutely inconceivable, is indeed nonentity. The first premise, however, is absolutely denied. We cannot fully comprehend ourselves. We have not such adequate knowledge of any substantial thing or real entity that we can perfectly master it. We apprehend; we do not fully comprehend. Truth is "larger" than our minds, and we are not the same with it; but we have a *lower participation* now—a badge of our creature state—in intellectual nature, and are rather *apprehenders* than *comprehenders* of it. If we know only by complete conception, we have no idea or notion of the nature of any substance or thing.

God from his perfection and intellectual brightness is more incomprehensible, and yet more conceivable, than any thing else. *Incomprehensible* is a term relative to our sense and fancy.

Mosheim objects to Cudworth's next remark, in which he contends that certain innate ideas must, of necessity, have an object upon which to exercise themselves, in which to bathe. The infidel says: "We do not grant the existence of innate ideas. We claim that the idea of God is a nonentity, because it involves contradictory particulars; *e.g.*, infinite justice and infinite mercy, infinite power and infinite goodness." Although some may think that Cudworth begs the question in reference to innate ideas, yet it certainly does not follow that God does not exist from the second statement of our infidel objector, but simply that the Supreme Being is widely different from the notion which human weakness generally forms

concerning him. Further, to prove that two things are mutually repugnant, we must make it evident that we have a complete notion of their nature. To uphold his assertion, then, the infidel must either deny the *infinite* or announce his ability to discern a repugnancy between things incomprehensible.\*

C. The theist's idea of God, since it includes the infinite, is, therefore, inconceivable and impossible.

The discussion of the subject of the *infinite* is one of the most difficult with which we have to deal in philosophy, and it would be folly to attempt to condense Cudworth's argument for the idea of *infinity*. Those who are curious must examine, for themselves, Cudworth in connection with Mosheim's exhaustive notes on the subject.† Some of the arguments in the discussion are suggestive. Hobbes had conceived the *infinite* as an expression for the inability of our understanding, and, on the other hand, had insisted that God was not finite. The conclusion apparently made God an inconceivable *nothing*, a confused chaos of the mind.‡ The ancient atheists did not deny the infinity of matter. The modern atheists evidently discard reason more completely in denying the *infinite* entirely. They try to disprove a God, because there is nothing infinite in power, in duration, or in any respect whatsoever; and this must apply to matter also. Cudworth replies somewhat as follows: If there was once nothing at all, then there never could have been any thing; for reason says, From nothing comes nothing. If there was something, it must have had infinite duration;

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\* I. S. U., vol. ii, pp. 515-520. † I. S. U., vol. ii, pp. 520-554.

‡ Hobbes's De Cive, cap. 15, sect. 14.

otherwise, something has come spontaneously from nothing. If matter is granted to be infinite, it is folly to urge this *infinite* as an argument in disproof of God's existence.\* We admit that there is no image of any infinite, but it is mathematically certain that there is something infinite in duration. From this fact we prove the existence of something that cannot be imaged, and that cannot be fully comprehended by our minds. We, indeed, have no notion of the *infinities* of number, of corporeal magnitude, of successive duration. But our infinities of number, magnitude, and duration are not infinities in the philosophic sense. More may be added to each indefinitely by divine power. An addition of finites never makes up one *infinite*. This "indefinite increasableness," this potential infinity that can never become actual, is often mistaken for an *actual infinity of space*. Time and magnitude, being finite, they are not eternal.† But, says the objector, "Is not the Creator made finite by this admission? If time is not eternal, could the Deity be so?" Cudworth replies: "Is God not otherwise eternal than by a successive flux of infinite time? God is in order of nature before time; he made time and the world. God is above that successive flux, and comprehends in himself the stability and immutable perfection of his own *being*, his yesterday, to-day, and forever. By virtue of this conception, God *is*, and is the permanent to whom this infinite appertains; he is the actual infinity."‡ Objectors quibble about *nunc-stans* of eternity, as if the eternity of the Deity were conceived by theists as

\* I. S. U., vol. ii, p. 526.

† I. S. U., vol. ii, p. 528.

‡ Most of modern theologians follow this Platonic view of Cudworth's.

a moment of time standing still. The duration of every thing must be agreeable to its nature. As imperfect nature is ever flowing, or expecting something of itself which is not yet in being, but to come; so must He whose nature is perfect, immutable, and always the same, necessarily existent, have a permanent duration; and it is as contradictory for that duration ever to have begun to be as ever to cease to exist.\* The being to whom this duration pertains cannot be *matter and motion*, or this “mundane system.”

We certainly have some conception of infinity, when we demonstrate that infinity belongs to *something*, and that this *something* is an immutable and perfect nature. Every rational person admits that *something* has existed from eternity without a cause. At once there arise the notions of plenitude and perfection as attributes of this *something*, this unmade mover. We have no need to be troubled, moreover, by the “contradictory particulars.” When philosophically considered, finite and infinite are not absolutely negatory of each other. *Finite* is the negation of *infinite* as that which is, in order of nature, before the finite; *infinite* is not the negation of the *finite* in any sense, except the grammatical. In other words, the *finite* is the imperfect—the negative; the *infinite* is the perfect—the positive. We can now see how magnitude, number, and time are not regarded as infinite in the philosophical sense. For magnitude, number, and time are not things in themselves, but only “properties, modes, and relations of real existences. Consequently, they are not of a kind to par-

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\* I. S. U., vol. ii, p. 529.

take of the highest imaginable perfection ;” they are still subject to that grammatical infinity which is simply the negation of limit.

Infinite knowledge is knowledge of whatsoever is knowable, infinite power is perfect power to do all things possible, and infinite duration is perfection of existence. Any imperfection in essence excludes infinity ; and, therefore, the only true infinity is the Holy Trinity. We have a conception of perfection, because perfection is our measure of imperfection. A straight line is the measure of a crooked one, and not the crooked of the straight. Perfection is, in order of nature, before imperfection. “ We perceive divers degrees of perfection in the essence of things ; and, thus, we discover a ladder of perfections in nature according to the idea of the absolutely perfect as the standard.” “ Whatever is imperfect is accounted so by diminution from the perfect of its kind. The imperfect could not be discovered, if the perfect did not exist. The language of nature for rational beings takes its beginning in the absolute or complete from which it descends to lower forms.” \*

*D.* Theology is a compilement of inconsistent and contradictory notions.

That some theologians may have asserted contradictory propositions, does not prove that theology in itself is contradictory and inconsistent.†

While it is true that real contradictions, if such there be, imply nonentity, yet this criterion is liable to abuse. This is especially the case, when that which some men’s limited understandings cannot

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\* Boëthius, *De Consol. Phil.*, lib. 3, p. 69.

† *I. S. U.*, vol. ii, p. 553.



grasp is cried down as an impossibility, or *nothing*. Such abuse is illustrated when the materialist, because he can conceive no substance except body, declares that incorporeal substance is incorporeal body, and then holds that the latter phrase is a contradiction in the very terms.\* He, then, further asserts that it is mere nonsense to speak of God as perceiving sensible things, if he have not organs of sense, or as thinking, if he have no brains.†

Cudworth quotes in reply: "O ye brutish among the people, when will ye understand? and, ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? He that formed the eye, shall he not see? He that teacheth knowledge, shall he not know and understand?" "The attributes of a triangle are not contradictory; the idea of the Deity is more simple than the triangle, and is pregnant of many attributes" that much less are contradictory. *Infinite* in one perfection implies *infinite* in all. As the light of the sun is one light, though, when refracted and reflected from the roid clouds, we perceive it as the colors of the rainbow; so all the attributes of the Deity are partial human conceptions of the same perfect Being. As men do not at once know all the properties of the triangle, and may think that they see relations which, in fact, do not exist; so there is a possibility of parvity of comprehension, and an element of error in the individual conception of God, but this conception may broaden and the error may disappear.

*E.* The idea of God, as existent, owes its being either to the nonsense of excited minds, or to the imposture of politicians.

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\* Hobbes's Lev., cap. 34.

† Hobbes's Lev., cap. 31.

Hobbes was not the first to account in this manner for the propensity of the human race to religion.\* If you ask, says Seneca, why thunder-bolts are said to be hurled by Jove, the answer is: "The wise thought some inevitable source of terror necessary for restraining the minds of the vulgar." This applies merely to the earthly stupid that believe only what they see and feel. The most religious are the least solicitous concerning the future, for they build their fortunes on the right use of their wills.† The faith of the righteous is not belief in tales of superstition, which need only to be legalized to become articles of religion.‡ Those who base their good and evil in the passion of pleasure and pain, subject only to the chance of animal life, and who establish civil society and justice on fear and distrust, are properly solicitous. The fear of God is simply respect for his justice. Religious fear, in fact, arises from the consciousness of duties unperformed.§ "The true fear of God is the beginning of his love, and faith is the beginning of cleaving to Him." || The faith of Scripture is "the assurance of things hoped for, the proving of things not seen." Faith and hope produce love. It is in the interests of none that there should be no God; and only such wretched men imagine God's non-existence desirable as have abandoned their only true interest—that of being righteous and the friends of God, and as are desperately resolved to be wicked.¶

The vice of wicked atheists leads them to think

\* Arist. *Meta.*, lib. 1, cap. 4; Cicero, *De Nat. Deor.*, lib. 2, cap. 42; Plato, *De Leg.*, lib. 10; Seneca, *Nat. Quæst.*, lib. 2, cap. 42.

† I. S. U., vol. ii, p. 568.

‡ Hobbes's *Lev.*, cap. 12.

§ Lucret. lib. 5, v. 1223.

|| *Ecclesiasticus* xxv, 12, ed. Fab. ;

¶ I. S. U., vol. ii, p. 576.

that good and evil have no foundation in nature, but in an arbitrary law of morality. Now nature is liberty and law is restraint ; therefore, these men argue, God exercises an arbitrary tyranny in punishing crime, so-called.

Atheists deny all natural friendship among men, and, with Cotta in Cicero,\* declare that no man would be benevolent or beneficent, were it not for his indigence and weakness. It is, consequently, contrary to the omnipotence of God, if he be, to possess morality. In fact, the atheists put up a horrid form for the Deity, and then say that no such "bugbear" exists. The opinion of God's existence, on the contrary, does not arise from the hope of good or from the fear of evil ; but, first, from reason, and, then, from a natural prolepsis, which anticipates reason.

Some, however, hold that the conception of God is a creature of the imagination, because fear arises from a dread of physical forces.

Says Mosheim, these parties either beg the question by presuming God's non-existence and by calling the fear of God a delusion, or involve themselves in the most flagrant error. The following must be a specimen of their logic : The offspring of fear is false ; religion is the offspring of fear ; *ergo*, religion is false. We ask, How is religion the child of fear ? They answer, Whatever has any degree of fear united with it arises from fear ; religion and fear are always united ; *ergo*, religion is from fear. A similar logic would assert the non-existence of atheists, or of Julius Cæsar, or of any mortal. The fact is, very few assert

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\* Cicero, De Nat. Deor, lib. 1.

with assurance the existence of that which they simply desire, unless to them can be applied the words of Catullus :

“Non est sana puella : ne rogate  
Qualis sit : solet ea imaginosa  
Pati aliquid.”

Who could believe that simpletons would have more power on all classes than those who exercise *right reason*? Furthermore, those who least fear fortune, whose hands are eyes, whose minds are robust, have the highest degree of reverence toward God. Newton and Boyle found that a deeper knowledge of causes strengthened their faith in a Deity.\* Atheists, in fact, violate the first principle of causes in supposing that mind can come from senseless matter, for no effect can transcend the perfection of its cause. And more : they do not explain the cause of motion, so long as they premise simply matter and its modifications. To assign cause upon cause indefinitely is to assign no cause. Matter in motion can have no cause of motion or it is moved by an incorporeal *something*—a self-active energy.

In the bodies of animals the cause of motion is not the organized matter, but a soul, conscious or unconscious, vitally united to matter and naturally ruling over it. But the cause or *ground* of motion in the whole universe is either “God himself originally impressing a certain quantity of motion upon the matter of the universe, and constantly conserving the same;” or it is a hylarchical principle under the direction of perfect mind, and that mind has power to move matter regularly. Aristotle involves the two

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\* I. S. U., vol. ii, pp. 580-584.

conceptions of the latter hypothesis in his final cause and efficient cause. There is an "Immovable Mover," the Deity. "He moves only as he is loved," (*κινεῖ δὲ ὡς ἐρώμενον*.)\* There is also an inferior "moved mover." This is "that which, because it is moved, moves other things," (*κινούμενον δὲ τᾶλλα κινεῖ*.)† Aristotle conceives that the *unmoved* is the perfect, and that motion is the symbol of imperfection.

Those who boast that they can explain all things without a God, overlook, also, the grand phenomena, called by Aristotle τὸ εὖ καὶ καλῶς, or *the harmony of all for the good of all*. Mathematicians smile at the probability of the "chance" that threw the letters of the alphabet in the order represented in Cudworth's *work*, or that produced the orderly composition of the world in its present form. No ectypal methodical habit can account for such phenomena. Mechanical forces of themselves cannot explain gravity, respiration, and the motion of the heart.

Knowledge, in fact, is not ectypal, but archetypal. The divine art or wisdom has impressed an unmistakable signature of itself upon the world. Nature, as the governor of the world, is vital and formal, (artificial,) and makes use of the mechanical forces, so far as they are serviceable to the intellectual. Final causes are philosophical; it is more proper to give *pipes* to him who has musical skill than to give musical skill to him who has *pipes*.‡

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\* Arist. Meta., lib. 14, cap. 8.

† I. S. U., vol. i, p. 268.

‡ Robt. Boyle, De Caussis Finalibus, sec. 1, p. 10; Arist. de Part. Animal., lib. 4, cap. 10.



Neither artificial nature nor percipient atoms explain the harmony of the universe without the presupposition of a perfect mind to direct.

The conservation of species; the phenomena of natural justice, honesty, duty, and obligation, on which ethics and politics are founded; and τὸ ἐφ' ἑμῶν, "the liberty of will," not simply self-determinations in things indifferent, but also decisions in those involving praise and blame, are not accounted for by unconscious plastic nature or by mechanism, and, consequently, are rejected as fanciful by the supporters of these partial systems.

This idea of a God is not a political fiction. Those who so regard it assume that religion is error; that politicians originate that which they make use of; that falsehood is wisdom, or Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle were deceived;\* and that there are no ideas of religion where civil law does not exist.

How did sovereigns so universally chance to hit upon this idea, if it is a nonentity? A nonentity could not be handed down by tradition! These persons discover their own ignorance of philosophy in judging that mere telling from without can put an idea in the minds of men; for we are passive to nothing, save the sounds, which are simply by agreement symbols of notions. Human teaching is more properly a kindling of the soul from within. The mere narration to men that there is a God could never infuse any idea of him in their minds, such as has been indicated in the *definition* of God, unless their minds were something more than the passive recipients of sounds.†

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\* Lactantius, De Ira Dei, cap. 10.

† I. S. U., vol. ii, p. 629.

This idea of God is not feigned; for the power of feigning is the power of compounding things that exist apart, and the fictitious ideas have a possible entity. God, though he create a world, could create no more thought than is eternally in his mind. He could not frame a positive idea of that which has no entity. If the idea of God exists, and there is no God, then this idea alone is *sui generis*,—for all others have possible entity; and immutability, necessary existence, infinity, and perfection are absolute nonentities—new thoughts created out of nothing.

This idea of God, further, does not arise from an amplification of our ideas. For, on the atheistic hypothesis, the soul has no power to make more than *is*; the soul, *they* must remember, has no active power, it is mere passion from external objects. They reason in a circle; they make unconsciously the idea of imperfection from perfection, and then try to frame perfection from imperfection.

After presenting the foregoing arguments, as reasons for asserting the existence of a perfect Being, in opposition to the atheistic pretenses against the idea of a God, Cudworth considers how and in what sense God's existence may be demonstrated from his *idea*.

That some assert that God's existence is undemonstrable in the manner that sensibles are demonstrated, *i.e.*, from a necessary antecedent cause, is not an adequate ground for neglecting this theme.

Cudworth maintains that we have certain knowledge—not simply faith and opinion—of things, the *διότι*, or *why*, of which cannot be demonstrated; and further, that it is contradictory to seek the causal

demonstration of that which is eternal of itself or by its very nature. Reason, in fact, compels us to affirm that if any thing now exists, something has existed from eternity. We must, from the necessary principles of reason, infer God's existence. And, when any thing is necessarily inferred from that which is undeniable, this is demonstration, not indeed of the *διδότι*, but of the *ᾗτι*; *that the thing is*, though not *why* it is; many geometrical demonstrations are no other.\*

Cudworth regards Des Cartes as correct in making *Essential Goodness* the *præcognitum* to all other science, but as vitiating his whole argument by his denial of the certainty, or authority, of our reasoning faculties. Truth cannot be made arbitrarily, but *is*. To suppose that truth and falsehood can belong to things indifferently, is to take away the nature of these notions, and to make them words without signification. If God understood by *will* only, he would not understand at all. "The truth of singular contingent propositions depends, indeed, upon the things themselves, existing without, as the measure and archetype thereof. But in reference to the universal axioms of science, the terms of which are those reasons of things that exist nowhere but in the mind itself,—whose *noëmata* and ideas they are,—the measure of truth concerning these axioms can be no extraneous thing without the mind, but must be native to it, or contained within the mind itself, and, therefore, can be nothing but its clear and distinct perception."†

Every clear perception is a truth; there is no clear perception of falsehood. There may be false opinion.

\* I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 30.

† I. S. U., vol. iii, 34, 35.

but there is no false knowledge. Knowledge of universal truths is clear perception of the several ideas of the mind and their necessary relations to one another.

When the terms of the proposition, "The part is less than the whole," are clearly understood, the proposition can never be mistaken.

Although God can make something out of nothing, yet he cannot make nothing to be something, and *vice versa*. Mind has the criterion of truth in itself. Sense does not reach to the *absolute* of nature, or to the essence or essential existence of things about us; sense has nothing to do with truth and falsity. Every appearance must be a true appearance; we may, indeed, have material falsity, but not formal falsity. (Sense is not absolute but relative to the sentient. If there were sense alone without reason, the Protagorean doctrine would be strictly true,—human knowledge would be entirely relative; but as it is, whatever is clearly perceived of one rational being is also true of others. Like the "natural justice" of Empedocles,\* this universal truth "is extended throughout the vast ether and through infinite light or space." It is only by reasoning after the analogy of sense that men reach the conclusion that reason is *seeming*, or appearance. The divine Word, or *Λόγος*, is the archetypal pattern of all truth; created beings have derivative participation in the divine Truth. It is no derogation of the Supreme Being that he created man with the capacity to comprehend the axioms of mathematics and the verities of morality. If this privilege is not ours, life is a shadow, rational creatures

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\* Arist. Rhet., lib. 7, cap. 13.

are not certain of existence, our reasoning may be false, and God may not *be*.

Cudworth very prudently presents the arguments against and for Des Cartes's proof of God's existence. Probably out of respect for Henry More, who favored Des Cartes's argument, he passes no judgment on the validity or strength of either point of view.

Against Des Cartes's statement, "God includes necessary existence in his very idea, and therefore He *is*," it may be argued, in brief, that an absolute necessity is wrongly inferred in the conclusion from an unproved necessity contained in the premises; that God, so far as the form of the proof extends, is simply possible in the premises; that the assertion of the necessity of a God requires to be supported by the demonstration of his existence from an antecedent necessity or by necessary inference, which the Cartesian philosophy professes to reject as contradictory and impossible.\*

We omit the familiar argument in favor of the Cartesian proposition, and, instead, present one of the arguments for God's existence, which Cudworth regarded as cogent:

Whatever we can frame an idea of in our minds, implying no manner of contradiction, this either actually *is*, or, else, if it be not, it is possible for it to be; if God be not, he is not possible hereafter to be; *ergo*, he *is*.

The reason of the minor premise is evident, otherwise God would be contingent; the major has been proved, by Cudworth, before. This and all arguments

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\* I. S. U., vol. iii., pp. 37-48, 52.



of the kind are convincing, says our author, according to the capacity of the recipient.

Leibnitz also favors this argument: \*

“God alone enjoys this privilege, that he necessarily exists, if he be possible; and as nothing prevents the possibility of that which is without limits and involves no contradiction, this alone is sufficient as a convincing proof of the existence of a God.”†

Cudworth now proceeds to prove the existence of eternal verities‡ and that they presuppose a perfect omnipotent Being. Against the atheistic conception that things make knowledge, and not knowledge, things, he quotes Boëthius: “Every thing which is known, is known not by its own force and power, but by the force and the power, the vigor and the activity, of that which knows and comprehends it.”§ The human mind has ideas of the intelligible natures of things, by which it understands singulars. What local motions, for instance, could impress us with this common notion, or adage, that things which agree in one third, agree among themselves? Aristotle says, “There is no knowledge of geometrical theorems by sense; if we *saw* that the three angles of a triangle were equal to two right angles, we should still seek a demonstration,—sense reaches only to singulars, knowledge to universals.”||

In the knowledge of truths we first find out the intelligible entity, or universal, and then apply it to singulars.

\* Prin. Phil. Supp. Act. Erud., Lips. tom. 7, sec. 11, pp. 500-514, sec. 45.

† Against this view, vid. Mosheim's note, I. S. U., vol. iii, pp. 50-54.

‡ We have a fuller consideration in the “Immutable Morality.”

§ Boëthius, De Consol. Phil., lib. 5.

|| Arist. Analyt. Post., lib. 1, p. 31.

There are many universals, such as life, sense, and reason, that do not fall under sense. There are others—the geometrical concepts, for instance—in which accuracy cannot be reached by sense. We shall learn more of Cudworth's views on this subject (below,) but the inference which we may draw is, that human science is not the creature of singular sensibles, but proleptical to them and, in order of nature, before them. Since there are intelligibles superior to the abstract thought of the understanding, this fact indicates the existence of a perfect Being. [Truths, both of quantity and of morality, "are neither things of to-day nor of yesterday, but they ever live, and no man knows their date or from whence they come ;"]\* they are before man, world, and matter. If there be eternal verities, then the intelligible natures, out of which these truths are compounded, must be eternal. Cudworth quotes Plato and Aristotle extensively in support of universal intelligibles as the only objects of science. These ideas must inhere in a mind that is essentially *οὐσία ἐνέργεια*, or act and energy, and that has no defect. This mind is *Νοητὸν*, or *Intelligible*; it is that which comprehends infinite power in its measure. All minds are stamped with the seal of this Intelligible. "Truths are not multiplied by the diversity of minds that comprehend them; for they are all ectypal anticipations of one archetypal truth and mind. As the same face may be reflected in several mirrors, and the image of the sun may be in a thousand eyes at once, beholding; so, when innumerable created minds have the same ideas of things and understand the same truths, it is but one and the same

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\* Sophocles, *Antig.*, ver. 467, 468; Arist. *Eth. Nic.*, lib. 3, cap. 3.

eternal light that is reflected in them all,—that light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world,—or the same voice of one everlasting Word, re-echoed by them.”\*] They could not apprehend one another’s meaning, were there not some mind of which all men partook, a mind embracing all the perfection that, by definition, was attributed to the Deity at the beginning of this argument.

### Section 3. Against the Second Atheistic Objection.

“EX NIHILO NIHIL FIT.”

Cudworth designates this objection the atheist’s Achilles. The objectors understand it to indicate that all reality has existed eternally, uncreated by a Deity. The theist’s *God* signifies the existence of a Creator of real entity out of nothing; and as the assumption of such a being is contrary to the undoubted principle of reason and of philosophy, just stated,—*Ex nihilo nihil fit*,—they confidently assert that there is no such creative power as a personal God.

Cudworth proposes to treat the subject in three divisions:

I. To show the senses in which this principle is a common notion, and, unquestionably, an eternal truth.

II. To demonstrate that, in the sense indicated in the atheistic objection, it is absolutely false, but that the proper interpretation of the principle does not oppose divine creation.

III. To prove that this common notion, taken in any sense, does no more execution against theism than

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\* I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 71.

against atheism ; and that, in its proper sense, it demonstrates the impossibility of atheism, in that atheists, from their superficial reasoning, may be shown to produce something out of nothing in the impossible sense.

I. Grant that *Ex nihilo nihil fit* is a principle of reason.

1. It is impossible for a thing that was not to bring itself into being or to be made without an *efficient cause*. From this we derive the notion of something necessarily self-existent, otherwise we should be compelled to assent to creation out of nothing, which is impossible.

2. It is impossible for any thing to be brought into being without an *adequate cause*. The cause must have equal perfection with or greater than that which is produced, and also sufficient power to produce the same,—nothing can give that which it does not possess. However much of the entity of the effect is greater than the cause, so much has come from nothing without a cause. Only self-activity can produce motion, otherwise motion is without a sufficient cause. Likewise imperfect beings can produce no new substance ; they can only produce new modifications, after the manner in which human souls can produce new thoughts and new local motions in bodies. No imperfect being has emanative power sufficient to produce substance ; for this, again, would be equivalent to the declaration, that a substance can come from nothing,—only a perfect being containing all things can have power to create in the strict sense of the expression.

3. No new matter can be produced by natural

generation. Imperfect being can simply modify existing matter; as matter is passive, any combination of the two will not produce a new substance. We must conclude, then, with Aristotle, that, where God does not interpose, in natural generations there is no creation of new substance, nor is there any annihilation. Although some of our "modern philosophers" would hold the contrary, most of the natural philosophers applied this principle simply as pure physicists, and not as metaphysicians.

4. Souls cannot be generated out of matter; all of the ancients that asserted the incorporeity of souls, regarded them either as produced by God out of nothing pre-existing or as dependent emanations from the Deity.

In general, then, *nothing* cannot cause any thing, either efficiently or materially, and this conclusion rather proves the existence of God than impugns it.\*

II. Creation ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων may not be taken causally, but only to signify the *terminus a quo*, or the limit from which things are made,—an antecedent non-existence. The meaning of this argument—the atheistic argument proper—is: Nothing that once was not, could, by any power whatsoever, be afterward brought into being; there is no creative power in never so perfect a being.

In reply it may be argued:

In the sense above described, *Ex nihilo nihil* is not a common notion, is not a self-evident truth. If it were the case, then there would be no motion, no causation; the universe would be a rock of adamant. We, however, produce local motion and new thoughts,

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\* I. S. U., vol. iii, pp. 79-90.



and, consequently, the atheists are compelled to confine the application of their proposition to substances or real entities. So much being granted, there may be, then, new modifications out of nothing, but no new substances; but they give no reason why one should be more impossible than the other, or why no substance should be generable.

Cudworth acknowledges that many seem to stagger under the plausibility of this argument, but accounts for this lack of faith on the supposition of a confusion of conceptions in three particulars :

(a) Such persons fail to discern the equivocation in the expression, *Ex nihilo nihil fit*, and, because the principle is evidently true in the causal sense, they inadvertently assent to its use in the wrong sense—that no substance, or real entity, can be brought out of non-existence into being, even by God from his perfection.

(b) Further, because artificial things, *e. g.*, a house or a machine, are produced out of matter by the simple modification of the substance, they conclude that no power whatever could produce any thing, except from pre-existent matter, and that matter itself is unmade. Unwarily they extend a principle of physics beyond the limits of that science to philosophy proper, and accordingly declare the limit of infinite power.

(c) Imperfect men can create no new substance, therefore they argue *ad hominem* that it is impossible for any power to create.

But since imperfect beings can create thought, why not extend the power of perfect Being to substance also? Certainly, that God form a substance that was

not, is not to create it, in the impossible sense, out of nothing; for this substance comes from Him who is *all*; and any thing whatsoever may be made by that which is not only an "infinitely greater perfection," but also "sufficiently active in power to produce it."

The thing produced is substantially emanative and can be created, provided there is nothing in the creature contradictory to the nature of the Creator. An imperfect contingent being that before was not, may *be* without contradiction; consequently, such creation is the proper object of infinite power.

Have we not in this a proof that all things which are not wholly God are made, and consequently have not been eternally pre-existing? If this or the like is not acknowledged, then, certainly, we must follow Spinoza and hold that no real entity can derive its being from another substance; and there is one substance only, eternally self-existent, without determination. But Cudworth contends that reason does not allow us to consider every substantial thing, or real entity, eternal, necessary, and independent. To include finite things in the class of the self-existent, is to make something come from nothing in the impossible sense. There is no necessity that all things be self-originated, but some may be made from others unmade.\*

Our minds are created out of a higher entity, but if our minds are not independent, much less is that lower entity matter. Cudworth continues at some length to show, by argument and quotation, that atheists, rather than theists, bring something out of nothing; that they, in fact, derive all things, save unqualified matter, from nothing.

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\* Arist. De Cœlo, lib. iii, cap. 2.

III. *Ex nihilo nihil*, in its proper sense, demonstrates the impossibility of atheism; for atheists bring real entities out of nothing, not only in the sense of an antecedent non-existence, but also in that absolutely impossible sense, that nothing is the cause of something.

(a) Atheists, in the last resort, hold that all things are made out of matter alone, without the assistance of any active principle or efficient cause. They, therefore, make all the motion in the world to arise from nothing, and they assert action without an agent.

(b) If we are more liberal, and grant motion without a cause to atomists, and attribute self-moving power to matter, with Strato, still no new entity can be produced by the modification of matter. Unconscious matter could not produce consciousness without creating mind and reason from nothing. Mind and reason are not attributed to matter as such.

(c) But atheists contend that mind and reason are only accidents of matter. This mistake must arise from their indistinct conception of the relation of accident, or mode, and substance to each other. Now a mode is such a thing as cannot possibly be conceived without that of which it is a mode; *e. g.*, magnitude, figure, and position are conceived as belonging to bulky extension. Standing, sitting, and walking cannot be conceived except as modes of organized body. But life and thought may be apprehended without extension, and, therefore, must be conceived as modes of something distinct from matter, of incorporeal substance,—note, that incorporeal substance is used to denote that which is not extended according to the physical conception of extension or

magnitude. To explain thought, sense, and life as modifications of matter is, consequently, to produce something out of nothing without a cause.

The atomic atheists, at least, are not consistent. They consider real qualities as distinct from the modifications of matter, and make them accidents of our souls in order to avoid a violation of *Ex nihilo nihil fit*. Much more, following the same method, ought they to determine that life, sense, and thought are modes, not of senseless matter, but of incorporeal substance; for these attributes cannot be resolved into mechanism, or modifications of matter, as the "vulgar sensible qualities may, and ought to be." \*

Cudworth does not regard life, thought, and sense, abstractly considered, as substances; † they are not accidents of matter, however, but essential attributes of incorporeal substance or spirit; and souls and minds in which they inhere are real, active, spiritual entities. He considers, therefore, that those who derive any kind of sensitive soul "from the power of the matter" violate *Ex nihilo nihil*, and that they are well on their way to atheism. If senseless matter can produce life, as well might it be supposed to produce all things. There is no valid reason to stop at rational souls, especially on the part of those "who conclude souls to be *rasæ tabulæ*, mere sheets of white paper, that have nothing at all in them save that which is scribbled upon them from corporeal objects, externally impressed; and who hold, further, that there is nothing in the mind of man which was not before in sense: so that *sense* is the first or primitive knowledge;

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\* I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 115.

† Substance equals *οὐσία*.

and *mind* is a derivative from it, more shadowy and evanescent.\*

As there is no middle ground between atheism and theism, the demonstration of the impossibility of atheism establishes the truth of theism. Indeed, from the principle, that nothing can come from nothing, considered causally, we may demonstrate the existence of a Deity. If there be no God, then our idea of the Deity, as well as all knowledge, came from nothing. For singular bodies without us cannot enter into us and put understanding into our minds. There are simply local motions propagated from them to our organs of sense. The mind must have its immediate intelligibles within itself, for otherwise it could not possibly understand any thing. These intelligibles and their relations are eternal. Now, the mind can frame ideas not only of existences, but also of possibilities. This plainly implies the existence of a Being, infinitely powerful, that could produce them. So the proper object of mind is a perfect Being in the extent of his power. This perfect Being is the first or original mind of which all other minds partake. Were it not so, the intelligible objects of the mind and its ideas or notions must have come from nothing.†

#### Section 4. Against Atheistic Objections, Third to Eighth Inclusive.

##### INCORPOREAL SUBSTANCE.

Cudworth groups the six atheistic objections against incorporeal Deity and corporeal, answers the objections to incorporeal substance, demonstrates the ex-

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\* I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 120.

† I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 132.



istence of such substance from the atheistic conception of corporeal Deity, and thus shows the absurdity of the atheistic objections to a God considered under the present division of the "argument."

(III.) In the first place it is maintained that all atheists are corporealists, although all corporealists are not atheists. If we follow the Democritic atheists, we shall find that they grant to space an incorporeal nature, in which tangible, impenetrable bodies subsist. It follows from this that space, if it be of a nature distinct from body, is the affection of some infinite substance, of incorporeal Deity. There are others, however, who deny that there are two extended substances. They regard space simply as the extension of body, considered in the abstract.

It may be well to note at this point that Cudworth attributes space neither to Deity nor to body, and that, in his indecision, he hints at the proper solution of the difficulty: that space is a function of subject and object, of spirit as such.

To return, those who deny the existence of two substances reason as follows: "Whatsoever is extended, is body; whatsoever *is*, is extended; *ergo*, whatsoever *is*, is corporeal body, and incorporeal Deity cannot exist."\*

Cudworth suggests that there are two methods of combating this atheistic syllogism:

I. By denying the minor premise, Whatsoever is, is extended.

II. By denying the major premise, Whatsoever is extended, is body.

The first method is taken up exhaustively by our author, and Dr. Mosheim has annotated the argu-

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\* I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 234.

ment with not less learning and prolixity. In fact, Cudworth clearly apprehends not only that upon the overthrow of the syllogism above stated depends the answer to the third atheistic objection, but also that on the success or failure of this attempt the five objections following hang.

The argument in demonstration of the proposition by which the minor premise of the syllogism is denied, Cudworth leaves to Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, Porphyrius, and others. Their decision is that there is something unextended, indistant, devoid of quantity, without parts, and indivisible. Cudworth presents the argument for this proposition as follows :

1. He quotes various passages from ancient authors—as just suggested—in which they assert, in substance, the truth of this proposition.

2. He states the replies of incorporealists to the objections of their opponents.

(a) That unextended substance is absolute parvitude.

(b) That what is neither great nor small has no place and is a nonentity.

(c) That to be all in the whole and all in every part is an impossibility.

(d) That the illocality and the immobility of human souls, or finite spirits, are absurd doctrines contrary to theistic tradition.

3. He set forth the reasons of incorporealists for affirming a substance, indistant and unextended, not subject to sensuous imagination.

I. Commencing, then, with the refutation of the minor premise, Whatsoever is, is extended, it may be well to remark that we have not space to note Mos-

heim's criticisms upon Cudworth's interpretations of the ancient authors, or to quote except by way of illustration. Nearly all the passages are very suggestive, and a few selections are quite necessary to our purpose in following Cudworth's argument.

Plato says : \* "Soul itself and the intelligible attributes of soul are in order of nature before the length, breadth, and profundity of bodies." And, again : † "Drowsy imagination, like a ghost, haunts men when they think of that true and awakened nature of the Deity." And, of ideal beauty : ‡ "It is that which is not anywhere, either in heaven or on earth, but is itself alone by itself and with itself, all other beautiful things partaking of it."

Cudworth considers that these passages indicate a belief on the part of Plato in an unextended Supreme Being, *all one* from the fact that every greatest thing and every least thing participate.

Mosheim claims that Plato and Aristotle also—whom we shall consider presently—do not deny a certain kind of extension to Deity. According to Mosheim, *ἀσώματος*, *incorporeal*, may be used in the following senses :

1. That which is imperceptible to sense ; *e. g.*, ideas, perfections, etc.
2. Rude matter, destitute of form and quality ; *e. g.*, *ὕλη*.
3. Subtle particles, devoid of terrestrial bodies ; *e. g.*, fire, air.
4. That which is devoid of bodily concretion and extension.

No doubt the word, which we translate *incorporeal*

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\* Plato, De Leg., lib. 10. † Plato, Timæus. ‡ Plato, Symposium.

or *spiritual*, has one, or several, or all of these significations in the numerous connections in which it is used by Plato and Aristotle and their successors. Mosheim insists that Cudworth misinterprets Plato and Aristotle by not clearly distinguishing these possible variations in meaning. We have already suggested, however, that Cudworth's *incorporeal* may have vastly more content than Mosheim conceives. If this be the case, all his objections are groundless. It is worthy of note in this connection, that Cudworth leaves the method of confuting the syllogism under consideration to the judgment of the reader. This would suggest that he considered each method as a phase of the same argument, and that he regarded it immaterial whether we deny the major, *Whatsoever is extended, is body*, or the minor, *Whatsoever is, is extended*. In fact, he hints (below \*) at a compound of these methods. By this digression we hope to avoid all misinterpretation in the brief synopsis of the discussion, and at the same time to indicate the direction and character of Mosheim's criticisms.

Aristotle states : † “There is an immovable substance separate from sensibles, devoid of magnitude and parts, and indivisible.” And further: “Every thing devoid of matter is indivisible; *e. g.*, the human mind.” In *De Anima* he affirms that intellect is continuous, that souls are not magnitude, ‡ that souls in general are neither in place nor are they locally moved otherwise than by accident, as in the statement, “that it (soul) moves together with the body.” §

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\* I. S. U., vol. iii, pp. 397, 398.

† Arist. Meta.

‡ Arist. De An., lib. 1, cap. 3.

§ Arist. De An., lib. 1, cap. 4.

Aristotle makes the essence of corporeal substance as distinguished from incorporeal to consist in magnitude.\*

Philo asserts the existence of a double substance: "All things are filled with God as containing them, not as being contained by them or in them. To him it belongs to be every-where and nowhere; *no-where*, because he created space together with bodies, and it is not proper to include the Creator in any of his creatures; *every-where*, because he extends his virtues and powers throughout earth and water, air and heaven, and leaves no part of the world destitute of them. He bound them fast with invisible bonds."†

Plotinus has treated this subject very extensively.‡ He says: "As for the human soul, it is the same in the hand and in the foot." He claims that we assert that God is in every one of us, and the same in all, upon one of the firmest principles of the philosophy of life.

Says Porphyrius: "If there were conceived an incorporeal space or vacuum, God or mind could not possibly exist coëxtensive with it. This space would be, by hypothesis, receptive of bodies, but it could not give place to the energy of mind. Mind is no bulky thing; soul is an unextended substance, which is locally in body only by disposition and energy."

By such quotations as these, Cudworth traces the existence of the belief in an incorporeal substance back farther than the scholastics of the Middle Ages, and thus shows the insincerity or the superficiality of his opponent, Hobbes, in his discussion of this subject.

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\* I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 241.

† De Confus. Ling., p. 339.

‡ 6 Ennead, libri 4 and 5.



2. (a) In reply to the objection from the parvitude of spirit, we must not look upon God as the greatest by way of quantity; for then we must doubt how he can be in every least thing. We must not regard him as the least, lest we be at a loss to augment his entity to the greatest. A physical point possesses distance and is mentally divisible;—incorporeal unextended Deity is not of this nature. A mathematical point, while it has neither substance nor magnitude, still possesses place and position.\* These attributes, however, are foreign to the proper conception of infinite Power. God cannot be an object of the sensuous imagination in man.

(b) In the next case, why can spirit not have place? Plato holds that those who declare that magnitude is the very essence of being, adhere rather to the lower faculties of sense and imagination than to that of reason.

In reference to the relation of the spiritual to place, Plotinus regards *here* and *there*, when applied to the Deity, to imply that there is an unextended and indistant element in all extended things.

Porphyrius tells us that we do not reach to the knowledge of incorporeal substance, while we are so subject to the power of imagination that we regard its products as the same with thought or intellection.

Whatever can do or suffer any thing, reason dictates must be something, and we need not fear that an All-wise Being, who acts upon the whole world, will prove to be a nonentity from lack of corporeal extension.

Active power, says Cudworth, has a certain *βάθος*—

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\* Arist. De An., lib. 2, cap. 6.

an essential depth. It is a self-activity devoid of quantity and dimension. Had it dimension, the greater the bulk, the greater would be the activity.

On the strength of the imagination alone we ought not to pass judgment, even on the things of sense; *e. g.*, it is only through reason that we have any intelligent conception of the form and the size of the earth. If imagination is not a safe criterion in the case of sensibles, how much less is it the measure of truth in matters pertaining to intellect. Reason declares that there is a permanent duration, differing from the successive flux of time. We may safely follow the decisions of this judge. Says Plotinus: "For the same reason that we deny local motion to the Deity, must we also deny temporal distance to the same; we must affirm of God, that he is not in time, but above time, in eternity."

We conceive not timeless eternity in its perfection now, because we are essentially involved in time. But our freer faculties, however, assure us of the existence of a perfect Being, who is by his very nature free from the successive flux of time.

But what of the objection of whole and parts?

(*c*) It is, indeed, a contradiction for extended substance to be all in one part of that space which the whole occupies; but as the soul is whole in every part of the body, so is this negative *ὅλον* applied to the Deity as a substance not capable of division.

(*d*) In reference to the illocality and immobility of souls Cudworth discusses, at length, the opinions of the ancients, and especially in reference to the heavenly or spiritual bodies of souls. The following quotations indicate the trend of the argument: "Our

soul, though it quit this body, shall never be disunited from all body." "The soul has always some body joined with it suitable to its own present disposition." "Spiritual body is an interior vestment." "The soul is always in a body, but sometimes of one kind and sometimes of another." \* "Man is a rational soul with a cognate immortal body." †

The objectors claim that if such incorporeal spirit be joined to extended body, these finite spirits, in that they have no relation to place, might take cognizance of the whole world at once. These finite spirits, however, in their essence, are but parts of the universe, and are not comprehensive of the whole; they are not the universal Trinity. Their activity could not extend farther than the parts of the universe allotted to them in their imperfect state. It is the peculiar attribute of that infinite or perfect incorporeal substance—the Deity—to actuate all things. Cudworth does not assert, however, that body is essential to spirit. Perception is possible without a corporeal vestment. We can say of finite soul that, apparently, it takes the form of the human body as water takes the form of the containing vessel, and in some cases, as does water, if congealed, the shape also. ‡

3. We must continually bear in mind that in the discussion under consideration both parties premise but one kind of extension. "Whatever has magnitude, or one thing without another," is logically and physically divisible and impenetrable by any other body. Any arguments that support the existence of

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\* Plato, *De Leg.*, lib. 10.

† Hierocles.

‡ I. S. U., vol. iii, pp. 256–384.

another substance besides "body," tend to prove the existence of an unextended substance of the kind predicated by the incorporealists. It is argued, further, "that unextended Deity is not an impossible idea, for there is something unextended in our very selves."

If, for instance, the soul be considered as extended, then either every part of extended soul is soul, *i. e.*, unextended soul, or parts devoid of life produce life. They produce it not after the manner of the production of qualities from combinations of magnitude, figure, position, and motion; for life is a simple reality, and, if produced in the way indicated, it is produced out of nothing.\*

The indivisibility of soul is suggested also by its operations, both in sensation, external and internal, and in thought. That which perceives the unity of impressions must be one, or the center of a circle in which the several senses are *radii*. If the percipient is extended, one of three things must be affirmed. Either every part of this extended soul perceives a part of the object only, or every part of it comprehends the whole object, or all come to some one point that alone perceives the several parts of the object and the whole. If the first be true, "one part of the soul must perceive part of the object, and another, another; just as one person has sense of one thing, and another, of another thing." If the second be granted, "there must be in every man an infinite number of sensations of the same object," and there are innumerable persons in each human soul. In the third case, be the point considered either

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\* Plotinus.

as mathematical or as physical, the objections of Aristotle to such an interpretation—referred to above\*—are unanswerable. If, in this case, on the other hand, it be meant that the whole soul perceives all, and no part of it as such discerns any thing, then, assuredly, the soul is indivisible and unextended.

From internal perception also, says Plotinus, we perceive the indivisibility of soul. "I myself," not as an extended bulk, not as a physical point or mathematical, but as one self-active, living, intimate being that contains, holds, and connects all, perceive pain in head or foot, and adjust the other members to relieve the one afflicted.

The rational operations of the soul point most conclusively to the incorporeal character of soul. Virtue and vice are not objects of imagination. We have, nevertheless, a conception of the intension of powers and virtues, in which there is nothing of extension. The primary objects of thought, also, are indivisible; *e. g.*, there is no flesh in our conception of man. In regard to extended things, likewise, the soul conceives in the same manner; *e. g.*, the thought of a mile or of a thousand miles' distance takes up no more room than the thought of an inch or of a mathematical point.

We infer the distinction between thought and extension from the fact that they cannot be conceived together. "We cannot conceive half, or a third part, or a twentieth part of a thought, much less of the thought of an indivisible thing." Either volitions, passions, knowledge, prudence, justice, temperance, and all other things belonging to mind and soul are absolute nonentities, or souls and minds are unextended.

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\* Arist. De An., lib. 1, cap. 3.



Granting, then, but one kind of extension, the incorporealists conclude: There are two specific substances in nature,—a mere passive thing, and an energetic nature. The first is simple extension—there is not the *res*, or thing, and extension, but extension is the concrete notion of the thing itself. The nature of this extension is purely *aliud extra aliud*, perfect alterity, disunity, and divisibility. It is mere outwardness; it has nothing within; it has no active power. All its activity, by a logical necessity of the conception, is either impenetrability by any other extended thing, or passive local motion. No body, or extension, as such, is able to move itself or to act upon itself. If this were the only substance, as already stated, there would be no motion or action in the world. This extension is the lowest of all forms of being, and next to nothing. It is a heap of substances, all external to one another. The action of extended body is simply local motion, a mere translation from place to place.

The second specific substance, the energetic nature, is a thinking monad. Its internal energy is thought—the very substance of that which thinks, an eternal energy that acts from itself, within itself, and upon itself. Though this energy is unextended, yet it has an essential depth, βάθος; and in its entirety it can act upon any quantity of extended substance, penetrate it, and co-exist with it. Every finite being, as made up of a union of soul and body, has an unextended *inside* and an extended *outside*. In consequence of the latter, this being is determined to *here* and *there*.

Those who, reasoning from the same premise that

there is only one kind of extension, deny these conclusions, must acknowledge that thought and soul are divisible, both mentally and physically, that there is no internal energy, that thought is local motion, and that one substance cannot co-exist with another, save externally by juxtaposition.

II. Cudworth now proceeds to give a few suggestions in reference to the second method of confuting the atheistic syllogism under consideration.

Those who prefer to deny the major premise, "Whatsoever is extended, is body," regard corporeal extension as the anticipation, or type, of another incorporeal or spiritual extension, to which penetrability and indivisibility can belong. The Deity has this infinite or perfect extension, but it is contractible and dilatable in finite spirits.

Says Cudworth: "It is not our part here to oppose theists, but atheists. We leave these two classes of incorporealists to dispute it out friendly among themselves. And, indeed, we do this with the more of toleration, because it seems that some are in a manner fatally inclined to think one way in this controversy, and some another. Whatever the truth may be, the latter hypothesis may be very useful to retain in theism those who can by no means admit of a Deity, or of any thing else, unextended. Perhaps there will not be wanting those who would compound the two together. They then would suppose the Deity to be altogether unextended, and all of him every-where. But, for these, finite incorporeals, or created spirits, have an unextended inside and an extended outside—a life, or mind, diffusing itself into a certain amplitude of outward extension, whereby they are determined to

place, so as to be all in every part of it. This outward extension is not to be accounted body, because it is penetrable, contractible, and dilatable, and because no one part of it is separable from the rest by the incursion of any incorporeal thing upon them, the parts."\*

Cudworth dogmatizes not at all in reference to the arguments of the incorporealists, save that he considers that it must be admitted that body, impenetrable and indivisible, does not explain all that can be known of the universe, and that there is in nature that which is one and indivisible. He argues, then, with confidence against the objection of Hobbes, that in considering these subjects men have mistaken abstract names for realities.†

(IV.) The belief in incorporeal Deity did not arise from any ridiculous mistake of the abstract notions of mere accidents for substance itself. No scholastics even dreamed that a universal man ever existed apart from singulars, for it is absolutely impossible that the real essence of any thing should be separated from the thing itself, or should be eternal, when the thing itself is not so. To have held such an absurdity, they must have regarded such qualities as whiteness and heat, incorporeal substances. In very truth, Cudworth adds, these scholastic essences of things, said to be eternal, are simply their intelligible essences or their natures as conceivable and as objects of mind. In this sense it is true that the essences of things, *e. g.*, of a triangle, or of a house, were never made, otherwise there could be no eternal verities concerning them. The true meaning of these eternal essences is,

\* I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 398; Cf. MacVicar, *Mind*.

† I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 400.

that knowledge is eternal, or that there is an eternal mind that comprehends the intelligible natures of all things, actual and possible, their necessary relations to one another, and all the immutable verities belonging to them. These essences are not the spiritual substance, but they are objective entities of mind,—they are *noēmata*.\*

Those who acknowledge any thing incorporeal have no interest in the remaining objections against a spiritual Deity.

(V.) The hylopathians declare that matter is the only substance unmade. All things are qualities of matter, and, consequently, mind is no God, but a creature.

(VI.) The Stoics had a strong persuasion of God's existence, and, therefore, they asserted the existence of an *intellectual fire*, eternal and unmade, as the maker of the world. But, on their hypothesis, God could not be absolutely incorruptible; they, therefore, failed to reach a clear notion of God as a Being simple and indivisible.

(VII.) The atomists are even less consistent, in that they have so plainly declared the inertness of matter. We have already shown how they violate the principle, *Ex nihilo nihil fit*. All true theists admit the world's animation, but it is differentiated from a Perfect Being downward, and not by unreasoned leaps upward from senseless matter.

(VIII.) On the false supposition that matter, devoid of life, is the first principle of all things, men are led to consider liability to disruption of body, or to physical death, so-called, as an unanswerable argument against immortality and happiness. On the contrary, a living soul has no connection with a dead carcass; it

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\* I. S. U., vol. iii, pp. 401, 601–630. (Im. Mor.)

is, by its very nature, immortal. And further, eternal unmade life is absolutely unannihilable by any thing else, and may have perfect security in reference to future happiness. We are all participants in the divine nature, why shall we not claim our noble birthright? \*

**Section 5. Against Atheistic Objections, Ninth to Seventeenth Inclusive, and in Conclusion.**

NATURAL JUSTICE.

Cudworth next considers somewhat in connection the three atheistic objections to a Deity, ostensibly founded on the phenomena of motion and thought. He then gives specific answer to each of the remaining pretenses.

The arguments here presented have been of necessity largely anticipated, but Cudworth adds numerous examples and illustrations as well as arguments, all of which impress the reader with the irrefutable truth and justice of his cause. The root thoughts, more fully expanded and applied in the "Immutable Morality," are every-where prominent.

(IX.) The atheists claim that "*Nothing is moved, save as it is moved by something else,*" is a postulate of reason and a principle of motion, to which the premising of an unmoved mover is antagonistic. The fact is, that the postulate above stated applies only to local motion in bodies, and the transmission of motion indicated by it is merely a nominal cause without meaning, except there be premised in addition a self-active Life in nature.

Even such a "*first push*" as Des Cartes posited, requires as a condition of its application that the quantity of motion be conserved. To declare that

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\* I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 409.



“no body can move itself,” is virtually to assert that nothing can act from itself or be self-active. The familiar statement of Aristotle is at once suggested in opposition to such a conclusion: If there be no *first mover*, there is no cause of motion in the world; if there is self-activity, then it is prior to local motion in order of nature.\*

(X.) By positing the statement, “that nothing takes its beginning from itself,” it is supposed by some that thought can be reduced to local motion and mechanism. If this axiom be understood of substantial things in the sense that no thought nor action nor dependent being could come from nothing without an agent, it is granted without question. If it be interpreted to signify that no action whatsoever takes its rise in the agent or subject of action, the question at issue is begged. That many of our thoughts depend on mechanical causes as their occasions, is true; but that there is no transition in thought except such as has been in sense, is denied. We could not carry out any design, if our thoughts “were like tennis-balls, bandied and struck upon us, as it were, by rackets from without.” Says Aristotle:† “All rational beings are in some sense sources of action.” The rational soul is self-recollective, self-attentive, a bubbling fountain of thought-activity, when not choked by some form of personal selfishness.

Those who regard thought as the result of local motion in body, are sometimes troubled with their own consciousness of thought or fancy—as they are pleased to call it. There is certainly no more fancy in thought, however, than in local motion. Des

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\* Arist. Meta., lib. 14.

† Arist. Eth. Nic., lib. 3, cap. 3.

Cartes called brutes, machines ; but he had sense enough of the logical consequences of the assertion to deny that they were capable of thought. There is no more satisfaction in disputing with the supporters of such a theory than with mere machines. These objectors, further, deny God and happiness ; they deny consciousness also, and yet are illogical enough to pretend to give man happiness by the removal of fear. Upon their theory, perfection is the "dead level" of unqualified matter, and all modification is imperfection. Why not hasten dissolution by fear and all the instruments of physical destruction whatsoever ?

(XI.) In reply to the objection, that the object of knowledge must be in order of nature before knowledge, or that the only things are singular sensibles, Cudworth has already demonstrated that such sensibles are not the only objects of mind. He now adds numerous illustrations in support of his thesis.

The form of a house is an accident of matter, but *mind* is a substantial existence that enlivens other bodies as well as our own. Sensation is not passion, but a perception of passion, in which self-activity is involved ; much more is this the case in conception and in volition. If false judgment or error from delusion exists at all, there must be some activity in the soul itself, by which it can assent to things not clearly perceived. If universals are abstract names, and propositions are the results of the addition and the subtraction of names, and, further, reasoning, the computation of the consequences of names, as Hobbes affirms, is it not strange that the science of geometry has existed for so many centuries without change in the various languages of civilized nations ? We may

be assured that the *noëmata* of mind are known by a more spiritual and a more exact perception than the phenomena of sense. The former are distinct from images; the latter are germs of thought in which sense and imagination, if they are exercised to excess, may blind all signs of intelligence. Life, sense, and mind, according to Cudworth, differ not in kind, but in degree. He regarded it suicidal to admit any generation out of matter, so-called. The Deity alone can create souls and all life, and annihilate the same. It is a strange perversion of our rational faculties to conclude that a lower degree of perfection can produce a higher, that the ruler can be less real than the matter ruled, that the separation of the soul from the physical body can be the cause of any loss of power or self-activity.\*

In connection with an argument against Des Cartes's theory of animal creation, Cudworth enters into some very suggestive speculations in reference to the relation of *vitality* to the source of all life.

We cannot regard the soul, he says, as immortal, simply because it is dependent substance. God's goodness must be trusted. We must believe that he will conserve in being those creatures whose existence is neither inconsistent with his own attributes nor the good of the universe. Thus far only may we speculate in reference to *life* in general. Rational souls, however, have both morality and liberty of will, from which we may infer that they are undoubtedly fit subjects upon which the divine justice may display itself. In the case of the brutes it may be otherwise, in that they are not capable of rewards and punishments.

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\* I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 440.

Cudworth does not commit himself further on this subject, but quotes Porphyrius to the effect that the irrational part of the soul may be resolved into the life of the whole, and, so far as its creature nature is concerned, may suffer annihilation. In this case, however, there is certainly no place left for death. In fact, our author insists that the *ancient theists*, at least, looked upon God as the *sole fountain* of all life and as the creator of living beings, without any assistance from *primal matter*.

(XII.) We may well question those who are pessimistic in their assertions in reference to the standard by which they discover the imperfections of nature, and from which they discern the absence of a benevolent Providence. This method may reveal that their standard is simply their unconscious measure or judgment of their own condition of mind. By the logic of a healthy, active mind, this world of beauty is not considered imperfect. God is, rather, an overflowing fountain of love and goodness. God's will or purpose is goodness, justice, and wisdom. Τὸ βέλτιστον is an indispensable law to itself. Not, however, that God is obliged to do *the best*, save that he cannot deviate from it by the very perfection of his own nature. Indeed, *senseless atoms* are preferable in a system of government to a capricious omnipotent Will; but no atheist can prove that the world could have been made with a higher degree of perfection, or that any thing is made ineptly. The parts are made for the whole and the whole for the Maker. The world is not made for man alone. There is a reciprocal action implied in creation in which the human race has a part to perform. We may assert

with confidence that atheists are not fit judges of the world's adaptability. In their denial of God's morality and of true knowledge of themselves they have virtually negated every standard by which they might find plausible excuse for their dissatisfaction. Their complaint, in fact, is the froward speech of discontented persons.\*

The true origin of evils we should seek in the necessity of imperfect beings. We shall find that the *Divine* art appears most of all in making these evils, like discords in music, contribute to the harmony of the whole and to the good of particular persons. "It is not things themselves that disturb men, but their own opinions concerning things."† The good man knows that pain is not the evil of the man, but only of the part affected. This physical pain may liberate him from the evils of the mind, upon freedom from which our happiness depends.

(XIII.) Were it necessary to excuse the apparently indiscriminate dispensations of God's providences upon the just and the unjust alike, we might claim that God is tardy in his punishment of the wicked to show his patience, and to teach us to exercise mildness in our attempts at revenge. "Divine justice steals on softly with woolen feet, but strikes at last with iron hands." All this, however, savors of reasoning *ad hominem* in regard to this subject. The truth is, rather, that "there is neither any thing truly evil to the *good*, nor good to the *evil*."‡

It is rather a part of the Divine plan in man's

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\* Pliny, *Procemium*, Nat. Hist., lib. 7 ; Sen. de Ben., lib. 2, cap. 29.

† Epic. *Enchir.*, cap. 5 ; M. Aur. Antonin., lib. 4, sec. 3.

‡ Plato, *Apol.* ; Plato, *De Rep.*, lib. 10.



development that imperfect beings have not the *data* for impartial judgment in this matter. A clouded future develops virtue. "In judging the works of God, we must not look at any particular part and blame the Maker, because we fancy finer things. No man expects to see with his finger. We do not blame a painter, because he does not put bright colors everywhere. We should not attend simply to the earth, which is the dreggy part of the universe. Do we blame plants, because they have not sense; brutes, because they have not reason; men, because they are not angels or demons; angels, because they want divine perfection?" Says Origen: "It happens to many so to be brought up from childhood as to have no opportunity at all of thinking of the nobler themes of human investigation. It is probable that there are causes of these things in the reasons of Providence, though they do not easily fall under human notice." Plotinus claims that no account of Providence is complete without reference to the past and the future, as well as the present; he sees in the depraved state of humanity the results of the abuse of personal liberty. In certain persons, the failure to seize opportunities for the exercise of a larger liberty may be the beck of a kind Providence, who sees in them constitutional inability to make proper use of it. God prefers to develop in his children loyalty rather than power, when the growth of the latter must be fostered at the expense of the former.

(XIV.) That God enters into the management of all that he has created can, in no way, affect his happiness. How this is, may not be for us to comprehend; but from analogies in our own experience

we are compelled so to conceive the All-wise in his relations to the government of the world. Were the sun an animal, and were it possessed of life, co-extended with the rays of light, it would perceive every atom of matter that its outstretched beams touched. Now all created beings are in some sense rays of the Deity, and God must feel and perceive all these emanations of his own nature. The notions of many things in the mind simultaneously do not crowd it, but to assist those who cannot contemplate the capacity of perfect mind, Cudworth introduces a gradation of inferior causes from angels to "plastic nature," and then places all these grades under the supervision of the watchful eye of the Almighty. In this way "there is no other work left for the Supreme Governor, save the translation of souls increasing in goodness into better conditions, and of souls becoming worse into worse," in order to make "virtue victorious and triumphant over vice." \*

We have seen that to regard the highest spring of life in rational animals as self-love, "argues bad nature, low-sunk souls, and gross immorality" for the advocates of such an opinion.† The same conclusion holds good of those who maintain that a being to be perfectly happy must have nothing to do save to enjoy his leisure.

(XV.) In answer to the atheistic queries, Cudworth urges that they involve anthropomorphic conceptions scarcely worthy of philosophic refutation. They are commonplaces, however, that require notice in an exhaustive treatment of the subject. God, by virtue of his overflowing goodness, created other

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\* Plato, *De Leg.*, lib. 10.

† I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 486.

beings that they might be happy, might enjoy life, and that he might communicate his goodness to his children. If atheists ask, What hurt had it been had we never been made? we may retort, Why are all men, under the ordinary circumstances of life, so unwilling to die?

That the world is not eternal, is a necessity of creation. Time or succession was created with the world. The query, Why was the world not made sooner? is seen to be irrelevant by those who have a proper conception of the *system* of the universe, of the creation of the world, and of time as a part or function of this system. The system of which the world forms a part is eternal, and if the world, in the performance of its function, could have been eternal, it certainly would have been so. It takes but little power of discernment to understand that to speak of *soon* or *later*, in reference to a beginning of time itself, is simply absurd.

Further, an incorporeal Deity must not be understood to exercise his power upon matter, so-called, mechanically. On the contrary, all things depend upon God vitally, by virtue of his self-activity or thought. Even on the mechanical theory "a perfect mind could preside over and could move the whole corporeal universe with infinitely more ease than we, by mere will and thought, can regulate the movements of our bodies." \*

(XVI.) The denial of any knowledge of a God by man is not in the interest of the human race in general, as our philanthropic atheists would have us believe, or, indeed, of man in particular. Men were

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\* I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 498.

created with the means for a happy earthly existence at their disposal, and with aspirations for a better life after the dissolution of the physical body. Without a right knowledge of God they cannot live happily in this state of existence, nor can they be assured of felicity in the future. Praise and honor are the free bounties of God to those who have true knowledge of himself. The world has been so constructed that those who make a proper use of their reason, may, through the contemplation of it, discover the Λόγος and understand in an abundant measure the perfection of the Creator.

If there is a God, that men think otherwise will not relieve them of their imagined troubles arising from the fear of an omnipotent God and just. Things that are *are*, though men discover their existence too late to profit. *Wishing* is not proof; it is simply foolish desire. This desire of atheists to banish God is founded largely upon a mistaken notion of God or, in the case of the willfully ignorant, upon no notion at all, but upon stubborn prejudice. Such objectors have not studied to discover the deeper synthesis in every apparent opposition of attributes in the conception of a perfect Being. God's goodness is not fondness, his justice is not cruelty, and to those who are not set to do evil his punishment is medicine. On the other hand, in the explanation of God's chastenings, we must remember that to prevent by sheer force the evil deed of the man who wills the bad is, indeed, often a greater evil than to allow it. Except to those who, by persistent and willful sin, have made it their interest to become nothing, God and immortality are the universal sources of human happiness

and hopes. "To believe God and to do good are the most cheerful and comfortable states of existence. Those who sing the praises of Democritus and Epicurus simply pay homage to infatuated sophists or witty fools and debauchers of mankind." \*

(XVII.) The refutation of the "Leviathan" has been the direct object or purpose of Cudworth's argument. It has already been shown † how full of inconsistencies is this masterpiece of Hobbes, when subjected to the canons of philosophical criticism. The general spirit of Cudworth's reply has already been indicated. It is inspiring, however, to follow the outline of that unanswerable argument by which he consigns the spectre, with which Hobbes had thought to tumble a Deity down and out, to the realm of the vain fancies of crafty men.

Hobbes held that the civil sovereignty owes its power to fear, that such sovereignty must be absolute, and that it must be a *will* to itself; religion, other than state religion, is antagonistic to all these essentials. The foundation of the ethics and the politics advocated in the "Leviathan" is laid by the denial of all the *fundamentals* of our social relations. There is no common concern, but all is private and selfish. Utility and sensual pleasure are the sole measures of good in nature. Justice is the child of civil enactment. Nature has brought us into the world free from all obligation and duty. When we have exercised this license "of hewing and slashing" a goodly time, for the sake of convenience, we place upon our necks the yokes of subjection. Bear in mind, however, that all this talk about *convenience* and

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\* I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 495.

† See chapter 1, *ad fin.*



*inconvenience*, utility and the contrary, is simply a discourse upon mere vain fancies.\* Now, this child of convenience is simply "the brat of fear," a necessary evil. We find that this sentiment was held also by the "dirt philosophers" in the time of Plato.† By pacts, we deliver up our natural right. By word, we make unlawful that which before its utterance was lawful. And by mutual consent, we are oblivious to the fact that the products of *will* may be destroyed by the same agent. Then, in order to build up a beautiful system of government without fear of overthrow by the discovery of logical contradiction, we postulate that *law of nature*, *covenant*, and *civil sovereign* are mutually derivative terms. This system is always the same, although we acknowledge that it is artificial and contrary to nature.

In reply to all this, Cudworth suggests some very plausible emendations.

Civil sovereignty, on closer inspection, seems not an artificial bond, but a living unity of ruler and subjects. Their common life is *natural justice*—the birthright of all rational beings. The authority of God is founded upon it, and civil authority has force only so far as it participates in this divine nature.

The power of life and death was never lodged in individuals, even before the organization of civil society; and, consequently, this power cannot be conferred by them. God and *natural justice* frame the body politic of rational creatures, and every civil sovereign rules not through the fear inspired by his own sword, but through the justice, the authority, and the fear of God. The authority to command implies an

\* I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 590. (Im. Mor.)

† Plato, De Rep., lib. 2.

obligation to obey. Commands do not create obligation, but presuppose it. Commands would signify nothing to men, were they not conscious of obligation through the instinct of *natural justice*. If this arose simply from the positive command of God, men would be good only by accident. But the goodness of justice or justice is intrinsic, and is very different from the variable good of private utility. Justice is essentially a determinate thing, and to speak of it as *infinite* or indeterminate is as absurd as to talk of an infinite measure. If there be any thing in its own nature just, then there is, of necessity, something unjust. Could civil sovereigns banish conscience and religion from the minds of men, by this very act they would bury their own authority. We know that lawgivers may make civil law and reverse their enactment without transgressing civil law. On the hypothesis under consideration, the lawgiver is superior to civil law; to institute a court of justice would be the acknowledgment of a power superior to the lawgivers. Such admission is contrary to hypothesis. In fact, if sovereign power were judicable by some other, either there would be no final determination of controversies—a state of affairs inconsistent with the nature of government itself—or all decisions, in the last resort, must devolve upon “a multitude of singulars,” a state of anarchy.\* We may safely conclude that *infinite right*, as here understood, implies a contradiction; is, in truth, a nonentity, the very nadir of abstraction.

It is further held that private judgment concerning *good* and *evil* undermines civil authority and destroys

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\* I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 513.

the stability of the state. Cudworth replies that not the advocates of the authority of religion, but these very objectors, are those who make conscience a matter of private judgment, in that they regard duty as a matter of private utility. On their theory, if any man judge it of private utility to poison or to stab a ruler, he is unquestionably bound by the highest law to do so. Man cannot be brought out of his natural state of private good by "any mere enchantment of words." Hobbes grants that man may lawfully resist in defense of his own life under all circumstances, and, when he has rebelled, he may justly defend himself by force. So it is finally *private judgment*, notwithstanding pacts and covenants, that determines the peace of the state. It is only rational to grant that *natural justice*, which is of a nature common to all men, is the bond of society; it must supplant private judgment in order that social relations exist.

Conscience, indeed, respects divine laws and impartial justice, even when they oppose private utility, and unites rather than destroys. Says Plato: "That which is of a common nature unites, but that which is private dissociates."\* "It is true that particular persons must make the judgment in conscience for themselves,—to speak of a public conscience is nonsense,—and individuals may err in this judgment. Yet the rule by which conscience judges is not private. We can account for all errors of judgment, except in the case of those mistaken fanatics who professedly follow their private impulses. This rule of conscience is the eternal law of God and his revealed purpose; it is more public than the civil laws of any country,

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\* Plato, De Leg., lib. 9.

and by it all men may judge.”\* The best things may be abused, and some men, in consequence of their own wickedness, may make a pretense of conscience in the interest of rebellion. Conscience and religion command men to obey civil authority in all lawful demands, even though these be contrary to private utility or interest. But when civil sovereigns command unlawful things, conscience obliges “to obey God rather than man,” and yet not to resist the power. Herein is the patience of the righteous man and the conscientious exhibited, that he “gives unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s, and unto God the things that are God’s.”

The “atheistic objections” have now been considered, and Cudworth, with confidence, announces his conclusion.

The atomic theory is adopted as a device of method, by which to lead those unaccustomed to think upon questions of philosophy as such, to the apprehension of the *spiritual*.

Matter, considered as a primal principle, is a nonentity; save that nonentity may be regarded as a phase of spiritual reality, as the potentiality of things with respect to God, as either the active or the passive phase of divine power. *Matter* and *body* are synonymous.†

The source of all things can have no lower entity than that of an absolutely perfect Being, who has made all things that were fit to be made according to a plan suggested by perfect wisdom, and who exercises an exact providence over all.

If a gradation in the universal system of activity or

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\* I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 514.

† Bowne’s *Meta.*, p. 302; I. S. U., vol. iii, pp. 122-124.

spiritual reality be granted as a necessary presupposition to satisfy the demands of reason, then there is a scale of entity from the potentiality of a "methodical plastic nature," or its like, to the pure actuality of perfect Being.

The intelligible natures of realities are not alterable by any will or any opinion. "Every thing in reference to science and knowledge, to all minds and intellects in the world, *is* necessarily and immutably that which it *is*, whether relatively or absolutely. If, then, moral good and evil signify any reality, either absolute or relative, in the objects so named, in that they have some certain natures—the actions or the souls of men, they are not alterable either by mere will or by opinion." \*

Sense is not a contexture of local motions, but a sympathetic active energy. Mind is not a *tabula rasa*, upon which the figures of sense are impressed, but a more complete actualization of the same energy or life that is exhibited as potentiality, in sense and in imagination. From the deeper reality of mind we apperceive the concrete unity in the *singulars* of sense and imagination.

Morality is not in external objects, but from an inherent vital principle of goodness, man, as a rational being, is inclined to do some things and to avoid others. By faithful adherence to this natural prompting, in accordance with the liberty of free moral agency, man, by the necessity of that essential nature whose liberty he has realized, must rise to an ever deepening intellectual apprehension of his relations to a *system* of spiritual reality in which he now lives, moves, and has his characteristic being.

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\* I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 640, Im. Mor. This *statement* is intended to have force against the dead mechanism of Hobbes.



## CHAPTER III.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF CUDWORTH'S PHILOSOPHY.

## Section I. Cudworth's Platonism.

CUDWORTH is usually designated "the Cambridge Platonist." There can be no question that he tried to read as much of the philosophy of Christianity into the words of Plato as a fair rendering and interpretation would allow. It was Cudworth's purpose to show how close to the philosophy of revelation the best thought of the ancient world approached. He has been criticised most largely on the score that he saw more in the words of Plato than the classical commentators of his day could discern. Cudworth's age was not a time when a reconciliation of paganism and Christianity was looked upon with favor. Consequently, all attempts by our author to identify the Christian Trinity with the Platonic triplicity were regarded with suspicion, and largely on this account did he call down upon himself the censure of contemporary theologians. Cudworth also showed a decided inclination to accept the interpretation of the Neo-Platonists. Especially was this the case in such parts of their commentaries as looked to a reconciliation of Aristotle and Plato; and, indeed, the Neo-Platonists did suggest much that has been developed in later years in explanation of Aristotelian philosophy. The Neo-Platonists were looked upon by many Christians as the enemies of Christianity. The Christians, not

without cause, thought that it was the purpose of this sect to clothe the philosophy of Plato in a garb that would give the sage of the Academy equal honor with Christ. Plato had to suffer down the centuries from the prejudice aroused by the injudicious comments of his too ardent and mystical admirers. Cudworth could not escape the charge of heresy, therefore, when he proposed to give the promoters of heresy a fair hearing and to praise the philosopher that had been the object of Neo-Platonic admiration as a theist, and almost as a Christian philosopher.

It would exceed the bounds of our present purpose to go into an extended discussion of the Platonic tendencies in the writings of Cudworth. Almost every paragraph bears witness to the influence of Plato. We shall regard it relevant, however, to throw out only such hints as the study of the works of Cudworth may have suggested as especially pertinent.

Cudworth finds the *idea*, or notion, that requires no presupposition in his conception of perfect Being. This conclusion is entirely in keeping with Plato's notion of *The Good*—that all-embracing *One* from which, as a basis, the world is differentiated. Cudworth's conception may have more of personality in its content than the metaphysical conception of Plato. It is certain, however, that the first principle of Plato was regarded by him as a supreme conscious Deity: "Though truth and knowledge be excellent things, yet the Chief Good transcends both."\* It is the Supreme Being, the *Ovσία* as that which is the most beneficent and the most fruitful source of all things, and the constant harmonizer of the whole

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\* I. S. U., vol. i, p. 313.

world.\* This God, although the cause of all things, is distinct from the world, not as an abstraction, but as pure actuality or activity, unmingled with any thing, and yet prevading all things.† Cudworth interpreted Plato in support of his own doctrine, that both finite souls and matter are created by this intelligent First Cause. Many, however, have regarded Plato as a supporter of the doctrine of the eternity of matter; and by these Plutarch, rather than Cudworth, is held to be the correct interpreter of Plato. While we are aware that the sayings of Plato furnish ample ground for controversy on this question, we are inclined to think that Cudworth's interpretation is more in accordance with the Platonic spirit. This will appear more evident when we shall have occasion to explain Cudworth's doctrine of creation, and his interpretation of Plato more in detail.

The *Timæus*, a work in which some think that Plato has involved himself in inextricable dualism, needs to be considered with reference to the subject-matter in order to understand the proper significance of many of the passages. The *Timæus* deals professedly with the outer, the changing phenomena, the becoming. In the *Timæus* (cap. 12) Plato makes his own distinction. We must point out the difference between that which always *is*, without beginning, and that which *is made*, or *is becoming*, but never truly *is*. The former is always apprehended by the mind with the aid of reason, for *being* is the proper object of knowledge. The latter is a matter of opinion, for that which *is becoming*, and perishes, and never *is*,

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\* I. S. U., vol. ii, p. 218; Plato's Symposium.

† I. S. U., vol. ii, p. 242; Plato's Cratylus.

cannot be an object properly knowable, but is the object of opinion with irrational sense. We must understand, however, that every thing that is made, is made by some cause.\*

The following extracts from the commentaries of Chalcidius and of Boethius agree with Cudworth's view of Plato's meaning in the various expressions concerning creation contained in the *Timæus*. Says Chalcidius:† "The origin and beginning of the works of God are incomprehensible, for there are no data—no trace of the period from which they began to exist. The causes, then, of all the works of God are more ancient than time, and as God is eternal, so also are these causes eternal. It follows that whatever is from God cannot be a thing of time, and cannot be bound by the laws of time. Now time brings with itself periodic change, diseases, old age, and dissolution. The workmanship of God, then, is free from all these vicissitudes, and its origin is causative, not temporary. The material world, so-called, is the work of God; its origin, therefore, is causative also, and not temporary. In this manner the universe, although tangible and corporeal, was created and constituted by God."

And Boethius: "Some there are who, when they receive the opinion of Plato, that the universe neither had a temporal beginning nor ever will have an end, wrongly conclude that the creation is, therefore, similarly eternal with its Creator. For, clearly, it is one thing to be conducted in a succession through interminable existence, which is Plato's notion of existence, and another thing to embrace at once the whole

\* I. S. U., vol. ii, pp. 364–366.

† *Tim. Plat.*, cap. 1, sect. 23.

presence of eternity, which is the exclusive attribute of the Divine Spirit. Indeed, God must not be thought older than creation in point of time, (*temporis quantitate*), but prior to it by *necessity* and *essence*, (*sed simplicius potius proprietate naturæ.*) \* “If, therefore, we wish to express our notions by precise terms, let us, if we adopt the doctrine of Plato, call God eternal, but the world perpetual.” “Eternity is the entire, simultaneous, and perfect possession of endless life.” †

To understand Plato's *One* it must be borne in mind also that he carried on all his discussions with the understanding that the *One* be regarded as a concrete unity. This unity asserted in its idea the reality of the *unchangeable Being* of Parmenides, and also that of the *perpetual flux* of Heraclitus as necessary correlates; there is no being without non-being, and *vice versa*.

Or, in modern parlance, negation is determination or fixing of limits, and affirmation or concrete notion is only through exclusion or negation. “The many cannot be thought without the One, and the One must comprehend within itself the many. The phenomenal world, or the many, has truth only as the One is in it concretely as unity is in multiplicity. Matter is, indeed, an infinitely divisible mass without actuality, but this fact does not destroy its reality in the sense just suggested.‡ This looks as if, in the belief of Plato, matter were so far a creation of the Deity that his very actuality produced this potentiality called matter. Now the realm of which *opinion*—mentioned

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\* Consol. Phil., lib. 5.

† I. S. U., vol. i, pp. 419, 420, note.

‡ Stirling's Schweg. Hist. Phil., pp. 73-76.



above—treats, is that range of *becoming* between actuality and potentiality, and partakes of both.

Plato may not have been able to free himself from the conception of matter as a necessary substrate, but through the study of Plato, Cudworth reached the notion of matter either “as an absolute creation” or “as the latest emanation of absolute spirit.” Both of the notions named, Cudworth regarded as the two phases of the same truth, and as entirely consistent with Christian theism. In fact, in the consideration of *Ex nihilo nihil fit*, he has developed what he considered the *spirit* of Plato’s teaching on the same subject.\* God is that efficient and adequate cause by which that which was not was made to exist.

Cudworth has treated no part of his subject more exhaustively than the analogies which he discovered between the orthodox conception of the Trinity, and Plato’s hypostases or persons in his (Plato’s) conception of Divinity. The notion of a Trinity made a profound impression upon the mind of Cudworth, and we conceive that it influenced him largely to present the three topics, whose treatment specially characterize his system, *i. e.*, Pagan Polytheism, Immutability Morality, and Plastic Nature. The consideration of the Platonic triplicity is introduced by a discussion concerning the merits of Plotinus’s interpretation of the signification of the persons of the Godhead as mentioned in Plato’s Parmenides. Cudworth limits the meaning of the phrases there presented as follows:

The *ἐν τὸ πᾶν* is the Good, the simple light, the “one-all,” the Intelligible.

The *ἐν πάντα* is the *Noûς*, the concretion of under-

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\* I. S. U., vol. iii, pp. 98, 99.

standing, reason, and wisdom, the "one-all things," the Intelligent.

The *ἓν καὶ πάντα* is the eternal *Ψυχὴ*, the Soul of the World, the "one and all things," the Life.

Cudworth repudiates the wider signification that the Neo-Platonists tried to read in this Trinity. Such interpretations as the following are degradations of the Platonic thought.

Plotinus conceived the above expressions to mean:

1. All things unitively.
2. All things intellectually.
3. All things animally (self-active) and productively.

Amelius, the disciple of Plotinus, degraded them still further:

1. That is.
2. That has.
3. That beholds.

Cudworth conceives the orthodox Christian view as follows:

1. It is not a Trinity of mere names, *e. g.*, man, his mind, his soul, (Sabellianism;) but a Trinity of "subsistences or persons."

2. The second was begotten by the first, and the third proceeds from the first and the second. Both Son and Holy Spirit are co-eternal, necessarily existent, and perfect with the Father.

3. By permeation and interexistence these three persons are one God.

Corresponding, then, to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are Goodness, Intelligence, and Life.

Cudworth claims for the Platonic Trinity:

That it is not in kind like any creature relation.

That the three persons of this Trinity are indestruct-

ible, and as necessary correlates as original light, splendor, and reflection.

That the persons of the Trinity are the perfect "principles, causes, and opificers" of the whole world.

That mind is a co-essential, subordinate to goodness.

That nothing was more the cause of life than the Life of the Trinity, and that this life has a common essence, also, with goodness and mind.

Thus Cudworth would maintain that the Platonic Trinity is not a "jumble" of God and creature, after the manner of Arian disquisition. The subordinates in the Platonic Trinity indicate simply that the persons are not to be regarded as three co-ordinate gods, but as three distinctions in a Trinity, and that these persons circulate among themselves. He likens the relation to the center, the radius-distance immovable, and the movable circumference of a sphere, and yet all one sphere; also, to the root, the stock, and the branches, all co-essential to the vine. The only difference then that Cudworth finds between the Platonic Trinity and the Christian is the gradual subordination in the Platonic Trinity. From our point of view, however, Cudworth does not regard this as an inequality in the hypostases. To support this interpretation, in the garb of the "Christian Platonist," Cudworth becomes the apologist of the Platonic Trinity in all its aspects, and in so doing gives a very extensive history of the doctrine of the Trinity in general.

This discussion occurs in Cudworth's account of the pagan polytheism. He closes its consideration by calling attention to the wonderful providence of Almighty God that enlightened the minds of the

pagan world before the advent of Christianity to prepare the way for the reception of the doctrine of the Trinity among the learned.

Cudworth finds that the Trinity of the only truly spiritual essences, life, intelligence, and goodness, is suggested by the contemplation of the universe.

Plato's third hypostasis of the Trinity was a supermundane soul—an opificer of the world, but superior to it.

Plato's *Ideas* were the conceptions or *noēmata* of the perfect intellect, or Λόγος, the second person of the Trinity. These *Ideas* are the standing objects of all science, if not the causes of all existing things. These are not dead forms; whatever is made in the Λόγος is active, and life, and true being; they are called “animals” by the later Platonists, simply to designate that they are not forms like pictures or images. The *Ideas* are not persons nor generated entities in an intellectual world before they are developed in the physical world. Plato's object in insisting on eternal *Ideas* was to refute those who held that the world was God or that the nature of things was fortuitously formed. The presence of these *Ideas* in the mind of God did not involve their generation; for, to admit this would have destroyed the argument of Plato. No sphere of being is destitute of its *Idea*. The world, as the creation of the divine goodness, is endowed through the soul immanent in it with life and reason; and through *Ideas*, all that apparently are contingent and irrational may be found to exist for reason or teleologically. True being is found in the concrete intelligible.\*

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\* I. S. U., vol. ii, pp. 350, 351, note; Schweg. Hist. Phil., pp. 78–81.

"The intelligible world contains us as parts in a manner as the sensible world contains us and other animals." We are and yet we are not the sensible world; we are and we are not the intelligible world; we are Godlike and are not Godlike.† Men may participate in the nature of God. There may be many gods by participation; every good man is "a partaker of the divine nature."‡

We have already seen the influence of these principles upon the thought of Cudworth. It becomes most prominent in the "Immutable Morality." The objections of Plato to the doctrine of Protagoras are the bases of Cudworth's attacks upon pure sensationism and its logical consequences.

The soul is, for Plato, the medium by which the confused plurality of the potential is brought into organic unity. The individual soul possesses the same nature as the universal *Ψυχή*. "It belongs to the nature and perfection of the universe that there should be a plurality of souls through which the principle of reason and of life might be individualized in a plenitude of particular beings." The soul is spiritual and unspiritual, *ideal* and sensuous. From these hints, with the aid also of Aristotle and of the Neo-Platonists, Cudworth developed his notion of a plastic nature that is the offspring of a higher soul,—of a more powerful life under which it acts unconsciously to ends. This *nature*, as well as all things finite, Cudworth derives from the Godhead.

The triplicity of the virtues, goodness, wisdom, and life, or active power, and their unity in an eternal

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\* Plato's *Timæus*.

† I. S. U., vol. ii, pp. 232, 233.

‡ I. S. U., vol. i, p. 373.



justice, indicates the plan after which Cudworth determines the *οὐσία* or essential character of the God-head. As we have already seen, this eternal justice is regarded as a common notion in which all the parts participate, and upon which the sovereignty of God and all civil authority is based, and by which the harmony of the universal system of spiritual and eternal reality is sustained.

It is probably not exact to call Cudworth's insight into the questions of philosophy, Platonism; the rather, we may say, that in so far as Plato was great, Cudworth read in his words the philosophy of Life.

The phases of thought that we have conceived as especially characteristic in Cudworth's discourse on the "Intellectual System of the Universe" are, as before suggested, Plastic Nature, Interpretation of Pagan Polytheism, and Immutable Morality. Any one of these subjects would furnish a fruitful topic for an extended essay. We must confine ourselves, however, to a brief outline of Cudworth's treatment of these interesting themes of speculation. An examination of the subject-matter may suggest that a more logical order would be, Pagan Polytheism, Immutable Morality, Plastic Nature, or the reverse. For obvious reasons, however, we shall follow the order in which they are presented by Cudworth himself.

## Section 2. A. Plastic Nature.

Under the name "plastic nature" or "plastic life," Cudworth has presented a phase of that mode of speculation which of late has been offered to the public under various titles: "Philosophy of the Unconscious," "Unconscious Intelligence," "Nature and

Intelligence," etc. Cudworth's conception of plastic nature can hardly be regarded more than an instrument to assist in the comprehension of a spiritualistic system of the universe. The nature of the laws of motion is extended to the realm of *life*. Plastic nature is analogous to mental causality; it is a con-cause which God makes use of co-operative with himself."\* It is the lowest state of the inward principle of life; it does, but only as it is the imitator of the wisdom of God. If there be φύσις, there is Νοῦς. We advance from the stupid life of nature to a state of self-perception. By positing such a nature Cudworth hoped to silence the objections of those who denied that there are any philosophical causes above mechanical, and to refute those who made this very "plastic nature" the Supreme *Numen*. He thought by it to make the realization of an εἶδος the method by which we should regard God as the mover of all things. Plastic nature is incorporeal, and in its *idea* contains the model of the whole organic body. By this inward principle, rather than in an external force, he wished to exhibit the laws concerning motion.

Cudworth finds a reference to his "plastic nature" in the saying of Heraclitus: "Neither any God nor any man made this world." The *φιλία* and *νεῖκος* of Empedocles are regarded as attributes, or phases, of the same active principle. In fact, our author believed that what he had to say concerning a "plastic nature," was consonant with the views of all the spiritualistic philosophers from Heraclitus to Aristotle.

What we call "nature" must be regarded as an inner principle, not indeed so truly inward as God,

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\* Plato.

and yet inward from matter or simple extension, and it must be conceived to act as a vital force from within.

That every subordinate creature should be performing its function under the law of mental or final cause is in accord, not with the conceptions of materialism, but with those of a spiritualistic philosophy.

"Plastic nature," in fact, is not less than the intelligible cause of regularity and harmony after this fashion: "As if harmony, living in musical instruments, should move the strings without any external impulse." Human art acts upon nature mechanically, or from without; but "nature" acts vitally, and without hesitation. This "natural art is not the pure divine art, but it is the concrete expression of the wisdom of God immanent in matter; it is *ratio mersa et confusa*; it is the living signature of the divine wisdom, the divine art ectypal." The contrast may be presented still further as follows: Nature, divine wisdom, spermatric reasons; knowledge, manual laborers, architect.

"Plastic nature" is analogous to habit. Its art, however, is not gained by exercise, but is native to itself, and is exercised or is applied under the dictation of secret whisperings from the divine wisdom. The musician does not comprehend the movements of his fingers; the dancer acts artificially largely; the instincts of brutes are passive impresses of divine wisdom. The foregoing phenomena indicate that there may be vital auto-kinesy without "consense," consciousness, or the state in which a being is present with itself.

That which moves matter must do so with some

energy of its own, but it may have vital sympathy with that matter upon which it acts without express consciousness of this relation.\* Soul has some energy of which it is not expressly conscious. If a "plastic nature" be not posited, Cudworth thinks that profound sleep, lethargy, embryo, etc., must be regarded as states of non-being. This "plastic nature" is not regarded as a god or goddess, but as a lower power of incorporeal soul, or as a distinct life inferior to soul. It corresponds to Aristotle's *φύσις*, all the higher types of life partake of this lower form or mundane soul. This mundane soul depends upon a higher intellectual principle for its *εἶδος*; as suggested above, *φύσις* and *νοῦς* bear reciprocal relation—are correlates. It is this "plastic nature" that strives to restore an injured body to its normal state, that makes in animals so many little worlds which conspire with a general plastic nature, and that renders all unconscious creature existence in harmonious subordination to the Deity. From these considerations, we conceive the possibility of one unconscious "plastic nature," by which all actions that transcend the power of fortuitous mechanism are performed. Proclus goes a step further and says: "Nature is the last of all causes that fabricate this corporeal and sensible world, and the utmost bound of incorporeal substances. It is full of reasons and powers, it presides over all mundane affairs. It proceeds from the supreme goddess, the divine wisdom, which is the fountain of all life, as well intellectual as that which is concrete with matter. This wisdom, upon which nature essentially depends, passes through all things unhindered; by it even

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\* I. S. U., vol. i, p. 245.

inanimate things partake of a kind of life, and things corruptible remain eternal in their species, for they are contained by its standing forms or *ideas* as their causes."\*

Finally, in reply to those who regard "plastic nature" as the Supreme, we may assert that they make a first principle of that which is essentially derivative, of that which is an echo of the original voice. Again, no duplication of corporeal organs can ever make unconscious life to advance into conscious life; and, further, we cannot attribute perfect knowledge to that which is devoid of all consciousness.

Cudworth has been criticised severely for this assumption of a "plastic nature."† We have failed, however, to perceive that the predication of such a "nature," subject to the limitations of Cudworth's philosophical system, in any way interferes with the doctrines of Christian theism.

Cudworth, we believe, does not advance the theory primarily to relieve God of responsibility and of labor, as most of his opponents and critics premise. Cudworth has satisfactorily answered the objection to a busy God in another way. But, the rather, he wished to suggest the living reality and the spiritual correlation of the universe, that, wherever there is life, it is conspiring to the unity of the whole as it were by instinct.

Cudworth's critics insist upon transcendency and immanence as essentials in a theistic conception of God. Does Cudworth's conception of a "plastic nature" not make provision for the recognition of

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\* I. S. U., vol. ii, p. 619.

† Against Cudworth, vid. Cocker's Theistic Conception, pp. 222-235, 242.



these essentials? God is certainly transcendent in relation to "plastic nature," in that he is archetypal. He is immanent, also, in that he secretly whispers to it an unconscious art with which physically to manifest his wisdom. This manifestation is made, not to unconscious nature, but to self-conscious intelligence in man.

### Section 3. B. Interpretation of Pagan Polytheism.

In the digression, entitled "Pagan Polytheism," Cudworth proposed to treat a subject that in our day has found a more systematic development in the "Science of Religion," and in the "Philosophy of Religion." In the light of the modern advance in these absorbing themes of thought that which has seemed to the critics of Cudworth to be composed largely as an exhibition of learning becomes the dawn of the day in which we rejoice.

We may be assured that Cudworth had some apprehension of the absorbing importance of his theme, not only from that which he has written, but also from a consideration of that which was proposed by him. It has been stated already that what seems to be scarcely a third of his original design occupies over eight hundred pages of Mosheim's edition of the "Intellectual System."

It is possible for us but briefly to outline the purpose and the spirit of this remarkable fourth chapter so full of anticipations of the results of modern investigation. Had we not the privilege of examining the works of such men as Rawlinson, Lenormant, Müller, and Caird, we might still act the part of critic after the fashion of Mosheim. To those who have suffi-

cient interest to follow the annotations in connection with the reading of the text, not only will Cudworth's mistakes become manifest, but also the character of the opposition to his view. The reader soon discovers that Cudworth is as likely to be criticised for expressing opinions of striking merit as for his errors. His catholic and generous annotator, by his very frankness, has not infrequently confuted his own objections.

Cudworth had posited a perfect Being as the *first principle* of the Intellectual System, and had asserted as a logical result the harmony of the universe. It devolved upon him in consequence of the assertion of this hypothesis to show, not that in the utter rejection of paganism was Christianity to be established as the supreme religion for man, but rather that if there be a perfect Being as the basis of Christianity, his nature as spiritual actuality must also account for the existence of this *pagan polytheism*, so-called.

If Christianity is any thing, it must have its basis in the very constitution of every rational soul. If revelation has revealed any thing, the revealed fact has authority simply because it finds realization in the development of the spiritual nature of man. If by possibility the pagans may not have acknowledged the existence of a Supreme Being,—a premise never granted, however,—this must have come from the degradation of pristine purity. The necessity of a revelation through Christ must be found, not in the existence of false systems of religion prior to Christ, but in the defects of these systems. The nations of heathenism are not lost or in darkness in consequence of their religion, but from the lack of an adequate

development of it. If Cudworth has the key to the true system of the universe,—and the indications are in that direction,—then it is most natural that he should find that remarkable *consensus* of thought in reference to the Supreme Deity which he claims to discover throughout all the remnants of pagan literature. And, further, it is not strange that he should be in a position to give satisfactory explanation for any apparent divergence from the central thought. Cudworth posits that the idea of a God, the existence of whom is called in question, includes *unity* or “*oneliness*” in it, for there can be only one perfect and supreme cause, or *Causa Sui*.

Those who have opposed Cudworth contend that this notion of a God has been made by man, and owes its origin to civil laws, in themselves artificial, and that, in the assertion of many independent deities as causes of the world, pagan polytheism supports this theory.

Our author, therefore, proposes to inquire into the true significance of pagan polytheism. The results of this inquiry led him to insist on the following postulates in the discussion of pagan theology :

1. That intelligent pagans worshiped one supreme God under many names; these names were attributes.

2. That they worshiped inferior deities, subordinate to God.

3. That they paid vows to images, representing both God and his subordinates; these images are sometimes called, by abuse, gods.

The multiplication of deities is attributed to three causes :

- (a) Deification of heroes; *e. g.*, Æsculapius.
- (b) Personification of the divine attributes; *e. g.*, Faith.
- (c) Distribution of the Divine government; *e. g.*, Minerva.

Pagan idolatry consisted in blending creature worship with the worship of the Creator. Most of the pagans believed in beings superior to men, to whom God delegated in part his government; but they regarded God as the only unproduced, the oldest of all. We have evidence of this conclusion in the fact that, when Christianity came in conflict with paganism, the supporters of paganism acknowledged the existence of one supreme God. This view is supported by the results of an investigation of the writings of the most eminent as well as the most ancient of pagan theologians.

By monumental representations in India and Egypt, by philosophy in Greece, and through the Old Testament literature among the Jews, the supreme God was worshiped.

Zoroaster, Orpheus, and the Egyptians are quoted in support of an incorporeal Deity. Mosheim, indeed, calls in question the probity of the authorities from which these expressions are taken, yet, granting them to be forgeries, the very existence of such elevated notions concerning God in them, Cudworth might still regard as an unanswerable argument in favor of his view.

Pindar, Sophocles, Euripides, Plautus, Virgil, and other Grecian and Latin poets favor the same conception of Deity. Most of the pagan philosophers who were theists acknowledged a self-existent God or

Deity by whom the world and all the gods were made. Only on the supposition that they believed in a personal God can the discordant statements of some of the philosophers be reconciled; Cudworth considers this remark especially applicable to the philosophy of Xenophanes of Elea, to that of Parmenides, of Heraclitus, and of Empedocles.

So much for the barest outline of what Cudworth has given us. A few suggestions from the table of contents of the portion never committed to writing may be of interest.

In apology for the three special sins of pagan polytheism its supporters may insist:

1. That only in God's manifestations do we know God.

2. That in worshiping inferior deities, they deprived the supreme God of no proper honor, in that these subordinates are God's ministers.

3. That by images they save humanity from running to atheism.

To these Cudworth replies:

1. That to worship God through his manifestations is not consistent with a correct knowledge of his separate and spiritual nature.

2. That those who worship are not to be worshiped religiously.

3. That it is debasing to man himself, and to his pristine conception of God, to worship an inimitable nature in the likeness of man or beast.

To do away with image worship was one of the grand designs of God in introducing Christianity. Another cogent reason was, "that since the way of wisdom and knowledge had proved ineffectual for the



majority of mankind, men might, without profound knowledge, be brought to God and to a holy life by the way of believing." \* The Scripture "reveals a higher, more precious, and more divine light than that of theory and speculation." The life of Christ has all possible "engines" in it to bring men up to their sonship with the Father, and to engage them in a holy life. There is no evil principle in the world, but there is a polity of fallen angels with which the souls of wicked men are incorporated, and this is the Kingdom of darkness whose power shall finally be overcome by the Kingdom of light.

#### Section 4. C. Immutable Morality.

##### PART I.

##### *General Remarks.*

The "Immutable Morality" is a grand summary of the arguments by which Cudworth finds in a perfect Being an adequate ethical basis for society. It is more than a summary, however. Cudworth is not now making his appeals to superficial atheists, but he presumes that those with whom he contends are versed in the language of philosophical discussion. With philosophers and theologians he hopes to discuss themes that involve the apprehension of Spirit, and some familiarity with spiritual conceptions is prerequisite to intelligent disquisition. The second part of the "Intellectual System" presupposes that the refutation of atheism, and of the atomic atheism in particular, in all its ancient aspects, has been presented satisfactorily and successfully. Cudworth

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\* I. S. U., vol. i, p. 292.

anticipates, however, the logical results of the philosophical spirit that actuated many of the professed friends of theism. He sees that the supporters of the "New Philosophy" have, indeed, made a departure from the masters of ancient philosophical speculation, and are inclined to discuss the nature of knowledge as the instrument of philosophy rather than to enter the realm of philosophy proper. He notices, with much concern, also, that the burden of this modern discussion is to establish the authority of sense at the expense of that which is first by nature and eternal. Although Locke and Hume had not yet spoken, Cudworth seems to comprehend the extent of all they might say in favor of an appeal to particulars, of passive impressions from external objects as the source of all knowledge. He realizes that the deep undercurrent of spiritual reality, which has given direction to his thought up to the present, but which his unbounded prudence had thus far kept from the surface, must now exhibit its strength and openly assert its authority. By a treatise on "Immutable Morality," therefore, Cudworth hopes to lead his readers, without mental reservation on their part, to acknowledge his own conclusions in reference to God and the divine attributes.

Even when it is studied out of connection with the first part of Cudworth's work, the "Immutable Morality" reveals to the thoughtful and intelligent seeker after truth the eternal "diamond net" by which our individual lives are sustained, despite all the changes of our physical organism, without the loss of personality.

But those who have studied carefully the first part,

and have thus become familiar with the full content of Cudworth's phraseology, read in nearly every paragraph of the "Immutable Morality" a proof that we bear a spiritual relation, that is concrete and domestic, to that eternal Reality of which every part is a reflection. We are now led to the certainty of knowledge, not so much by a hand-to-hand contest with the supporters of partial views and of bald contradictions, as by that spiritual elevation to which the writer leads us. From this summit of clear intellection we can comprehend at a glance the eternal "*rationes*" in his conclusions. At first we wonder and then we do not wonder that others like ourselves have fallen so far from a truth so simple, and yet all-comprehensive. The fact is, that men have not trusted the supreme perfection involved in their very being. Further, they have gloried in their imperfection; they have declared it a necessary evil. They have confidently boasted that God is *inscrutable*, and have thus tried to quench the Spirit of our Creator within us. They have failed to recognize the Spirit of God that dwells with us, that will freely grant to us a knowledge of all things, that would make us perfect even as our Father is perfect.

Christ's kingdom may come, and God's purpose may be accomplished in our hearts, even while we inhabit the physical body; otherwise we would not have been commanded to ask for this victory, and earnestly to desire it. We may be more than "sons and daughters" in the development of the possibilities of our spiritual nature. We may know even as we are known by that Perfect Being who has created us, and has designed us to be like himself.

A review of the treatment of so grand a theme in a few pages must necessarily be inadequate and imperfect, even if from those who have had experience in dealing with these great problems of mind; from one to whom the door is as yet scarcely opened it will be most just and fitting, in closing this short and imperfect sketch of his philosophy, in all doubtful questions to consider Cudworth "his own best interpreter."

We have already seen how Cudworth has searched every recess of human investigation to find objections to the existence of a perfect Being, and how, in the spirit of the objections, he has refuted them.

In the "Immutable Morality" we find these objections considered with reference to their significance in a system of spiritual activity. The phases of thought represented by these objections now appear as stages of progress in the elimination of imperfection; they are the steps by which man, by being true to himself and to his Creator, may realize in himself the True Intellectual System of the Universe. Man has the true guide to the solution of all difficulties for the asking, and he should never distrust the inward Monitor, which assures him that he shall be satisfied if his faith fail not.

In connection with a satisfactory epistemology, or Science of Knowledge, Cudworth states with more conciseness some of his former arguments, and supports them with concrete illustrations replete with spiritual significance. In the "Immutable Morality" Cudworth's philosophy develops its content. We are delivered from any fear that after all his "knowledge" may be an ideal abstraction, or that it may be confined to the realm of appearance or phenomena

alone. We discover that, for him, reality is spirit, and in the realm of spirit man *is*, whether he be conscious of that realm or not.

He shows that understanding and sense are the actuality (*ἐνέργεια*) and the potentiality (*δύναμις*) of reality or entelechy. They are the factors or moments by the distinction in which the finite spirit develops a knowledge of self, and grows into the likeness of pure Spirit, in whom, as the All in all, there is self-sustained thought-activity.

Further, the potentiality of man is not even in order of time before his actuality. Potentiality and actuality are intimately connected, though polar to each other, and the discovery of this relation in polarity is the first manifestation of conscious spiritual life.

All the perfections of spiritual existence are potentially in the germ. Probably Aristotle had a similar conception of spiritual life, when he says: "By performing just actions we become just, but the performance of just acts does not make us just." Justice or goodness is the impulse to all that can properly be called *action*. In action or doing is *being*. Here, also, the actuality is contrasted with the potentiality, the *being* with the non-being. The *being* posited in this case is imperfect, is becoming "until that which is in part shall be done away," and "that which is perfect is fully come."\* Cudworth shows the reality of *eternal essences*, which are contrasted with phenomena; both essences and phenomena pertain to reality, the immutable and the relative unite to form the perfect.

Imperfect conceptions of truth have led some in all

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\* 1 Cor., xiii, 10.



ages to opine that just and unjust, good and evil, depend on civil enactments. Not only Hobbes, but also pious theologians have declared that arbitrary will or power is the *prius* of Divinity, and have thus given credibility to the belief in the contingency of all things.

If good and evil, just and unjust, are not mere arbitrary names, they cannot be arbitrary things,—they cannot be made by will out of relation to a nature or essence. Omnipotence cannot supply the formal cause at *will*; *e. g.*, justice and triangular body are such as they are by their very nature. *All things* exist according to the necessity of their essences. We have already noticed that the Will of God, if, in the common acceptation of the term *will*, God possess this attribute, cannot obligate rational creatures. Cudworth's tractate on Free-will is not at hand, but it may be interesting, in connection with the subject before us, to state and briefly to consider the theses that he sought to maintain in the third part of his Intellectual System.\*

I. Man possesses contingent liberty of self-determination where there is perfect equality of objects.

If it were otherwise :

(a) Another world, built on the same plan as ours, would have the same history.

(b) The mind could not choose in matters indifferent or exactly alike.

The above, however, is not the *free-will* of which praise and blame are predicable. There is a more significant phase to *free-will*.

II. It is only the preference of the *better* for the

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\* Ency. Brit., 9th ed., sub voce *Cudworth*.

*worse* that is praiseworthy, of the *worse* for the *better* that deserves blame. This is a power in man for determining himself for perfection or for imperfection.

There are not, however, two faculties of the soul : one, the *will*, and the other, the *understanding* ; but there is a soul that wills understandingly and that understands willingly, whose first motive-power is the good in general. The so-called *free-will* of a soul is distinctive of a rational imperfect being. A perfect Being, essentially good and wise, cannot have such a power, for it is impossible that he should ever improve, much less improve himself. Will or Power is lost in Perfect Love and Perfect Wisdom, or is subservient to the same.

We have seen, then, how Cudworth held that some things obligated absolutely, and that others did so contingently on the condition of some voluntary action. That which is indifferent may, by our voluntary act, acquire a new relation to our intellectual nature ; *e. g.*, to keep faith, natural (essential) justice demands absolutely ; when we promise in reference to a thing indifferent, the keeping of the covenant is enjoined absolutely. We repeat, then, the modes and relations that are by nature (essence) cannot be by *will*. We may interchange the name of a sphere and that of a triangle, but to change the essence without changing the body is not an object upon which even the Will of God may be exercised.

Could God *will* that his own power be finite, and that his knowledge should not be ? To assert eternal verities, independent of God's Will, is simply to maintain that the essences of things constitute the immutable "*rationes*" in the mind of God. In these "rea-

sons," or spiritual relations, we, in consequence of our essential nature, participate. It is rather the Reason in God than the Will of God that is God. *Will* is a flexible thing without definite measure until it becomes perfect, and then it is determined and guided by Truth. And, again, of this eternal Truth of God we are so many reflections, "some nearer and some farther, some clearer and some more obscure;" and so said Socrates. But in Plato, Aristotle, and Cudworth, the united Truth and Will of God are subject to the ethical or moral disposition of God, are obedient to his Goodness. The Will or Power of God in its perfection is determined by perfect goodness through perfect knowledge, and its sphere of free, but not indifferent, activity is *extra Deum*.

The Protagorean proposition, "Man is the measure of all things," is most profoundly true in reference to man's spiritual nature, for man in his essence is either potentially or actually all things. Plato and Cudworth understood, however, that Protagoras had no such universal conception in mind, and that he confined the application of his axiom to the "phenomenal man" alone. Taken in its limited sense, Cudworth finds this proposition worthy of the criticism to which it has been subjected by Plato in the *Theætetus* and the *Sophist*. The absurd consequences of such an axiom are patent.

There is no longer any instruction, any debate.

By it right may be wrong, and *vice versa*.

It annihilates the future.

Absolute mutability can have no perception.

There is no synthesis, for synthesis is not of the senses.\*

By arguments already familiar to us, Cudworth shows how inconsistent Protagoras is to assert the absolute relativity of knowledge on the basis of the atomic theory which Protagoras, in a measure, accepted; for, as we have already seen, the atomic theory indicates that we discredit sense by a higher intellectual criterion of truth.

## PART 2.

### *Science of Knowledge.*

Cudworth has now reached that part† of the “Immutable Morality” which has especial interest to us. He deems it fitting not only to refute his adversaries, but also, as above suggested, to determine the grounds of his own convictions in regard to knowledge. In order, then, to establish the principles which he has premised, Cudworth develops his epistemology, or Science of Knowledge. He proposes in this apparent digression to show the difference in signification between *sense* and *knowledge*, and in what manner they are related. This distinction is to reveal the validity of *eternal verities* and their necessity.

#### 1. *Sense.*

What Cudworth presents under the subject of *sense* is simply introductory to the more comprehensive theme, *knowledge*, or *ἐπιστήμη*. Cudworth hopes, by a careful consideration of the function of *sense*, to exhibit its partial character, and its entire inadequacy as a complete instrument of thought.

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\* Schweg. Hist. Phil., p. 71.

† Book iii.

Sense in itself is not knowledge. What is it? Cudworth commences with that abstract view which, in consequence of its extreme lack of content, all admit to be true, but which some do not admit to be the whole truth. Sense is passion in the body of the *sentient*. This bodily passion is caused by local motion in the nerves, and is communicated by them to the brain. Some suggest that this passion already has a mixture of self-activity. The description must be true, however, for there is no other action of one body upon another, there is no other change of bodies intelligible except local motion, or change of place. In the moving body this is called *action*; in the body moved, *passion*. The sensation of light from the fixed stars through our organs of sight is produced by local motion.

Now what is body, so acting and so affected? We have already learned that it is mere outwardness. In its utter externality it is viewed as inert. It is in juxtaposition to other bodies. Among these local motion is communicated without any change of body, but as a mere mechanical action and reaction. Body and motion appear external, the one to the other.

We cannot remain at this abstraction, however. We must take cognizance of that by which we recognize this relation. Sense, then, is found to be more than local motion upon bodies. There is a dull consciousness of these passions of bodies. There is a cognition—a vital perception. The soul which is vitally united with body has an element of passion also. This element in the soul must be joined with that in bodies before we have the vital synthesis which expresses the complete phenomenon of sensation. The



body is the *other* of soul. We must recognize that the passions supplied by these respectively are different also. The element from body is the *outward*, the *THIS TO THAT*. The element from soul is of such a nature that it may act as a counterpart to the independence of local motion. Soul penetrates body not by filling up the interstices, but co-exists with body, in every part of it.

The passion of the soul is not a mere negation of local motion, a pure passion; but it has also the active vigor of perception in itself. When the body or bodies without are viewed as exercised by local motions, the soul has, of necessity, these passive impressions. The activity of soul has taken the phase of suffering from body. Sensations, then, in their unity, are passive energies of the soul. By reason of the living relation between the soul and the body, between the subjective and the objective, making up, as they do, "one *compositum*, or animal, or spirit," they mutually suffer each from the other. The soul does not suffer indifferently from the body, but sensation arises from the "natural sympathy and compassion" of the soul with the body. This passive principle in soul is the very possibility of its vital union with any body; it is that without which there could be no living creature. In the first stage of sensation the soul seems involuntarily determined in its "sensible cogitations." These sensations have various degrees of mixture with the active phase of soul from that most abstract form of mechanical action and reaction, already indicated in analysis, to that action of soul which is one with itself. For example, there is a vast difference between the sensation of

hunger and the movement by which the soul determines to eat, between bodily pain and the grief from ill-tidings, understood as such by the activity of mind itself.

Cudworth, therefore, looks upon sensation as something more than those immediate motions in "nerves, spirits, or brain." It is an affection of the soul; and the soul is secretly instructed by nature to take cognizance not of motions, but of other things that concern the body. The soul is so affected by the movement of the nerves caused, (1) by animal passion, as "in pleasantness, dullness, irascible and concupiscible inclinations;" (2) by special states of certain parts of the body, as in hunger, pleasure, and pain; (3) by the states of corporeal things without, as in light, heat, hardness, etc. By reason, then, of the vital connection between soul and body, the soul interprets these local motions within itself, in its own body and external to that body. Sense, therefore, is a certain dull perception obtruded upon the soul from without itself, by which it perceives the state of its own body and those of external bodies. It does not penetrate into the nature of bodies; its design is not for knowledge, but for the use of the body.

We are now approaching the philosophical relation of sense to knowledge. The nature or essence of sense is "suffering." Accordingly, sense is prostrate under its object, and cannot judge of its own passion or of any other. It is only as sense is comprehended that soul gains knowledge. Knowledge is that higher energy which acts free from the passionate part of the soul. Sense, on the one hand, is energy of body; on the other, is sleeping soul, and as such it is con-

fused and not free and satisfactory like cognition in which the sympathy with the body is annulled.

Sensations are in the very *crasis* of soul and body, after the diremption of spirit into its elements. Soul and body are struggling to take the first step toward correlation or reciprocity. The very fact that the soul is not satisfied with these sensations is evidence that they are not yet free acts of knowledge. In fact, the more complete the passion, the less the knowledge. Says Cudworth: "The greatest philosophers have found more trouble in explaining these passions than in obtaining clear light concerning spiritual things more remote from sense. If we remain at the point where sense represents them, *i. e.*, as really existing in objects without us, they must needs be eternally unintelligible."\* The noon-day sun dazzles our sense and yet, notwithstanding its splendor, it does not enlighten our minds as to its nature. Universally, however, men try to find the rational explanation of the phenomenon of light by anticipating that light has a nature kindred to their own minds.

We see, then, that sense is adequate to its purpose. It gives advertisement of bodies without us, of their movements for the good and the protection of the physical. It furnishes hints upon which the mind may exercise its sagacity in the invention of intelligible hypotheses to solve these appearances, and to explain the nature of bodies. The mind, by this assistance, may become acquainted with finite intelligences, but we must still insist that sense is not knowledge.

Sense is a stranger to that which it receives,

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\* I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 563.

whereas to understand a thing is to have something in common, and to comprehend it is to have all in common. Sense is not the object, although presented at the same time with it, and, therefore, often mistaken for it. Sense lies flat, absorbed in singulars; it can never rise to affirmation or negation concerning its object. Sense is the eye at the surface of the sea; it beholds no large prospect. The universal "reasons," or active relations of mind, are that higher station from which a comprehensive view is gained. Sense presents the individual material forms; the mind comprehends the object by imposing, on these forms, its free universal ratios or activities by which it looks down and understands the individuals. Sense lies beneath the material object; the "eternal reasons" are above the subject; these eternal activities close the chasm, and subject and object become one in the unity of knowledge. So theistic atomism is right in asserting "that even bodies themselves are not properly perceived by the senses and by the imagination, but by reason alone. They are perceived, not because they are touched and seen, but because they are intelligibly comprehended." "The essence is not reached by the senses looking outward, but by the mind looking inward into itself." "That which looks wholly abroad upon its object is not one with that which it perceives." That which knows an object, however, "not only looks upon a thing at a distance, but also makes an inward reflection on the thing it knows." "The intellect, or *νοῦς*, reads into characters written within itself, intellectually comprehends its object within itself, and is the same with it."\* When

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\* I. S. U., vol. iii, p. 566; Arist. De Anima, lib. 2, cap. 50.



objects are thus known, we have arrived at true knowledge concerning individuals; the objects of intellect are the modifications of mind, and the intellect and the thing known are one and the same. We may liken sense, then, to a line which is the flux of a point running out of itself; but intellect to a circle that keeps within itself. Sense-perceptions, or sensible ideas, are to be regarded as the last of things,—their projected shadows and vanishing points; but knowledge is the comprehension of objects by proleptic wisdom.

There are no “uncertain sounds” in these expressions. Cudworth’s attitude in reference to the philosophical significance of sense is in harmony with that of the best thinkers in all ages.

All that Cudworth has predicated of sense he finds perfectly consonant with the results of the psychological or abstract deductions from the observation of the phenomena of mind. Sense is not knowledge, it perceives only the passions, the relative in the object, and as a passion it affects the subject. The sensation is not the soul considered absolutely, and the sensible notion is not absolutely of the object. *Sense* and *sensible* are midway between the activity of the external object and the passivity of the mind within. Each bears vital relations to the process of knowledge in the subject; *e. g.*, pain is not of the sword, but of the sword relative to the enlivened body. A flame may be light to one of the five senses, and heat to another, yet the phenomenon is simply vibration in each case. Sense perceives the relative in objects, but not the objects. Sense, in fact, is when the soul is so affected as if such and such corporeal things existed; *e. g.*,



when a straight staff is viewed in air, and then partly immersed at an angle in water, the appearance is true in each case.

Further, there may be a true sensation when no object exists without the body. From the fact that the "spirits" of the brain can produce these sensations, persons, after the amputation of members, have had sensations of pain that were referred to the lost members. The case is similar in dreams, which the waking senses blot out by excess of sensation. By letting the fancy run at will we may have waking dreams also. Imagination or fancy, like sensation, is a bodily affection of the soul. Let imagination become rampant, as happens in many cases of temporary insanity, and men's brains may be so violently agitated that their souls may interpret the effects of uncontrolled fancy as sensations from external objects. In this case, the imagination baffles the senses, for the soul listens to the stronger sensation.

Another case of lunacy may occur, which is insanity proper. The soul, by yielding to the "irrational desires," weakens in proportion the noëtical powers, and finally, the enfeebled soul becomes blind to the impressions from external objects through the senses proper. The irrational appetites and passions, by excessive indulgence, now have refused to perform their proper functions. They have, however, assumed command, and have made the soul its own tormentor. The condition of such a soul is worse than that of complete annihilation, if there could be such a catastrophe to a rational soul.

Cudworth's remarks are suggestive in their ethical and educational significance. We may, indeed, be

more concerned about an excessive use of the imagination and about the gratification of irrational desires than about any catastrophe from close application to the study of philosophy, of those departments of thought which involve more especially the noëtical part of the soul. A vigorous mental growth has vastly more to do with the care of a diseased body and with the preservation of a healthy one than most persons suppose. Self-control is the watch-word of every one who has made the philosophy of Life a constitutive part of himself. The possession of this regulative principle has made the physically weak—we want not examples in our midst—the intellectual leaders of mankind.

A word of caution may not be out of place to those educators who cannot conceive of the utility of any higher education than that of the senses and of the imagination.

That “great discovery” in educational science which has had its periodic revival throughout the history of education, and which has gained notoriety of late in some portions of our country, under the name of “Quincy Method,” or “object-teaching,” when regarded as a system complete in itself, is a very dangerous and a superficial method of instruction. Unless wisely controlled and supplemented, it is destructive of the possibilities of a broad and liberal culture. The youth of our country cannot be fitted to fill with credit the places of their fathers and their mothers, fraught with the increased responsibilities consequent upon national prosperity, without mingling their study of phenomena or science, so-called, with a little, or rather a great deal, of “heart and

head " development. The American people believe in the "practical." Many are unconsciously the exponents of a sound philosophy, when they say that our "education" is not "practical;" for "education" with them is synonymous with "scientific registration of facts," a mere exercise in memory. Such "education" in itself forms almost no constitutive part of the individual, and the man of affairs is too often right when he shuns the college-bred "encyclopædia" of undigested "facts;" he does not find the philosophy of "doing" in science; he finds no life in bald "facts." Unless the "scientific" man has risen above facts into philosophy, unless by rational insight he can apply facts of science, he is the mere text-book of science, and, in all probability, a poor one, also. We do not decry "science," or the registration of succession in phenomena; it has an essential place in all normal development; but there is just cause to call a halt, when "scientific educators," or "progressive teachers," from stupid ignorance or for the sake of notoriety, constitute "science" as the "practical," the front, flanks, and rear; designate mathematics as the "ideal," the forlorn hope; and allow philosophy as a "nonentity," the free air of heaven. Are these demagogues not examples of those narrow minds which they decry? That which *is* has a right to exist by virtue of its essence. Abuses must be corrected, not the experience of the past rejected. In the last resort, the most practical educational guidance for man is the highway to the broadest culture. This is characterized by the harmonious blending of these three phases of educational development in a unity of conscious rational happy Life.

Unless the average American citizen can find himself by completing this circuit, he is destined to be ignorant of any proper conception of his relations to God, the State, his family, or himself; he will be the "doubter," the "politician," the breaker of family ties, the pessimist, or the easy victim of the same.

Through Christian philosophy we must lead the world to God; must, according to the principles of eternal justice, continue to live as a nation; must preserve the sanctity of our homes, and must render personal life peaceful and happy, or we must give place to those who shall be nobler and better, for in the development of the race God has promised to raise up a people who will serve him.

Utilitarian mechanism in itself, the so-called "practical philosophy" of many, needs only the opportunity for a concrete application of its claims to show itself the most "impractical" vagary in the universe of God.

## 2. *Knowledge.*

We have already observed that Cudworth is using the relation of inward and outward, not in the ordinary sense of superficial abstraction, but as a designation of distinctions in mind itself. At the very beginning of the consideration of *sense*, we found that sensation had no meaning save for intelligence, and, consequently, has "domestic" relations with it. From the fact that *sense* has been shown to be an incomplete phase of that which we recognize in sensible ideas, and from the fact that *sense* is passion in body, or *without* the mind, we must find its complement in the active or *inward* relations of that

intelligence to which both these verities and sense bear vital connection.

Knowledge is this self-activity of intelligence, whereby it "commands its objects and begets a clear, victorious, and satisfactory sense within itself." The popular conception, "that knowledge arises from impression or force of the thing known upon that which knows from without," is partial. In the agnostic conclusion derived from it, we see the inadequacy of the presupposition to the subject-matter. Says Cudworth, we find rather with Boethius: "That knowledge arises from the inward power, vigor, and activity of the mind that knows activity, comprehending the object within itself, and subduing and prevailing over it."\* "The intelligible forms or relations by which things are known, are ideas vitally protended or actively exerted from within the soul." As we have already observed, Cudworth held that we know only by that which, in its essence, is common with the knowing subject and the object known. We know not, however, by reminiscence, as Plato was inclined to believe, but goodness, justice, honesty, and the like, the mind knows by an anticipation of its own nature. Cudworth claims that his opponents, in any legitimate debate, must grant an innate power of cognition, by which the mind judges. In this admission men of the Lockian school grant that which they otherwise deny. Our author argues that it is impossible, if *intellect* and *fancy* be exclusive the one of the other, for *νόησις*, or "*intellection*," to be in *intellect*, and *νόημα*, or *conception*, to be in *fancy*. *Νόησις* and *νόημα*, in their correlative form, are ἡ κατ'

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\* De Consolat. Phil., lib. 5, p. 131. Quoted above.



ἐνέργειαν ἐπιστήμη, or *actual knowledge* ; this knowledge is the same with the absolutely true. “The actual intellect, as a whole, is, then, that which understands τὰ πράγματα or things.” As hot and cold are supposed to be modifications of matter, so these intelligible ideas are modifications of the knowing mind. Those individual objects external to the soul, of which sense gives us indirect knowledge, the mind understands by “reflecting inwardly upon itself, and comprehending them under the *rationes* of its own, which it protrudes from itself.” The soul has potential omniformity ; it has the power of raising all intelligible ideas. Just as the germ of the animal contains all the members potentially, so we are ectypal models of the divine Intellect. “Although our intellects are not the actual ideas of all things, much less the images of the several species of existing things engraven in a dead manner upon them ; yet they have them all virtually and potentially comprehended in that one *vis cognitrix* of the soul which,” as just stated, is a “potential omniformity.” In consequence of this power the soul “is enabled, as occasion serves and outward objects invite, gradually and successively to unfold and display itself in a vital manner by framing intelligible conceptions of whatsoever hath any entity.” Both intelligible ideas and the mind itself are active energies. The mind is not overpowered like sense, in the perception of the most radiant truths. By acute exercise, the rather, it has more vigor for the comprehension of less important themes. Sense is of the body ; mind is spiritual and possesses vigor in proportion to its self-activity. Those who read too much by the excessive use of

sense, weaken their own power of thought; but it is a characteristic of mind, that it tries to bring forth out of its own womb. Mind is conscious that it has spontaneous activity sufficient to find, and ability to judge of its discoveries.

We have, then, cogitations, both passive and active, in the soul. The passive perceptions are due to the soul's bodily relations, and have been, in part, considered. *Αἰσθήματα* and *φαντάσματα*, or *sensations* and *phantasms*, designate these perceptions. The active conceptions, or pure thoughts, are called *νοήματα*. The phantasms, or decaying sensations, accompany such *conceptions of mind* as may be the object of sense. In geometry the two phases go hand in hand. Even in pure thought, the fancy sometimes tries to symbolize noëtical conceptions. Such conceptions, however, as *wisdom, justice, cause, effect, etc.*, are pure *noēmata*. This declaration Cudworth supports with some very convincing illustrations and analogies. In fact, error in reference to the source of these conceptions must arise from mistaking the *occasion*, or invitation, for the immediate productive cause.

Expose a clock in all its mechanism to a crystal globe, to a sentient eye, and to a living eye, intellect alone sees the relation of whole to parts; intellect adds the relative and logical notions of cause, effect, proportion, and order to the sense-perceptions—of figure, color, magnitude, and motion. Sense knows none of these intellectual notions. These relations are no less real from the fact that they signify objects relative to intellect. These notions, as modifications of intellect, are certainly as real as such qualities from the modification of body, as hot and cold.

Further, they are not out of harmony with the things conceived by them ; they are not false. Certainly art and wisdom, be they but relations, proportions, aptitudes of things for one another, in order to accomplish certain ends, nevertheless beget objects of the greatest consequence in nature and in human life.

If these notions, then, be fictions, objective art and wisdom are also. Further, all men are wise alike, and blind force is the only causality, and this power in bodies is simply local motion, or change of place. Under such an order of things even "individual convenience" must be a delusion.

But really sense is authentic only as a medium of sensibles with intellect. Sense passively assents to the judgment that mind passes upon the impressions. As above stated, sense is conscious of none of the higher notions of intellect. Cudworth supports the authority of intellect by some suggestive questions. Is it not the relation, proportion, and adaptability of natural objects that constitute their whole strength and beauty? Are these not the very notions that disperse confused atoms, and bring unity of object and establish harmony among all things? Do not these relations or thought-objects bear a more vital connection with our personal intelligence than our corporeal face, with its image in a mirror? Is not the strength of an army its order? If a subtle and "popular" orator from the ranks of the enemy could persuade the individuals of a large army that their commander was craftily tyrannizing over them in demanding order, to such an extent that all should leave ranks at once, could not "one chase a thousand" such, "and two put ten thousand to flight?"

A commonwealth is a creation of the mind. Even the most mechanical or outward relations owe their existence to the active principle of intelligence ; *e. g.*, a house *is*, in the fact that it expresses a notion of fitness for its end, that it is a proper residence for man in the performance of the functions of his life. The true form of an animal, also, we do not derive from sense ; we get no notion of a *totum* from sense.

We do not discard sense ; it has its place. What we object to is, that it be made arbitrarily to change place with intellect. There is rather a nature or wisdom in all artificial things, and artifice in all natural things. Sense, however, touches as mind sees, and sees as mind comprehends the whole. Corporeal objects, therefore, *are* only as they include these relative conceptions of the mind's creation. If this is the case in reference to relative essences, much more is it true of goodness, justice, etc., that are modes of intelligent beings, or express relations between them. Although an object of sense may invite the mind, these notions in no way arise from passive impressions ; *e. g.*, the name of the inventor, engraved upon some part of a wonderful piece of human mechanism, may give the intelligent observer *occasion* to contemplate upon the character of the maker, essentially it does nothing more. So, also, in the contemplation of the material universe or cosmos, the mind has *occasion* to conceive that this is the passive impress or stamp of wisdom, and thus excites within itself the conception of the divine Wisdom. When it considers, further, that not only for the beauty of the whole, but also for the good of every living part, each part is contrived, the conception of

goodness and that of morality are excited. When goodness and morality are regarded as modes of intelligent Being, we gain the idea of God as perfect. Sense could not have heard the least word concerning a Creator from the tumult of the numerous visible characters impressed upon it; but mind finds in sense an *occasion* to re-echo the name *Father*.

Cudworth further exemplifies to illustrate that mind notices more than sense occasions:

How much more fullness a sculptor sees in a beautiful statue than a brute sees.

How the musician anticipates skill by sympathy, while the uncultured ear prefers the drum to the most beautiful *harmony*.

How the intellectual may find in a learned volume an occasion for extensive mental activity, while the illiterate sees only scratches and scrawls on white paper.

Substitute, for the book, nature, legible only to the intellectual eye,—for sense gives simply scrawls,—and mind, by participation in the divine wisdom, will take notice of all cognate to it, will have large thoughts, and will read the divine goodness in every sign that is least as though it were great.

Sense, then, is simply the ectypal impress of the archetypal mind upon the finite mind, supplied as an *occasion* from which the finite mind by self-activity may become a perfect echo of the Perfect. “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect,” is man’s noble privilege. But to become so, man, by his own free activity, must put himself in harmony with God, with the universal brotherhood of humanity, and with himself.



Cudworth now enters into argument, more extensively than heretofore, to establish that the activity of outward objects has nothing of efficiency in the création of rational ideas, even in reference to those individual things, color, sound, and light. We have not a satisfactory comprehension of those things which make the strongest impression upon our senses. Mind asks even concerning the nature of color, sound, and light. It desires to conquer these most clear sense-perceptions by some of its own conceptions. If sense is not knowledge, then that which is derivative must be more obscure. If knowledge were derivative from sense, it would be the weaker perception. Since the contrary is the case, the mind must exert active power upon that which is passively received. Besides sensible ideas there must be intelligible ideas, the product of the self-activity of mind, to understand the significance of the sensibles. ✓

To illustrate, Cudworth takes a particular material body, the four-sided solid with triangular faces, the tetrahedron. It will be interesting to outline Cudworth's psychological analysis of this particular body, if for nothing more, as a hint at method in dealing with objects. The living eye, as sense, passively perceives an individual thing external, white, and triangular; it goes no further. Mind takes up this confused sensation as a *totum*, and, by analysis, finds corporeal substance, white, and triangular, all as yet individual. The mind gains no further knowledge of the thing itself; it now turns to those general anticipations and domestic notions of its own, from which it may learn of the character of these general natures, *corporeal substance, white, triangular*. And, then, —

it descends again to those individuals which now affect sense.

First, it determines that the *substratum*, or subject of both color and figure, is of a nature to possess impenetrable length, breadth, and depth. Because the object is not considered here as an objective thought, but as a thing actually existing, the mind adds the notion of singularity to the above, and we have impenetrable, existing, extended thing. Now none of these notions—thing, existence, extension, something, nothing, etc.—were ever impressed upon the mind from without, but are due to the activity of the mind itself. Now, if the essence of corporeal substance be comprehended by the active notions of the mind alone, sense perceived only the external covering, figure, and color; then, certain modes of an extended substance, such as whiteness and triangularity, must be understood, not by passive ideas, but by intelligible ideas or activities of mind.\*

By methods already familiar, Cudworth shows that intelligible ideas discover that the product *white* is a thought-passion, a half-awakened sensation. These mixed notions of thought and sense are not impressed by a sensible object, but are obtruded from the mind itself, and are consequently comprehended by the mind.

The last intelligible object in the tetrahedron is a species of triangle. Some have asserted that there is no intelligible idea of triangle or of figure, save the sensible idea or phantasm, and that there is no active inward idea exerted by the mind itself. This is as much as to say that there is no knowledge of figure

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\* I. S. U., vol. iii, pp. 604, 605. Im. Mor.

or of triangle at all. As we approach this particular triangle, its bluntness and its irregularity become marked, we discover in it but a feeble resemblance to our intelligible idea. The sensations are simply occasions on the presentation of which the mind protrudes the intelligible ideas after the manner that, from rude pen-scratches on paper, we anticipate men's faces.

If all triangles were first from sense, we should possess no standard of perfection. We have no plane surface in sense. We have no angles in sense. Sense is *one and one*. There is no numerical relation impressed by sense. On the contrary, the intelligible idea of a triangle is peculiarly susceptible to computation. Every phantasm of a triangle is a particular species of triangle. When it is present, there occur an active phase and a passive phase to thought,—the intelligible idea is embodied in the half-awakened perception. The mind, however, can understand a triangle in general without determining the particular species.

To return, then, sensible ideas are nature's words or language; but we do not read the words, we think the thoughts that the symbols suggest. Knowledge is "descending comprehension" of a thing from the universal ideas of the mind, and not "an ascending perception of these universals from individuals by sense." Knowledge is not the improvement of sense; it does not begin with individuals, but ends with them. Individuals are the secondary objects of thought. The soul, by its "own inward knowing power," comprehends external things. As already noticed, then, we recognize two phases of perception

in soul: the one, superficial, subject to change, in which the soul has some magical sympathy with the body; the other, epistemological, immutable, in which the soul has disentangled itself from all passion.

If we know as God knows, we gain knowledge by universals. If sensible ideas are not mere stamps from external corporeals, much less so are intelligible ideas. Some have thought that these universal ideas come by hewing off and battering sensible ideas into regular and thin ideas. But why does the mind do this work? If it has the intelligible idea, it has no need of deforming the phantasm; and if it has no intelligible idea, it has no reason to deform what is given.

✕ We have already found that Cudworth regarded all material individual things as mutable. Knowledge is not of such things. Knowledge is the active apprehension of that which has necessary identity with itself. It is the immovable essence of Aristotle. It is that to which, if the least be added, and from which, if any thing be subtracted, the essence is destroyed. Formally considered, the immutable essences of things do not exist in the individuals without us, "as if imprinted from them upon the understanding." The individual material things perish; hence, the immutable must exist independent on them. Immutable essences, however, do not exist apart from individual sensibles and external to the mind, but they have their eternal entity nowhere but in mind itself. Although the mind thinks of them at pleasure, they are not fictions of mind; they have a nature that is not blown away by the breath of an arbitrary will; they can never perish. Were all par-

ticular created beings annihilated together with the material world, they would still remain. We must regard *τὰ νοητὰ* as eternal.

To assert this concerning the nature of immutable essences is the same as to posit an omniscient Being necessarily existing, and consequently unable to destroy his own essence. Eternal verities are objective notions that exist only in that actual knowledge by which they are comprehended; eternal verities are living things, they are modifications of eternal mind. Consequently those who assert the truth of eternal verities, and yet deny a personal God, if they did but know their position, would perceive that they assert one and deny the other of two necessary correlatives. The force of nature in their case is so strong that they acknowledge Truth as thing, while they refuse to recognize his name.

Every thing that is imperfect must, of necessity, depend upon that of the same kind which is perfect. Our imperfect minds do not always contain in them these verities in actuality. We are doubting and slow to understand. We are in need of the eternal wisdom, "a sun that never sets," that may carry the universe for us in our weakness. All persons are not necessarily at a particular time conscious of the same truths, but they have the seeds of the eternal verities scattered all over their minds, and each has the same knowledge of any truth developed.

If knowledge of these verities were the result of contingent experience, that two men could agree, for example, about the sum of the angles of a triangle, would be the merest chance. "Knowledge, then, is eternal truth, superior to matter and to all sensible existences, and independent upon them." Christianity and Plato-



nism acknowledge that the eternal and first begotten offspring of the original goodness is wisdom.\* To declare that wisdom in any way is from matter is atheism. To make knowledge in God prior to corporeal being, and yet to make the knowledge of rational beings dependent upon the reflection of this eternal wisdom from sensible things, is not unlike the absurdity of deriving the light of the sun not from the body of the sun, but from the darkness which the light disperses.

When we distort the order of nature, and turn our backs to the light and follow the receding darkness, it is no wonder that for us God is inscrutable.

For the sake of true science we are thankful that the march of truth is faster than the receding footsteps of the advocate of an Unknowable. The day will overtake him in spite of himself, even though he never turn. "Every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess," for this is no private matter. ✓ The criterion of knowledge is within us; it is the same with our knowledge. Every thing that is clearly perceived is entity and truth. That which is false, God cannot make distinctly understood, much less man. No man can be deceived in reference to any epistemological truth that he clearly apprehends. ✓ The source of error is blind assent to that which is not clearly understood. It is true, indeed, that men often think they understand, when they do not; but to argue against clear apperception on this ground would be as absurd as to deny, when we are awake, clear sensations, be they never so sure, simply because in our dreams we think we have clear sensations. It may be argued that God leads us to believe in the

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\* Prov. viii, 22, 23.

reality of objects afterward shown to be affections of our own soul. Their fleeting character, however, is calculated to excite self-activity. We soon discover that these passive energies from the mingling of soul and body and the pleasures of sense, though they be occasions for thought, are not such real things as the pure noëtical energies of the soul itself; that the intellectual and the moral are lasting energies of the soul; that mind is more real than body and matter; that the pure offspring of Soul or Life "is much more substantial than those things which blossom from the body," or, more properly, from the soul slumbering in its potentiality. The clearness of apprehension is not due to a supposed "make up" of faculties of sense, but the goodness of faculties may be tested by the clearness and distinctness of apprehension. It is more absurd to think that truth could be different from that which it is for us now, if our faculties of sense were different or were changed, than to suppose that the eye-piece of the telescope could be so constructed that it will reveal to the mind phenomena which have no ground for appearance.

To assert that knowledge depends on the nature of faculties is to mistake the essence of knowledge; it is to consider knowledge that which is subject to change like sensible objects or phenomena, relative fleeting show of reality. We may confidently assert that, be sense-organs never so different from those we now possess, yet mind, as master by its own activity, creates the very substrates that are the *ground* of phenomena and has power within itself to explain whatever phenomenon sense may register.

This truth accords with facts observed in reference

to phenomena with which we are familiar. For instance, take the case of the deaf-mute; he can know these eternal verities as well as we can who are blessed with perfect organs of sense. If a person be deaf and blind from birth, yet in many cases the phenomena indicate that he can think as acutely as his more gifted brothers. The manifestations through those senses which he possesses are apparently enough stronger to banish all suspicion of corresponding mental defect.

It is because mind is superior to these faculties that the deaf and the blind have the power of thought, which they manifest to us.

On the supposition that faculties of sense make mind and are more than the *occasions* of thought, if a deaf and blind person can think and express his thoughts to me, or can write them down for the edification of others, ought not every person possessed of the five senses in their perfection to glory in the power of mind and to be an author?

May the fact not be, that those whom we may pity on account of physical deformity or difference from us, by this very power of thought, by this contemplation of the soul inward toward its Maker, may already be possessed of such perfection of soul as we little dream of? Nor are these truths of the soul abstractions. We say that they are *living, organic*, and yet these are comparatively formal, stiff, inflexible, dead symbols of the eternal reality of spiritual Being, in which mind exerts its self-activity. Through the wisdom and the goodness of God, the universe of spiritual reality is not a realm that can be pictured in the sensuous imagination. And yet to the Christian philosopher, be he never so humble, whom God has

made a new creature, and for whom old things have passed away and all things have become new,—to him, the realm of free spiritual activity is the most concrete, the most real. To him, vital and organic connection of bodily whole and parts furnishes the highest symbols by which he can describe the spiritual relation to those who cannot rise above the relative of sense and of sensuous imagination. To those who may have studied the harmonies of mathematics sufficiently to grasp that deeper harmony which Pythagoras saw in number, that *perfect harmony* by which every living material thing as well as eternal is held together, may be used with effect to illustrate. But this, also, is an inadequate symbol, although far more concrete than the former. If perchance he shall find one who, in the light of the Christian Scriptures, has discovered that deep morality which underlies the family relation, who has recognized in this relation that magic bond which binds against all the encroachments of time and of the senses, where perfect freedom reigns and all things are common, our philosopher may speak that most sacred name, Father, and its necessary correlate, Son, with a consciousness that he is conveying the symbol of that which is most real and most concrete. But still this is a symbol. It may be the most concrete to which in the present state of society he can make a personal appeal to his fellow. But he knows as he is conscious of thought, and so does every one who has grasped the Eternal with a firm hold realize, that, in the spiritual reality of eternity, we are more than sons and daughters. We are more personal, for we have perfect freedom. We have more in common, because we

know even as we are known. We are immortal as is the goodness of the Father; we have the freedom of the Son, who makes us free; Christ is, indeed, the Word of Life to us.

God creates us in his own image. Divinity lies buried in our potentiality. Knowledge is the process of the Trinity within us, and is eternal. By following the promptings of the Holy Spirit, by going out of ourselves to do good and to communicate, through the inspiration of perfect Wisdom and perfect Goodness, we dispel the darkness of imperfection. The *inward* deepens and the *outward* broadens until they blend into the harmonious unity of spirit. Without any annihilation of our *better selves*, by self-activity outward our intellect annuls sensible ideas in order to give birth to intelligible ideas. Present potentiality lays down its life in the hope of becoming a moment or element of a richer actuality. We suffer the dissolution of the perishable in order that we may be raised as one body with the divine Word. We find ourselves *one* with the "Intellectual System of the Universe" in all its *diversity*. Our knowledge is actual, and like to the actuality of the Father. Our activity is his activity; the creations of "our hands" are in harmony with his eternal purpose; we are co-workers with Christ; we praise him who has given us the victory of perfect wisdom.

Thus Cudworth has shown us the way to the fountain of Eternal Life, and leaves us in the conscious presence of the Sun of Righteousness, and we close our *study* of the "True Intellectual System of the Universe" with gratitude that we were privileged to undertake it.



# INDEX.

- Absolute, justice, 32, 143.  
     Leviathan, 58, 142.  
     right of nature, 54.  
     will, 41, 136.  
 Absolute Spirit, 19, 67, 125, 152, 165, 202.  
 Abstraction, 144, 171, 177, 182.  
 Accident, definition, 43.  
     thing, 79.  
 Action, 9, 20.  
     being, 172.  
     effect, 49.  
     external and internal, 52.  
     no purpose in, 57.  
     local motion, 80, 177.  
     without agent, 115.  
 Activity, 16, 19, 23, 186.  
     sign of divinity, 139, 202.  
     of souls, 127.  
     universal, 181, 201.  
 Actuality, 21, 60, 108, 172, 202.  
     'Ἀγέννητον, 13, 86.  
         nature, 86, 114.  
     Allen, John, 6, 35.  
 Almighty, the, 20, 139, 155.  
 Amelius, 154.  
 Analysis, 43.  
     of object, 193, 194, 195.  
     of sense, 177, 178.  
 Anaxagoras and Des Cartes, 46.  
 Anaximander, 63, 69.  
     Cudworth's estimate, 69.  
     inadequacy of, 69, 71.  
 Anaximandrian atheism, 69, 71.  
 Ancients, 20, 21, 38.  
     atomists, 73.  
     incorporeity of soul, 112, 136.  
     infinity of matter, 94.  
 Animals, 9.  
     *automata*, 42.  
     not machines, 74.  
     qualities, 86.  
 Annihilation, 132, 136, 183, 202.  
 Annotations, 20, 94, 164.  
 Antoninus, Marcus Aurelius, 137.  
 Appearance, 183, 199.  
 Apperception, 23, 147, 198.  
 Appetite, 52, 183.  
 Apprehension, 12, 93, 147, 196.  
 Arbitrary will, 51, 136.  
     criticism, 41, 196.  
     Des Cartes, 41.  
     Leviathan, 58, 81.  
 Archetypal, 23, 102, 104, 106, 109, 199.  
 Arguments, atheistic, 12, 78-81.  
     Cudworth's, 63, 64, 65.  
     order of, 78.  
     against will, 64.  
     why necessary, 68.  
 Aristotelianism, 59, 148.  
     described, 75, 76.  
 Aristotle, 8, 12, 16, 19, 22, 60, 75, 103,  
     112, 159, 161, 175, 196.  
     correlation of matter and motion, 73.  
     Cudworth's estimate, 75, 76, 77.  
     faith, 65.  
     final cause, 43, 102, 133, 172.  
     man the measure, 92.  
     problem of philosophy, 33.  
     singulars and universals, 108.  
     *σῶμα* and *ὑλη*, 76, 122.  
     on soul, 121, 127, 157.  
     on spirit, 119, 120, 121, 133.  
 Art, 20, 160.  
     'Ἀσώματος, 76, 77, 120.  
 Assent, 23, 134, 198.  
 Atheism, 11, 15, 51; Cudworth's defini-  
     tion of, 82; Des Cartes's, 43; refuted,  
     71, 117; significance of, 171; systems  
     of, 69-71.  
 Atheist's Achilles, 110.  
 Atheistic pretenses, 90, 92, 94, 97, 98, 112,  
     118, 130-142.  
 Atheistic syllogism, 118, 129.  
 Atheists, 7, 11, 16, 51, 64, 70, 82, 83, 86,  
     114.  
     characteristics, 64, 82, 83, 118.  
     classes, 69-71.  
     not philosophers, 83.  
     corporealists, 118.  
 Atomic physiology, 71, 72.  
     instrument of reason, 72, 146.  
     proves the superiority of knowledge,  
         90, 91, 92.  
 Atomic theory, 22.  
     excludes qualities from body, 74.  
     physical only, 72.  
     proper interpretation, 74, 75, 181.  
     service, 75, 146, 176.  
 Atomism, 11, 20, 51.  
 Atomists, 71, 131.  
     classes, 72.  
     inconsistent, 116, 131.  
 Atoms, 17, 69, 73.  
     incorporeal, 120.  
 Attributes, 51, 97; worshiped, 165.

- Authorities, List of, 24, 25.  
 Authority, source of, 7, 18, 143, 158.  
 Auto-kinesy, 160.  
*Automata*, animals, 42; rational beings, 46.  
 Aversion, 52.  
 Axioms, 14.  
   *noēmata*, 105, 106.  
   how understood, 105.  
 Bacon, 44.  
*Báboz*, of active energy, 123, 128.  
 Bayle, on Cartesians, 43.  
 Beauty, 120, 190, 191, 192.  
 Becoming, 150, 172.  
 Being, 9, 13, 15, 18, 21, 150, 172.  
   body, 118.  
   concrete intelligible, 156.  
 Being and non-being, 152, 172.  
 Being and Thought, one, 40, 181.  
 Birch, Thomas, 24.  
 Body, 9, 22, 177; definition, 43, 72; existence, 118; extension, 128; *materia prima*, 49, 146; *other* of soul, 178; spiritual, 124, 125.  
 Body politic, 81.  
 Boëthius, 97, 108, 151, 187.  
 Boyle, Robert, 14, 101, 102.  
 Bramhall, Bishop, 59; Hobbes's reply, 53.  
 British Museum, MSS. of Cudworth, 6.  
 Burnet, Bishop, estimate of Cudworth, 30.  
 Cabala, atheistic, 68, 198.  
 Caird, Edward, 25, 38.  
 Caird, John, 163.  
 Cambridge, 8, 27, 28, 30, 59.  
 Cambridge Platonism, 37, 59, 63.  
 Cambridge Platonist, 46, 145.  
 Cartesius, 7, 8, 14, 32, 37, 60, 63; animals *automata*, 42, 134; consciousness of God, 39; contemporary of Hobbes, 37; Cudworth's criticisms, 42-46, 107; definitions of physical concepts, 48, 49; dependence on theologians, 41; and Epicurus, 43; father of modern philosophy, 38; first principle, 38; first principle inadequate, 39, 41, 107; God-consciousness *versus cogito ergo sum*, 40; God, from idea, 45; laws of motion, 44, 132; mind and matter, 39-41; More's estimate, 60; *Oeuvres Philosophiques*, 25; modified pantheism, 41; pessimism, 45; physical universe, 42; his problem, 38; unexplained residue, 42; thought, an abstract simple, 39.  
 Causality, 14, 23, 113; plastic nature, 159.  
 Cause, 12, 15, 189; adequate, 111; *Causa Sui*, 165; definition, 48; and effect, correlatives, 101, 112; and effect, *ad infinitum*, 50, 80, 101; efficient, 111, 115; eternal, 151; physical phenomena, 42, 44, 132, 133; sequence, 47, 80, 132; unknowable, 44, 198.  
 Chalcidius, 19, 151.  
 Chambers, Dr., estimate of Cumberland, 62.  
 Chance, 69.  
 Chandler, Dr., 34.  
 Change, implies motion, 49.  
 Charles II., courtiers of, 33; of the opponents of Hobbes, 59.  
 Christ, 21, 149, 168, 201, 202; inward monitor, 171; Sun of Righteousness, 202.  
 Christian ethics, 25, 186, 201.  
 Christianity, 20, 21, 28, 143, 164, 197; supreme, 164; evidence of, 164; why introduced, 167, 168.  
 Christian philosophy, 19, 148, 186.  
 Christian theism, 20, 153, 162, 163.  
 Christian Trinity, Cudworth's notion, 154.  
 Christ's College, 8, 28, 30.  
 Cicero, 60, 99, 100.  
 Clare Hall, 28.  
 Cocker, Benjamin F., 162.  
*Cogito ergo sum*, 38, 40.  
 Cognition, innate, 187.  
 Color, 23, 193, 194.  
 Commonwealth, 10; necessity of, 55.  
 Compliment of Mosheim, 35.  
 Computation, reasoning, 47.  
*Conatus*, 49.  
 Conception, 187; measure of power, 67.  
 Conceptions, 23, 50, 156, 189; passions from *things*, 80.  
 Concepts, physical, 48, 123.  
 Concrete unity, 19, 21, 76, 77, 152, 201, 202.  
 Conscience, 10, 18; Hobbes, 53, 54; opinion of evidence, 54, 145; common rule, 145, 146.  
 Consciousness, 9, 115, 160, 162, 177; neglected, 70, 133.  
 Contents, 7, 24.  
 Contingency, 40; of all things, 173, 175.  
 Contingent, the, how developed, 172.  
 Contradiction, 14, 93, 97, 98.  
 Contradictory particulars, 96; of God as *spirit*, 93.  
 Convenience, 142, 190.  
 Co-ordination, of first principles, 86, 87, 89; in Trinity, 155.  
 Corporeal Deity, 51, 91, 118.  
 Corporealism, 79; two ways of refuting, 118.  
 Corporealists, 16, 118; conclusion, 129.  
 Corporeals, 12, 76.  
 Correlation, 20, 21, 76; of soul and body, 180.  
 Cotta, 100.  
 Covenants, 55, 143.  
*Crasis* of sensation, eternally unintelligible, 180.  
 Creation, 7, 15, 78, 111, 112; denied, 79, 112, 113; why, 81, 114, 140.  
 Creation of the world, 29, 89.  
 Creator, truthful, 39; perfect, 111; of world, 88.  
 Criterion of truth, 23, 72, 91, 97, 106, 124.  
 Cromwell, 28.  
 Cudworth, argument, 66; Arian, 34; of Aristotle, 75-77; associates, 59; atheist,

- 34; of atheists, 65, 71, 82; atomism, 74, 75; characteristics, 19, 64, 148 foll.; criticisms of, 5, 83, 84, 162; death, 28; definition of God, 87; degrees, 27, 28; of Democritus, 75, 76; of Des Cartes, 40-46, 165-107, 185; education, 27; embarrassment, 28; erudition, 85; *ex nihilo nihil fit*, 110-117; fellow, 27; friendship with Thurloe, 28; *idea* of God, 85-110; his own interpreter, 171; infinite, 94-97, 114; justice, 182-146; letters of recommendation, 28; life, 27; marriage, 28; Master, 28; of matter, 153; merits, 5, 6, 20, 34, 35, 36, 64, 169; neglect of, 6; of pagan polytheism, 163-168; philosophy, 7, 88; of Plato, 76, 77, 150; Platonism of, 19, 148-158; professor of Hebrew, 28; rector, 27; of sense, 22, 176-186; *σῶμα* and *ὄλη*, 76, 77; of spirit, 118-182; style, 6, 85, 86; theses, 27; of will, 21, 22, 173, 174, 175; Works, 24, 27.
- Cumberland, Richard, 11, 62; departure from Platonism, 63; Hobbian estimate, 63.
- Definition of God, 87.
- Deities, 21, 165, 166, 167; multiplication of, 166.
- Deity, 12, 44, 110, 120; Hobbes, 50; attempt to dethrone, 51, 142; indestructible, 79; perfect extension, 129; perversion of, 100.
- Democritic atheism, 70, 71, 118; perversion of the atomic physiology, 71; superiority of, 71.
- Democritus, 12, 69-75; Cudworth's estimate, 75, 142; founder of atomic atheism, 72; of sense and mind, 91.
- Demonstration, character of, 85; by necessary inference, 105.
- Des Cartes, *see* Cartesius.
- Design, 12, 44; denied, 81.
- Deus ex machina*, 9, 89.
- Discourses, 29.
- Ditheism, 13, 86, 87, 88.
- Divine art, 20, 102, 137; and natural, 160.
- Divine Goodness, 23, 136, 143, 154, 156, 202.
- Divine Wisdom, 20, 109, 110, 156, 202.
- Dogmatist, 32.
- Doubt, 21, 64, 171.
- Downing, J., 25.
- Dryden, estimate of Cudworth, 83.
- Dualism, 19, 86, 87; of Plato, 150.
- Duration, 95, 96, 124, 151, 152.
- Duty, 142.
- Earl of Shaftesbury, estimate of Cudworth, 83.
- Ectypal, 20, 23, 109; art, 160; models, 188.
- Ectypal habit, 160; insufficient to explain phenomena, 102.
- Editions, 24.
- Education, and Cudworth's doctrine of sense, 184-186; of senses, 184, 185; "practical," 185.
- Effect, 189; does not transcend cause, 101.
- Egyptians, 166.
- Eidos*, 20, 159, 161.
- Emanation, 15, 87, 97, 112, 153.
- Emanuel College, 27.
- Empedocles, 106, 159, 167.
- Enchiridion Ethicum*, 30.
- Enchiridion Metaphysicum*, 61.
- Ends, unknowable, 44; and uses, 45, 190.
- Ἐνέργεια*, 109, 172, 188.
- Energetic nature, 128.
- Energy, 16, 23, 109, 128.
- Entelechy, 102, 172.
- Entity, 13, 15, 79; created, 114; eternal, 104, 113; intelligible, 108, 116, 181; of perfect being, 146.
- Epictetus, 137.
- Epicurean, 82.
- Epicurus, 43, 142.
- Ἐπιστήμη*, 176.
- Epistemology, 171, 176.
- Essence, 173, 181.
- Eternal essences, 17, 156, 176.
- Eternal truths, 18, 176, 197.
- Eternity, definition, 152; of matter, 89; presence of, 152.
- Ethical disposition, 175.
- Ethics, and Cudworth's doctrine of *sense*, 184, 186; Cumberland, 62; depend on civil law, 56; More, 62.
- Euripides, 166.
- Evil, 13, 18, 80, 137; of mind, 137; not from God, 89; neglect, 68; origin of, 137.
- Evil spirit, 89, 168.
- Evolution, 19, 97, 131, 147; of intelligence, 72, 135, 155, 171, 185, 186, 188; of sensations, 178.
- Existence, 13, 14, 23, 46; actual, 46, 96, 99; of God, 44, 57, 62, 64, 65, 86, 99, 107, 108, 171; modes of, 96, 118; Plato's notion, 151; of souls, 92.
- Ex nihilo nihil fit*, 7, 11, 12, 15, 69, 73, 78, 110, 126, 131, 153; adequate cause, 111; against extended soul, 126; efficient cause, 111; equivocation in, 113; interpretation of, 110; not a common notion, 112; refutes atheism, 115.
- Experience, gained, 50, 57, 62, 72.
- Explanation of Hobbes's Notion of God, 29.
- Explanation of the Philosophy of Hobbes, 29.
- Extension, 79, 118; nature of, 128; spiritual, 129.
- Externality, 89, 177.
- External sensations, 17, 91, 182.
- Faith, 21, 99, 100, 168, 171; rational, 64, 99.
- Falsehood, material, 106.
- Fancy, 17, 183, 187, 189; not a mode of body, 75, 183, 183.

Fatalism, 53, 56, 80, 138.

Fatalist, 32.

Fear, 14, 142, 143; of God's power, 44, 99; of punishment, 81, 141.

Figure, an essential of body, 72.

Final Cause, 20, 44, 160; Des Cartes's denial, 43; irrelevant, 44; philosophical, 102, 159; vital, 160.

Finite, 9, 40, 95, 96, 114; created, 114.

Finite mind, 23; extended and unextended, 128; has spiritual extension, 129; illocality denied, 119, 125; ray of Deity, 139, 172.

First Principle, 8, 9, 13, 17, 83, 164; personal God, 66, 86; stupid matter, 71, 86; vital matter, 71, 86, 131; many first principles, 77; two first principles, 86, 87.

Flint, Prof. R., on MSS. of Cudworth, 6; of Cudworth's life-work, 59; of Tractate on Free-will, 173, 174.

Force, 23, 73, 87, 101, 111, 114, 127, 190.

Form, 19, 44, 45, 76, 80, 134, 161, 187, 190.

Free-will, 8, 173, 174; edited, 6, 33; Tractate published, 6, 33, 35; Hobbes, 53; of rational imperfect being, 174.

Friendship, 145, 192; denied, 100.

Frontispiece, 24.

Fullwood, Mr., 30, 31.

Garnier, Adolphe, 25.

Gassendi, 44.

Generation, 15; cause, 47; from matter, denied, 135; natural, 111; of souls, 74.

Gnostics, 88.

God, 10, 12, 14, 19, 21, 22, 23, 41, 67, 73; animal, 67; arbitrary will, 41, 136; attributes, 51, 97; most conceivable, 93; correlates eternal verities, 197; Cudworth's definition, 87; demonstrated from His idea, 104-108; denied, 78-81; has extension, 129; finite, 41, 113, 131; fountain of life, 136, 202; flux, 50, 95; gifts to man, 141; the Good, 149, 153, 175; Hobbes, 50, 51; immanent, 160, 162; incorporeal, 79, 123; indirect agent, 43; indivisible, 124, 129; infinity, 95; inscrutable, 44, 50, 92, 170, 198; of light, 88, 109; love, 89, 136; and matter co-ordinate, 87; not mechanical, 140; morality of, 67, 100, 136, 147; of Moses, 88; nonentity, 92; not object of imagination, 123, 124; objective, 41; omnipresent, 122, 124; omniscience of, 152; plastic nature in, 77, 162, 163; how revealed, 66, 167; the Unproduced, 166; the Will of, 174, 175; worshipped by pagans, 166.

Good, the, 149, 153, 175.

Good and evil, chaos of, 81; Hobbes, 53, 57, 144, 173; no foundation, 100; not from opinion, 147.

Goodness, 13, 136, 154, 156, 202; intrinsic, 144, 172; moral, 62, 175, 201.

Gould and Newman, 24.

Government, 12, 18, 56, 81, 143, 144, 145.

Greatness and smallness, 16, 119, 123, 124.

Greece, 166.

Hachette, L., 25.

Happiness, 12, 17, 18, 134, 141; inconsistent with activity, 81, 131, 134; state of perfection, 137.

Harmony, 20, 102, 192; how accomplished, 190; perfect, 201.

Hebrew Learning, 29.

"*Εν καὶ πάντα*, 154.

"*Εν πάντα*, 153, 154.

"*Εν τὸ πᾶν*, 153, 154.

Heraclitus, 20, 152, 159, 167.

Herrbart, 63.

Here and there, 128.

Heroes, 21, 166.

Heterokinesy, 75.

Hierocles, 125.

History of philosophy, 6, 25, 72.

History of religion, 20, 163, 164.

Hobbes, 5, 9, 10, 32, 38; appetite and aversion, 52; to Bramhall, 53; commonwealth, 55, 56; *conatus*, 49; conscience, 54; consequential, 58; Cudworth's criticisms, 51, 53, 55, 122, 130, 143-146; and Cumberland, 63; design denied, 48; experience, 50; father of English sensationalism, 46; first to grasp mechanism, 47; form of flattery, 47; God, 50, 56, 73, 99; inconsistencies, 51, 52, 56, 57, 63, 142; infinite, 94; Inquiry of Cumberland, 62; law of nature, 55, 56; law of State, 56; Leviathan, 24, 55, 58; Life, 24; method, 48; Mill's estimate, 36; motion, 52; Mosheim's estimate, 57; philosophy defined, 47; physical concepts defined, 48; pleasure and pain, 52; religion, 55, 99, 142; right of nature, 54; science of knowledge, 48; self-assertion, 47; of sensation, 49; state of nature, 54, 56; of will, 52, 53, 142, 143; Works, 24, 25; Wuttke's estimate, 57, 58.

Hobbes-Cartesian movement, 37.

"*Ὀλον*, 124.

Holy Spirit, 154, 155, 202.

Honest doubt, 21, 64, 171.

Hope, 13, 99, 141, 142.

Howe, John, 10, 58; Living Temple, 60.

Hume, 169.

Hylarchical principle, 101.

"*Υλη*, 76, 77.

Hylomania, cure, 43.

Hylopathians, 71, 131.

Hylozoism, 12, 20, 71, 77, 84.

Hylozoists, 71, 131.

Hypothesis, 14, 20, 180; of plastic nature, 146, 159.

Idea, no amplification, 104; not exact image, 85, 156; incorporeal, 120; intelligible, 22, 117, 188; living, 156; has



- an object, 93, 117; Plato's, 19, 156; subject of sense, 90; more than word, 85.
- Idea of God, 7, 11, 12, 39, 40, 66, 84; and attributes, *sui generis*, 104; denied, 78; and existence, 46; imposture of politicians, 98, 99, 142, 165; infinite, 94; innate, 68, 165; mere name, 85; nonsense of fools, 98; premises against, 103; proleptic to man, 84, 164; something, 86, 96; unity, 165.
- Idea of infinity, 94.
- Idolatry, 21, 165, 166, 167; why, 166, 167.
- Ignorance, 14; of causes is religion, 56; willful, 64, 141, 198.
- Illocality, 16; of soul, 124; of spirit, 122, 123, 124.
- Illusion, 188.
- Image of God, 66, 106, 109, 157, 163, 170, 175, 202.
- Images, 21, 49, 165.
- Imagination, 10, 14, 16, 22, 92, 122, 135, 147; decaying sense, 49; Plato of, 120; weaker than reason, 123, 124, 183.
- Immanency, 40; of soul, 156; of God, 122, 160.
- Immobility of soul, 124.
- Immortality, 10, 17, 181, 136, 141; in brutes, 46, 135.
- Immortality of soul, 29; scarecrow, 56.
- Immovable Mover, 80, 96, 102, 121, 133.
- Immutable, 21, 172, 196.
- Immutable essences, 23, 196, 197.
- Immutable Morality, 7, 8, 21, 24, 32, 92, 108, 132, 153, 157, 158, 163-202; Chandler's estimate, 35; character of, 168-173; fragment, 82; published, 5, 32, 34.
- Imperfect being, 18, 21, 80, 113, 125, 172, 174.
- Imperfection, 12, 17, 97, 102, 111, 135, 170, 171; correlates perfection, 197.
- Imposture of politicians, 103, 143, 144.
- Inactivity, 133; not divine, 139.
- Incomprehensible, 13, 92, 93, 151; God, 50, 78.
- Inconceivable, 13, 92, 93.
- Incorporeal, significance, 120.
- Incorporeal extension, 17, 118, 129.
- Incorporealism, 17, 77, 119; how asserted, 92; nature of, 123, 124, 129.
- Incorporeals, 76; not abstract names, 130.
- Incorporeal substance, 32, 72, 98, 117-131; abstract name, 51; objections, 119.
- Incorruptibility, 17, 80.
- Indefinite, 13, 94, 95; right, 144.
- Indefinite increasableness, 95.
- Index, 24.
- India, 166.
- Individuality, origin, 49, 157, 196.
- Individual life, 40, 49, 157, 195, 197.
- Individuals, 23, 181, 182, 195, 196.
- Indivisible, 16, 124.
- Indivisibility, of soul, 126, 127, 129.
- In-extension, 16, 124, 127.
- Inference, 14; necessary, 66, 85, 105, 199.
- Inferior moved mover, 102.
- Infinite, the, 9, 13, 69, 94-97; no phantasm of, 50, 123.
- Infinite and finite, 40, 95, 96.
- Infinity, 94, 95; actual, 95; grammatical, 95; negation of limit, 97; philosophical, 96; potential, 95, 117.
- Ingersoll, Mr., 89.
- Injury, absurdity of speech, 56.
- Insanity, 22, 183.
- Intellectual fire, 131.
- Intellectual System, 8, 21, 24; beginning, 27; character of, 5, 31, 158; design of *study*, 6, 36; editions, 24; extent, 32, 35; history of philosophy, 32; manuscript of, 5, 29; merits, 34; obstruction to, 5, 33; published, 5; purpose, 5, 32; summary, 168.
- Intellection, 187.
- Intelligence, 15, 19, 154, 163, 186, 187; Supreme, 71, 153.
- Intelligible, the, 15, 16, 17, 109, 153.
- Intelligible ideas, 22, 91, 130, 187, 188, 193, 194, 202.
- Intelligibles, 147; of body, 91; immutable, 147; objects of *science*, 109, 117, 130, 187.
- Intelligible world, 39, 156, 157.
- Interest of man, theism, 140.
- Internal sensations, 17, 91, 179, 183, 187.
- Interpretation of polytheism, 20, 158, 163-168.
- Inward, 22, 128, 178, 186, 202.
- James I., 27.
- Janet, 43.
- Jenks, Mr., publisher, 30, 31.
- Jesus Christ, 88.
- Jesus College, 30.
- Jews, 29, 166.
- Judgment, 18, 138; no private, 56, 144.
- Jupiter, 43, 99.
- Jus naturale*, 10, 54.
- Just and unjust, 56, 173; correlates, 144.
- Justice, 18, 136; implication of courts, 144; innate, 66, 172; respect for, 99; natural, 106, 132-145.
- Kant, 25, 38.
- Knowledge, 7, 12, 13, 22, 23, 171, 186-202; actual, 158, 197, 202; archetypal, 102, 104, 199, 202; beginnings, 48; of Christian, 201, 202; descending comprehension, 195; definition, 187; eternal, 181, 197, 199; never false, 106, 182; of finites by occasion of sense, 180; of *ὄτι*, 105; process of, 181; relative, 175.
- Lacroix, J. P., 25.
- Law of nature, final cause, 160; holy writ, 51; rational rule of self-defense, 55.
- Laws, 18, 55, 100; divine, 145; of life, 159; moral philosophy, 55; of State before divine law, 56; of time, 151.



- Leibnitz, 14, 108.  
 Lenormant, 163.  
 Leviathan, 24, 142; mortal God, 55.  
*Lex naturalis*, 10, 55.  
 Liberty, contingent, 173; Hobbes, 54; from necessity, 66, 147.  
 Liberty and Necessity, 29.  
 Liberty of choice, 21, 135, 147; in moral good, 174.  
 Life, 9, 17, 20, 22, 70, 71, 156, 202; eternal, 132; without extension, 115; mechanism, 49, 69; purpose of Hobbes, 55; Soul of the World, 154; mode of spirit, 116, 135, 136, 172; unconscious, 70, 139.  
 Literature, 20; of pagans, 165, 166, 167.  
 Local motion, 17, 22, 69, 71, 72, 75, 132, 177.  
 Locke, 60, 169, 187.  
 Logic, 18; of atheists, 99, 100; Des Cartes's, 42.  
 Λόγος, 14, 109, 110, 156, 202.  
 Love, 18, 21, 99, 174, 192, 201.  
 Maclehoze, J., 25.  
 Mac Vicar, 130.  
 Magnitude, 16, 72, 95; not eternal, 95.  
 Man, 9; compound of soul and body, 125; distinguished from brutes, 50, 80; in the image of God, 66, 106, 109, 110, 157, 163, 170, 175, 188, 197, 202; not machine, 74, 184; measure of all, 175; no mind superior to, 80; moral, 135; natural condition, 54, 188.  
 Manuscripts, 5, 8, 29.  
 Marcion, 13, 88.  
 Marks, 50.  
 Materialism, 23, 46, 69, 71.  
 Materialist, 32; inconsistencies of, 98, 134, 197; machine, 134.  
*Materia prima*, 136, 146; defined, 49; absolute creation, 153; emanation, 153; potentiality, 152.  
 Material truths, 39, 123, 134, 194, 195.  
 Matter, 9, 12, 15, 19, 76, 79, 96; body, 146; contingent, 62, 66; dead, 42, 74; incorporeal, 120; passive, 72; soul without law, 89; vital, 70, 71, 115; uncreated, 67, 89, 114.  
 Mechanical theory, 47, 72, 133, 177.  
 Mechanism, 9, 14, 42, 71, 74; "impractical," 186; inadequate, 102, 173, 186, 187; with life and spirit, 72, 133; subject to intellect, 102.  
 Memory, 50, 187.  
 Method, analytic, 48; not from design, 48; registering phenomena, 48.  
 Mill, John S., estimate of Hobbes, 36.  
 Milton, 59.  
 Mind, 15, 16, 22, 23, 38, 90, 121; cause of all, 79; creature of matter, 79; enlivens all bodies, 134; supplies harmony, 102; incorporeal, 122, 188; junior to things, 80; movement of atoms, 56, 79; notional world, 92, 188; relation to matter, 38-40, 73; and sense, 191; spontaneous activity, 189, 193; superior to faculties, 199, 200; not *tabularasa*, 147.  
 Minds, ectypal, 109, 187.  
 Mistakes of Moses, 89.  
 Mode, relation to substance, 115; of sensation, 73.  
 Molesworth, William, 25.  
 Monad, 128.  
 Moral Good and Evil, 29; epistolary courtesies concerning, 30, 31.  
 Moral ideas, from sensuous experience, 63.  
 Morality, perversion of, 53; phenomena of, 103; supremacy of, 67, 135, 138, 147.  
 Morality in Explanation of Hobbes, 29.  
 Moral sense, 62.  
 Moral unity, 18, 147, 192.  
 More, Henry, 8, 10, 59, 60, 107; Collection of Philosophical Writings, 25; catholic spirit, 60, 61; *Enchiridion Ethicum*, 30; estimate of "Daniel's Prophecy," 29; estimate of Des Cartes, 42, 60; fellow, 30; Hobbes's estimate, 61; merits, 61.  
 Morris, George S., 25, 45.  
 Moses, 88.  
 Mosheim, Dr. John L., 8, 10, 16, 24, 32, 118; annotations, 24, 36; criticisms of Cudworth, 76, 120, 121, 163, 166; estimate of Des Cartes, 44; estimate of Hobbes, 57; estimate of Plutarch, 89; infinity, 94; against innate ideas, 93; against Leibnitz, 108; logic of atheists, 100; of *σωμα* and *ψυχη*, 76.  
 Motion, 9, 15; cause of, 101; cause of universals, 48; without cause, 115; conserved, 132; defined, 48; kinds, 52; Des Cartes's laws, 44; and matter, correlates, 73, 96; phenomena of, 132; solvent for Hobbes, 48.  
 Movement, ancient, 38; Hobbes Cartesian, 37.  
 Müller, Max, 163.  
 Mutation, 49.  
 Natural Justice, 18, 19, 32, 132, 143-146, 158.  
 Nature, a harmony, 161; liberty, 100; inner principle, 160; no scale of entity in, 46; two substances in, 128.  
 Necessary inference, 46, 85, 105, 199.  
 Necessity, 7, 69; antecedent, 46; of essence, 173; Hobbes, 53; material, 66.  
 Negation, determination, 152.  
 Negation of limit, 97.  
 Negative, finite, 96.  
 Neo-Platonism, 19, 149.  
 Neo-Platonists, 148, 149, 154, 157.  
 New birth, 201.  
 New Philosophy, 169.  
 Newton, 14, 101.  
*Noëmata*, 23, 105, 131, 135, 156, 189.  
 Noëtical energies, 23, 199.  
 Nonentity, 17; God, 92; matter, 146; without place, 119.

- Non-existence, 15, 46, 112; of God, 99, 100.  
 Norris, John, 60; against Locke's Essay, 60.  
 Nothing, 98, 112; of the denial of, 86.  
 Notions, 91, 180, 187, 189.  
 Νοῦς, 153, 159, 161, 181.  
 Number, 95; infinite of, 95.
- Object, 22, 188; analysis, 193-195; of ideas, 117; of intellect, 182; how known, 182, 190; source of motion, 52; strength of, 190.  
 Object-teaching, 184.  
 Obligation, 18, 142, 143.  
 Obligatory, 21, 174.  
 Occasion, 23, 92, 180; not cause, 189; sense, 92, 191, 192.  
 Omniformity of soul, 183.  
 One, of Plato, 149; concrete unity, 152.  
 "One-all," 153.  
 "One-all things," 154.  
 "One and all things," 154.  
 One and many, 38, 152, 202.  
 "Oneness," 165.  
 Opinion, 33, 137, 151, 152.  
 Order, of causes, 80; intellectual, 70, 189, 190; of matter, 65; of nature, 15, 109, 195.  
 Organic whole, 49, 201.  
 Origen, 138.  
 Orpheus, 166.  
 Οὐσία, 149; of God, 153.  
 Outward, 22, 128, 178, 186, 202.
- Paganism, 164; imperfect expression of truth, 165.  
 Pagan polytheism, 20, 84, 148, 153, 155, 163-168; apology of, 167; estimate, 84, 164, 165; extent of digression, 84, 163.  
 Pagans, 21; acknowledge God, 166.  
 Pain, hinderance, 52.  
 Parmenidean doctrine, 72.  
 Parmenides, 152, 167; of Plato, 153.  
 Partial systems, do not explain, 103.  
 Participation, 13, 15, 93, 106, 131, 157, 192.  
 Particulars, first, 48; from sense, 91, 196.  
 Passion, 22, 53; not mere local motion, 178; perception, 178.  
 Passions, of peace, 54; not sin, 56; uncontrolled, 183.  
 Passive energies, 128, 178, 199.  
 Perception, 28, 177, 189; clear, 105; devoid of body, 125; of *noēmata*, 185; two phases of, 195; truth, 106.  
 Percipient soul, 17, 125; extension denied, 126; indivisible, 127; unextended, 127.  
 Perfect Being, 18, 19, 20, 21, 32, 46, 101, 124, 131, 141, 146, 149, 164, 170, 192, 202; denied, 80, 112.  
 Perfection, 10, 13, 15, 17, 21, 67, 96, 97, 102, 124, 170, 175, 195; how attained, 192, 202; in nature, 46, 95, 96, 172; no notion, 51; unqualified matter, 184.  
 Perfect love, 88, 172, 174, 175, 202.  
 Permeation, 154.  
 Φαντάσματα, 23, 189.  
 Phantasms, 13, 124, 189.  
 Phenomena, 18, 72, 171; without God, 51; of mind, 182, 183; physical, 42; floats in reality, 62, 152; study of, 184.  
 Philo, 16, 122.  
 Philosophers, 16, 59; modern, 112; pagan, 166, 167; pre-Socratic, 74.  
 Philosophy, 9, 15, 19, 21, 22, 23; of Cudworth, 37, 158; of Cumberland, 62, 63; definition of Hobbes, 47; of doing, 185; first step in 69; of More, 61, 62; power, 47, 113; "practical," 185.  
 Philosophy of religion, 20, 84, 163-168; extent, 84, 163.  
 Philosophy of Spirit, 21, 168.  
 Philosophy of the unconscious, 20, 77, 84, 147, 153, 158.  
 Physics, 15, 112, 113.  
 Physiology, 11, 73; atomic, 73, 146.  
 Φύσις, 159; correlative, νοῦς, 159, 161.  
 Pindar, 166.  
 Place, 16; defined, 49; not essential to thought, 123, 124.  
 Plastic nature, 7, 12, 19, 20, 70, 153, 157, 158; digression on, 84; incorporeal, 159; instrument, 43, 139, 147, 159; Proclus, 161; Supreme, 162.  
 Plato, 8, 16, 22, 38, 60, 75, 103, 119, 120, 121, 137, 139, 145, 175, 187; dualism, 150, 151; Christian philosopher, 149; of purity, 65.  
 Platonic Trinity, 19, 148, 153-156; not Arian, 155; Cudworth's claims, 154, 155; three distinctions, 155.  
 Platonism, 7, 19, 148-153, 197; Cudworth's, 158.  
 Plantus, 166.  
 Pleasure, 10, 58, 142; harmony of mechanism, 52.  
 Pliny, 137.  
 Plotinus, 16, 60, 119, 122, 123, 124, 127, 138, 153, 154.  
 Plutarch, 13, 45, 39, 90; for final causes, 45; of God, 59; Mosheim's estimate, 89; interpreter of Plato, 150.  
 Polarity, 172.  
 Politicians, 14, 142.  
 Polity of fallen angels, 168.  
 Polytheism, 7, 12, 20, 163-167.  
 Polytheists, notion of God, 67, 68, 148, 165.  
 Porphyrius, 16, 119, 122, 123, 136.  
 Porter, Dr. Noah, 42; estimate of Cumberland, 63.  
 Position, 16, 123, 124, 125.  
 Positive, perfect, 96.  
 Possibility, mode of imperfect being, 117.  
 Potentiality, 19, 146, 147, 172, 202.

- Power, 16; active, 73; cause, 49; infinite, 67, 113, 114, 123, 127; natural, 52.
- Pre-existence, 11, 74.
- Pretenses, atheistic, 12, 78-81.
- Principle of evil, 89, 90; denied, 163.
- Principles, of body, 73; native to soul, 91.
- Prins* of Divinity, 173.
- Problem of philosophy, 38; for Aristotle, Plato, Pyrrho, Des Cartes, and Kant, 38.
- Process of knowledge, 181, 182.
- Proclus, 20, 161.
- Prolepsis, 14, 109, 182.
- Prophecy of LXX Weeks, 29; More's estimate, 29.
- Proportion, 189, 190.
- Protagoras, 22, 35, 36, 92, 106, 157, 175, 176.
- Providence, 12, 45, 136, 137, 138.
- Ψυχῇ*, 154, 157.
- Psychology, of Aristotle, 73; of Hobbes, 48.
- Purpose, of argument, 65, 82, 83; of Cudworth's *work*, 66, 83.
- Pyrrho, 83.
- Qualities, 12, 15, 16; of sense, 49; imply soul, 75, 116.
- Quantity, 19; applied to souls, 125-128.
- Queries, 81, 139, 140.
- "Quincy method," 184.
- Rational being, source of action, 133; corruptible, 79.
- Rational system, 38, 76, 147, 202.
- Rationes*, 174, 175, 181, 188.
- Rawlinson, 163.
- Reality, 17, 18; not of imagination, 200; spiritual, 72, 76, 77.
- Reason, 8, 71; appearance, 106; creature of matter, 79, 115; criterion of truth, 72, 91, 106, 124; judge of moral goodness, 62; perceives bodies, 181; its union with sense and understanding, 91, 92.
- Reasoning *ad hominem*, 137, 139.
- Reciprocity, not vital reaction, 49; of nature and mind, 159, 180, 181.
- Reckoning, thought, 47.
- References, 24.
- Relative, 21; unity with immutable, 172.
- Relativity of knowledge, 175, 176; denied, 199.
- Relation, 23, 190; of mind, 181.
- Religion, 10, 18, 20, 55, 99, 146, 163; depends on state, 55; lack of power, 56.
- Religious, the, 14, 99.
- Religious atomists, 72-74.
- Rex*, 128.
- Right, and wrong, 56, 142-145.
- Right of nature, self-preservation, 54, 56.
- Ritualist, 82.
- Royston, Richard, 24.
- Sabellianism, 154.
- Scholastics, 122, 130.
- Science, not of singulars, 109; study of phenomena, 184, 185.
- Science of knowledge, 7, 9, 20, 22, 32, 91, 108, 130, 132, 169, 171, 176-202; Hobbes, 98.
- Science of religion, 20, 163.
- Schwegler, Dr. Albert, 25.
- Secondary objects, 22, 134, 195.
- Self-activity, 15, 17, 22, 23, 33, 72, 101, 111, 124, 135, 187, 199, 200, 202; denied, 115, 133.
- Self-consciousness, 40; described, 127; devoid of physical concepts, 124, 127; illusion, 41.
- Self control, 184.
- Self-determination, 173, 174; to perfection, 174.
- Self-evident, the, 13, 85, 105.
- Self-love, 58, 139.
- Seneca, 99, 137.
- Sensationalism, 9, 116, 157; absurdity of, 198, 200; partial, 185, 187, 196.
- Sensations, 10, 17, 22, 134, 178, 180, 189; Hobbes, 49; psychology of, 179, 188.
- Sense, 7, 13, 22, 23, 49, 90, 176-186; for body, 179; ectypal impress, 192; inadequacy, 176; and knowledge, 179, 180; not knowledge, 180; original knowledge, 90, 116, 169; medium, 190; mode of spirit, 116, 147, 177; not object, 181; *occasion*, 191, 192; passion, 90, 177; perception of the relative, 182; priority denied, 90; purpose, 180; relation to *sentient*, 177, 182; sleeping soul, 179; supreme, 90.
- Sense-perception, 23, 49, 185, 189; vanishing point, 182.
- Sensible ideas, 91, 182; nature's words, 195, 202.
- Sensible phantasms, 91.
- Sensibles, 15, 19, 91, 134, 193; relation to object, 182.
- Sensuality, depends on civil enactment, 56.
- Sentient, 52, 177.
- Sermons, 24.
- Signs, 50.
- Singulars, 15, 108, 130, 147, 181.
- Skepticism, Pyrrho, 35; of the willfully impure, 64.
- Skeptics, 38.
- Smallness, 16, 119, 123, 124.
- Smith, John, 10, 59, 60; style, 60.
- Society, 10, 18; Hobbes, 52, 58, 142; how sustained, 186.
- Socrates, 103, 175.
- Son of God, 154.
- Sophocles, 109, 166.
- Soul, 15, 16, 17, 19, 22, 60, 68, 75, 90, 92, 121, 127, 161; Aristotle, 121; and body, 120, 177-180; diffusion of, 62, 129; extended, 126; immortality of, 56, 120, 132; potential omniformity, 188; Plato, 157; spiritual, 129, 138, 161; unextended, 127; unharmonized, 89.

- Source of error, 23, 134, 193.  
 Sovereigns, 14; supreme, 56, 58, 142, 143.  
 Space, 16, 80, 95; abstract body, 118; created, 122; defined, 43; immaterial, 62, 118, 122; function of spirit, 118.  
 Species, 20; conservation of, 103, 162.  
 Speculation, mathematical calculation, 47; mere, 64.  
 Spencer, 44, 193.  
 Spinoza, 60, 114.  
 Spirit, 7, 20, 21, 72, 117-132, 172, 173; denied, 51, 69; living relation of soul and body, 178.  
 Spiritual body, of souls, 124, 125.  
 Standard of perfection, 135, 137.  
 State, 10; Hobbes, 52; necessity of, 58.  
 Stirling, J. H., 25, 152.  
 Stoical atheism, 70, 131.  
 Stoics, 87, 131.  
 Stoughton, Dr., 27.  
 Strato, 70, 115.  
 Stratonical atheism, 70, 71.  
 Study, 8, 171; design of the present, 6, 36.  
 Subject, 22, 194; of action, 133.  
 Subject and object, 181.  
 Subjects, no judgment save civil law, 56.  
 Substance, 15, 91, 118; corporeal, 7, 11, 76, 117, 122; created, 74, 111, 113, 114; double, 16, 89, 90; dual, 118, 122, 123; extended, 119, 125; incorporeal, 16, 32, 74, 117, 119; and mode, 115; spiritual, 74, 117, 120; unconscious, 13, 77, 84, 86, 162; uncreated, 78, 79, 111, 113; unextended, 119, 126.  
*Σύμμα*, 76, 77.  
 "Suffering," 22, 179.  
*Summa summarum*, 80.  
 Supervision of God, 139.  
 Supreme Being, 21; Plato, 120.  
 Syllogism, against spirit, 118, 119, 120, 121, 129.  
 Sympathy, 20, 76, 159, 180, 181.  
 Synthesis, 48, 181; in God, 141; of soul and body, 178.  
 System, 18, 19, 76, 140, 164; of reality, 77, 147, 171; of Hobbes, 142, 143.  
 Table, analytical, 8-23; doctrine of atheists, 71.  
*Tabula rasa*, 16, 116, 147.  
 Tegg, Thomas, 24.  
*Terminus a quo*, 112.  
 Tetrahedron, 23, 193-195.  
 Theætetus of Plato, 175.  
 Theism, 9, 20; betrayed, 44; demonstrated, 117.  
 Theists, 86, 131, 166, 168.  
 Theologians, 97, 163; Parisian, 41.  
 Theology, 14, 97; pagan, 165.  
 The Philosophy of Kant, 25, 88.  
 Theses, 27; theses to the third part, 33, 173.  
 Thing, 23, 76, 114, 194; intellect, 182; passive, 125.  
 Thing-in-itself, simple extension, 123; denied, 186.  
 Things, 20, 21, 128, 162, 188; all conceivable, 93; first, 80, 103; absolutely relative, 73, 128.  
 Thinking monad, 125.  
 Thought, 9, 17; contexture of names, 50, 56; divisible, 129; eternal energy, 128; and extension, 127, 128; mode of spirit, 116, 123, 127; phenomena of, 132; has place, etc., 50; reckoning, 47; subject to sense, 50, 133; unextended, 115, 127.  
 Thought-activity, 172, 199.  
 Thurloe, John, 8, 28.  
 Timæus of Plato, 19, 150, 151.  
 Time, 95; defined, 43, 124; not eternal, 95; function of system, 140.  
 Titles, of MSS., 8, 29.  
*Tò ἀπειρον*, 69.  
*Tò εὖ καὶ καλῶς*, 44, 102.  
*Totum*, to intelligence only, 191.  
 Transcendency, 162, 163.  
 Transcendental, 40.  
 Transmigration, 11, 74.  
 Triangle, 23, 194, 195.  
 Trinity, 19, 148, 153-153, 202.  
 Trithemism, 13, 88; in Cudworth, 33; description, 88.  
 True Notion of the Lord's Supper, 24, 29.  
 Truth, 14, 21, 41, 105; larger than finite mind, 93, 197; partial views of, 32; universal, 106, 109, 197.  
 Truthfulness of God, 39, 140, 199, 200.  
 Turner, John, estimate of Cudworth, 33.  
 Ueberweg, Dr. F., 25.  
 Unconscious, the, 14, 15, 77, 162.  
 Unconscious life, 70, 153, 159; cannot produce consciousness, 77, 115, 162.  
 Understanding, 12, 172, 174; apprehension in part, 181; imagination, 50; union with reason and sense, 91, 92, 172; union with will, 174; will, 50.  
 Unextended, the, in self-consciousness, 126.  
 Unextended soul, 17, 122.  
 Union of Christ and Church a Shadow, 29.  
 Unity, 16, 18; of knowledge, 181, 183; in multiplicity, 152, 202.  
 Unity of being and thought, 40, 41, 181, 187, 199.  
 Unity of God, creed of pagans, 33, 67, 68, 165.  
 Universal minds, 17, 43, 196, 197, 198, 202.  
 Universals, 10, 15, 23, 134, 151, 195, 196; application to singulars, 103, 130, 181; free from sense, 109; names, 50.  
 Universe, 9, 18, 19, 21, 23, 112; corporeal, 46; eternal flux, 152; God, 41, 156; harmony, 164; mechanical aggregate,

47, 70; system, 76, 140, 147, 164; vital,  
48, 70, 71, 181.  
Uses, correlate ends, 44, 45, 75, 190.  
Utility, 142, 143, 145.

Verities, 14, 15, 106, 176-202; eternal,  
176, 197, 198, 199.

Verity of Christian Religion, 28, 29.

Virgil, 166.

Virtues, 19, 127, 157.

*Vis cognitiæ*, 188.

Void, 69, spiritual category, 70, 118.

Wallace, Psychology, 73.

Warburton, estimate of the Intellectual  
System, 34.

Ward, Dr. Seth, 56.

Whicote, 10, 59.

Whole, 16, 119, 124, 191.

Whole and parts, 124.

Wicked, the, 14, 18, 99, 137, 139, 141.

Will, 9, 21, 22, 35, 50, 173-175; appetite,

52; not an attribute of God, 174; not  
comprehension, 105; and essence, 173;  
not a separate faculty, 174; of kings,  
58, 143; subject to truth, 175; and  
understanding, phases of goodness, 174.  
Wisdom, 20, 138, 157, 160, 174, 182, 190,  
191, 192, 202.

Word, the, *see* Λόγος.

Words, 50.

*Works*, 24.

World, 12, 16, 19; causative, 151; why  
created, 136; fitness, 137; perpetual,  
152; temporal, 140; vital, 181.

Worship, 21; of attributes, 165; of  
deities, 165; of images, 165.

Worthington, Dr., 28, 30.

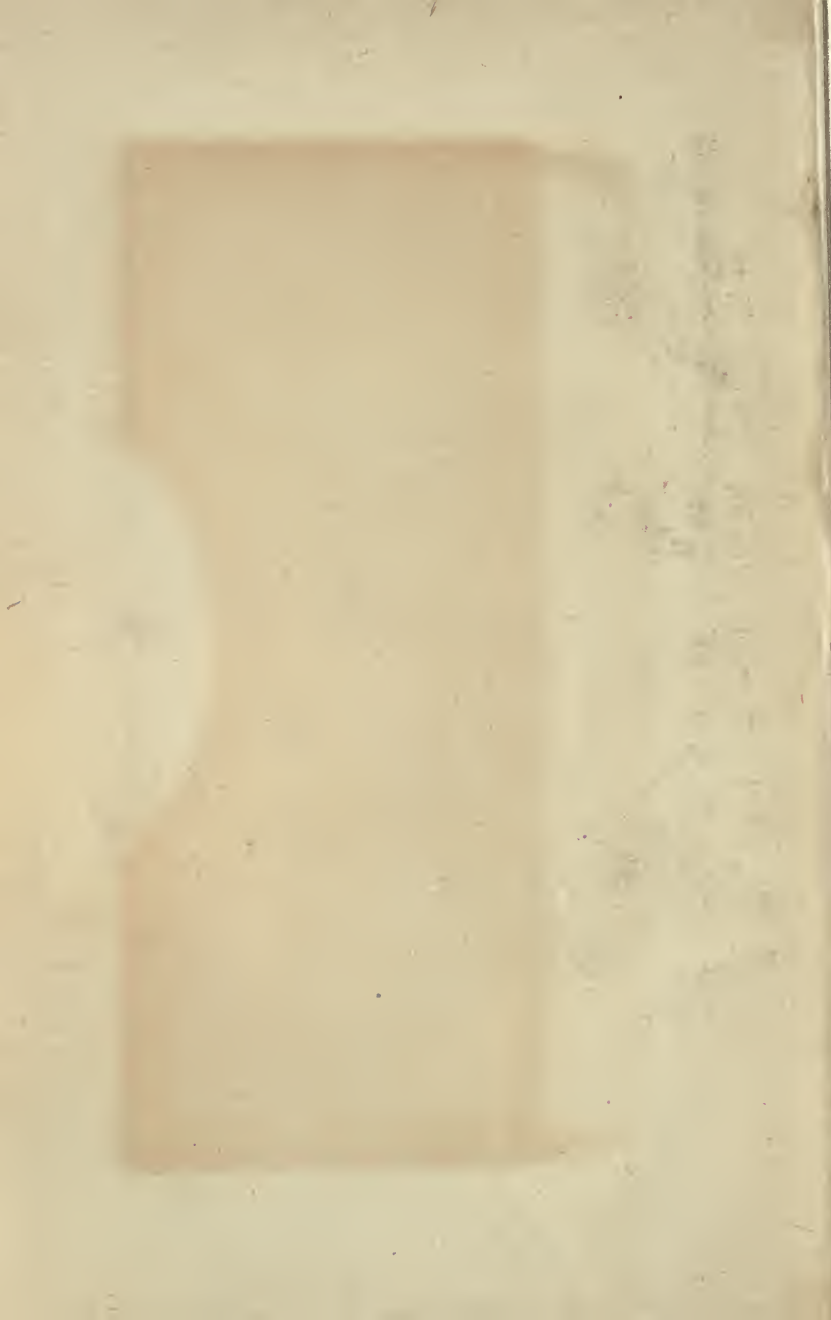
Wuttke, Dr., 10, 25; estimate of Hobbes,  
57, 58; of Cumberland, 62.

Xenophones of Elea, 167.

Zoroaster, 166.







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