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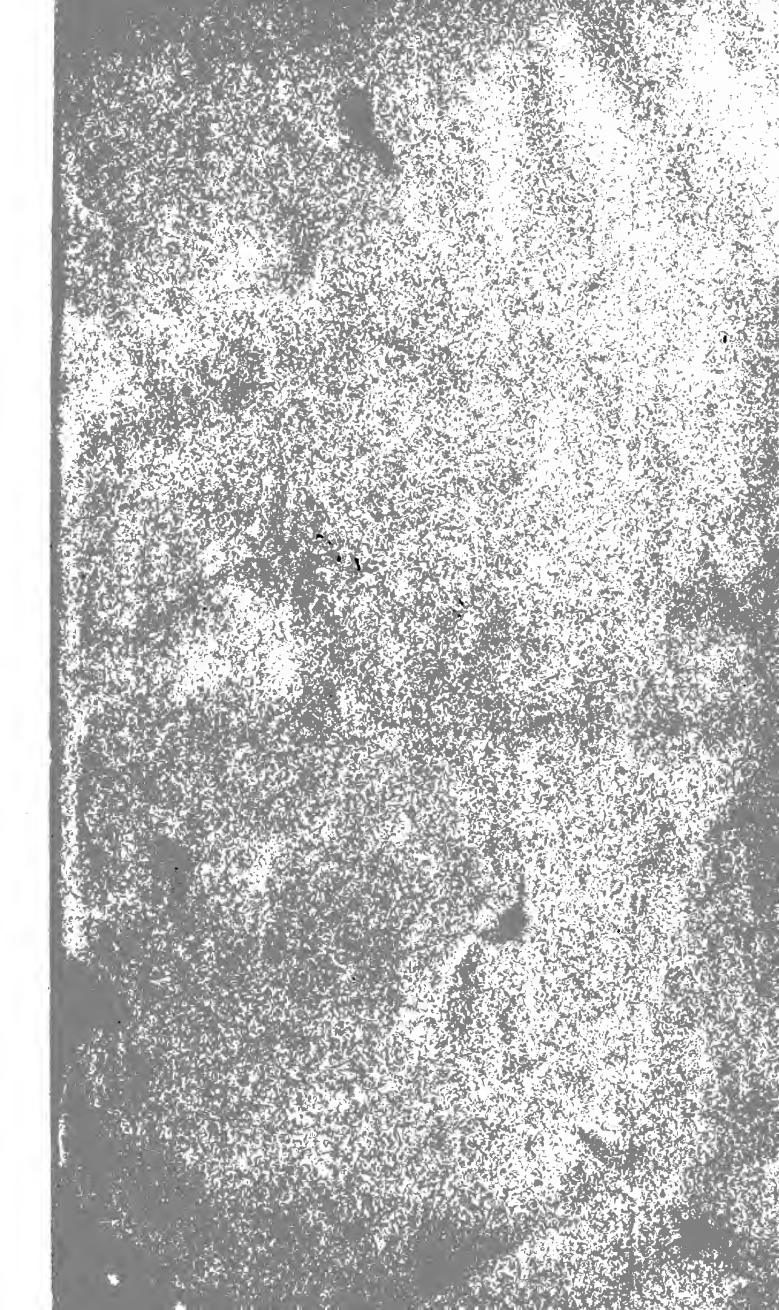
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PHILOSOPHY
OF
HENRY JAMES,

AUTHOR OF

"MORALISM AND CHRISTIANITY;" "LECTURES AND MISCELLANIES;" "THE
NATURE OF EVIL;" "CHRISTIANITY, THE LOGIC OF CREATION;"
"SUBSTANCE AND SHADOW;" "THE SECRET OF SWEDENBORG;"
"SOCIETY THE REDEEMED FORM OF MAN."

A DIGEST,

By J. A. KELLOGG.



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PHILOSOPHY OF HENRY JAMES.

No attempt, so far as I am aware, has ever been made to present a collective view of the philosophy of Mr. Henry James, so as to bring it within the scope of the general reader. The distinguished philosopher himself, so lately gone from us, seems not to have aimed to give his whole thought anywhere in brief compass. The essential principles of it are in all the works which he has given to the press from time to time during the last thirty years, and there is a more or less complete statement of his views in each of the later volumes; yet a satisfactory insight into his ideas cannot well be obtained without bringing the whole of his writings under one survey.

Laying no claim to a perfect comprehension of this philosophy in its details, I shall yet endeavor, however inadequately, to present its outlines, hoping thereby to aid in drawing attention to the

works of one who, it seems to some of us, will yet come to be recognized as the deepest thinker of the century.

It is undeniable that Mr. James is obscure, unexpectedly obscure, if I may use the expression. His style is so frank and alluring; he gives himself so unreservedly to his readers, is so profuse in his illustrations, and so evidently master of his subject; he berates us so cordially for our stupidity in not having always seen the truths which he demonstrates, and for our hard-heartedness in not having obeyed them, that we wonderingly say to ourselves, 'Here at last we must have found an unerring guide: let us confidently give ourselves up to him, and he will lead us into the innermost courts of truth.' But ere long we become bewildered, we know not whither we are going; we are dizzy, we are blinded, we hear nothing, we see nothing; and at last we refuse to advance another step until we find upon what ground we are treading. We doubt at first whether this may not be owing to some lack in ourselves, but by and by we are fain to divide the fault between the difficulties of the subject and the manner in which it is treated.

Mr. James looks at creation instinctively from the creative side, and this of itself has a tendency to put him at a remove from his readers. The usual problem is: Given the creation, to find the Creator;

to Mr. James it is: Given the Creator, to find the creation. God is; of His being there is no doubt, but who and what are *we*? Another cause of obscurity is Mr. James's use of words. To many of his words he gives a signification of his own, and we should get on well enough with that if he always kept to it; but ever and anon he slips back into the old usage, with the object perhaps of coming more closely to the ordinary method of thinking. The word *morality*, with its adjective *moral*, is a veritable-will-o'-the-wisp, until one has obtained the clew to the whole thought, and has learned to accommodate its significance to the point at the moment in view. Still another and most fruitful cause of misapprehension is the fact that to Mr. James the natural world is the correspondence of the spiritual world, making it thus correct to use the same terms in speaking of each; but it is also the inverse correspondence, so that the terms frequently mean exactly the opposite when used of one that they mean when used of the other: as in viewing objects in a mirror the right is left and the left right, the east is west and the west east, *et cætera*. And, in addition to all, one cannot help suspecting that the author loves paradox for its own sake—prefers it to a more direct method of stating his thought.

Mr. James, as is well known, bases his philosophy

upon ideas derived from Swedenborg, but the philosophy itself comes not from Swedenborg: it is profoundly original. - A previous acquaintance with the writings of the Swedish seer is not necessary to the comprehension of it, but it is a great aid to such comprehension. It enables one to read between the lines, and also explains not a little of the phraseology.

With this preliminary, I proceed to give, *making free and constant use of his own expressions*, a synopsis of what seems to me, after a study of many years, to be Mr. James's philosophy of life.

God is Life in Himself. All life is one, therefore there can be no other being in the universe having life in himself. Creation is not the production of a new being: it is a *manifestation* of the Infinite and Eternal Being, which is from everlasting to everlasting, and this manifestation is in man. Creation implies God's communication of Himself to the creature. It does not imply a transfer of life from God Himself to another: that would be to divide life, which is absurd. God cannot create a being who shall be independent of Himself. To create a being who should have life in himself would be to create God.

God's life finds its activity in love. He cannot love Himself, for that were self-love. He must love

that which is the total opposite of Himself. But the total opposite of Himself must be evil, since He is the all of goodness. Yet out of that which is evil He can make a creature who will react against the evil and aspire of his own free-will to a conjunction with his Creator, to whom then He will be able to communicate the blessedness of His own life with ever-increasing bountifulness to all eternity.

Creation is a composite, not a simple movement. It provides first for the creature's subjective existence, and then for his objective being. We must first be endowed with inalienable self-consciousness in order to be subsequently qualified for God's spiritual fellowship. The creature must have a life as distinctively his own as God's life is distinctively His own. This life is given to him by means of Nature. A *natural* form is a derived form. It involves the relation between a common nature and an individual subject of that nature. Everything in nature is a particular form of a common substance.

Nature is the exact opposite of God. God is the One Life. He has no fellow or equal. Nature is perfect community, and this community limits as it confers all individual faculty and enjoyment. God *is*; nature *exists*. Existence is the manifestation of being; it means the *going forth* of being into form.

Its nature is strictly *not to be*, as that of God is *to be*. The animating principle of Nature is self-love.

Nature is the preliminary realm of *formation*, on which the actuality of creation is suspended. Creation itself is an invisible process by which the creature becomes ultimately qualified for conscious unity with Goodness, Truth, and Power. *It takes place exclusively in the creature's consciousness.* Outside of God there is nothing real in the universe excepting the human consciousness. The great spheres of space and time themselves fall within that consciousness, not without it. There never was a space *where* nor a time *when* things began to be. Time and space are involved in existence. Eternity and infinity transcend it. Eternity is not time without end, nor infinity space without end. Eternity is the denial of time, infinity the disappearance of space. We can obtain a conception of this metaphysical idea by means of some familiar experiences. When in suspense or suffering we are conscious of every minute in the hour we have an acute realization of Time; when through happiness the minutes glide so swiftly that the hour has gone ere it seems scarcely to have begun, we get a glimpse of Eternity. So in our feeling of utter nearness to an absent friend and absolute remoteness from a stranger at our side we have a perception of Infinity.

Consciousness claims the totality of the sensible universe as the indispensable realm of the *me*. The visible world is but man turned inside out that he may be revealed to himself. All that sensibly exists is but the mind's furniture. The mineral life is the foetal condition of humanity, the *me* getting body. Its characteristic is inertia, and it gives us the fixity which is necessary that we may have a contrast for our coming freedom. The vegetable life is the *me* coming to sensation; in the animal life the *me* has attained to volition. Man reproduces in himself all mineral, all vegetable, and all animal forms. He is fixed as the rock, unstable as water; hard as the iron, sensitive as the flower; indolent as the sloth, busy as the bee; blind as the bat, far-sighted as the eagle; venomous as the serpent, harmless as the dove. All the antagonisms of nature are united in his form. Thus man is the measure of all the inferior things of the universe; the master-key which fits all the wards of the lower creation and makes its mysteries intelligible. When science shall have developed all nature's resources of use and ornament to man, then man will perceive an exact correspondence between himself spiritually viewed on the one side and the entire phenomena of the visible universe on the other. Excepting as part of the human consciousness, this natural universe has no reality to the Divine mind. Man alone is

objective to God, and the rose and the horse, for example, exist to him only as constituent portions of our mental structure, without which the human mind would be to that extent impoverished or out of correspondence with infinite being—for as inferior nature corresponds to man, so human nature corresponds to God.

Man's natural individuality possessing thus every conceivable characteristic of universal life, forms a basis broad enough to image the Creator's infinitude. But man has besides this a *distinctive* difference from the lower forms of life. He alone has the power to separate himself from his mere animal conditions, to postpone his natural appetites to his individual attractions. He is free to obey other motives and aspirations than those which date from his animal organization; he can restrain his bodily appetites within rational limits, or else urge them to the most injurious excess. It is this faculty which makes him man and stamps him the only fitting tabernacle of God. The animal may obey his nature without degradation, but if a man give himself up to his nature he dehumanizes himself. The animal and vegetable have no deeper life than that of their nature. It is their glory to exhibit their natural force in uncurbed luxuriance, but it is the glory of man to transcend his nature and make it obey an individuality above itself. The mineral



is subject to the vegetable, the vegetable to the animal, and the animal to man. Man alone is subject to no external power.

This state of conscious freedom arising from man's sense of ownership of himself Mr. James terms *morality*, which he calls the distinctive badge of human nature. It is the point of individuation of human nature from merely animal nature, and the point of identification of all its subjects with one another. The animal life is the instinctive life: in it the passions rule the intellect. In the moral life, the intellect rules the passions.

Self-consciousness, which is the natural human form of consciousness, is born of the union of the will and the instinct. Man thus becomes both objective and subjective to himself. He is the subject of his nature in the realm of sense, and the object of it in the realm of ideas.

But the whole of man is not comprised in nature and morality. Man is a unit of two forces: a material force which finites him, and a spiritual one which infinites him. In the human consciousness God and nature meet. Human nature has the literally awful grandeur of being the sole link between Creator and creature. Its organic element relates us to the outward and finite, *i.e.*, to nature, and gives us fixity; its distinctively human element relates us to the inward and infinite, *i.e.*, to God,

and gives us freedom. But we always identify ourselves with nature and not with God. The *me* absorbs the whole realm of the finite, the *outer* sphere of consciousness; the *not-me*, the realm of the infinite, its *inner* sphere. The human consciousness unites these two spheres. It identifies itself instinctively with the outer sphere, while at the same time it dominates it. It worships the inner sphere, while at the same time it recognizes itself, by means of the intellect, as essentially belonging to it. We identify ourselves with our organization because that is the sole ground of our consciousness, and it is our consciousness alone which gives us an entity distinct from God. This is what differentiates Mr. James's view from pantheism. Pantheism makes the creature continuous, as it were, from the Creator; Mr. James separates him by all the breadth of his consciousness.

The truth is that God alone is life, and that He communicates life to man. This truth we shall never be able to feel on penalty of losing our freedom. If we *felt* that our life was other than our own we should lose all our characteristic human activity, should consider ourselves merely puppets, and wait to be acted upon; but while it is death to *feel* it, it is life to *believe* it, and it is only through believing it that our reason can be kept ever sane and progressive, for it is the truth of truths, and

the reason can be nourished only by truth. It wastes away and dries up when fed by falsehoods.

The actual adjustment of the finite with the infinite mind is the total secret of human history : it constitutes both the universal and particular scope of what we call progress, meaning by that man's providential destiny upon earth, or the complete education of the race.

Man is the only offspring of Deity, because he alone is subject to an ideal selfhood. The distinctive trait of man is not subjection to nature, for the vegetable is more entirely the subject of its natural organization ; and it is not subjection to society, for many of the animals—the bee, the ant, the beaver—excel the best of men in this respect : it is obedience to his own ideas of goodness, truth, and beauty. His activity lies within himself, and acknowledges an ideal end. Even vice and crime show this. Vice expresses man's attempt to actualize his ideal life without the concurrence of nature ; crime, his attempt to actualize it without the concurrence of society.

Our animal consciousness is constituted by our susceptibility to pleasure and pain. The vegetable life is that of pleasure alone. It is the oppugnancy of pleasure and pain which lifts us from the vegetable existence to the animal. It is by means of the oppugnancy of good and evil, and their equilibrium

in the human constitution, that our moral life is evolved. We inherit a liability to all that is good and to all that is evil in human nature. To some qualities we are more susceptible undoubtedly than to others, but we are susceptible to all on presentation of adequate motives. Our wills then can disturb the equilibrium, and incline our actions to one side or the other. If our inheritance overpowers our will we are no longer credited with the responsibility of our actions, as we see in the unfortunate victims of klopemania. The *me* cannot survive a permanent disturbance of equilibrium.

Morality, therefore, does not characterize man spiritually, as is generally supposed, but only naturally. The two moral poles, the poles of good and evil, are alike requisite to humanity. Neither of them by itself defines, it as the North Pole by itself or the South Pole by itself does not define the earth. This balance of opposing forces is necessary to give us our moral consciousness.

But if morality is not our true life it is the fundamental germ out of which our true or spiritual life grows. Its function is to lift man out of the bondage of nature that he may become freely subject to God. But how shall the creature, immersed in his natural consciousness, filled with the instinct of self-love, unable to know God intuitively, come to a recognition of the Divine life which lies deeper

within him than his nature? He is endowed with a double consciousness. He comes to know himself at first as having a community with his kind; then, feeling himself finited on every hand by this natural community, he has a consciousness of death and a profound instinct leads him to believe in a positive good without contrast of evil. Thus is generated *conscience*. Conscience is the first entrance of God into the human life. It is His voice in our bosom, saying: I make you each conscious of a power of being or suffering infinitely transcending your power of doing or enjoying, and this power it is which alone allies you with God. Thus the moral element in us becomes disengaged from the physical. We cease to recognize ourselves as primarily under obligation to nature, and come to look upon ourselves as subject to an inward and infinite ideal.

Conscience is not a revelation to the intellect. It does not tell us what is wrong and what is right. It is simply a perception of the inextinguishable contrariety of good and evil. It is an instinct of the soul, not an intuition of the reason. Its function is to make manifest to us the death which we have in ourselves, the evil which is in our natural make-up, and so prepare us to receive the life which we have in God. Through it all our unconscious imperfections become luminous to our conscious

self. Its invariable sentence is death, and this death to ourselves we are obliged to undergo before we can become emancipated from the shackles of the finite, and rise into the living discernment and participation of the infinite.

The first effect of conscience, however, is to cause us to aspire after a personal righteousness which shall bring us into direct spiritual relations with God. But the more we strive, the less we succeed. A genuine conscience of sin is out of all ratio to the amount of evil actually done, much more actually doing. We all know that they who habitually do the least evil have the tenderest consciences, and they who do the most, the bluntest. A conscience of sin always originates in a judgment which the soul passes upon itself for having actually done wrong, but it ends in a conviction of one's natural unlikeness to God. In the spiritual man the subtler consciousness of evil-being has utterly consumed the grosser consciousness of evil-doing.

But conscience can go no further than to make manifest to us our inward destitution. It cannot tell us where to find our true or spiritual life, because it is itself a natural quality and nature knows nothing of spirit. The natural and the spiritual worlds are both embraced in the human consciousness, the former being the lower region of the mind and the latter the upper, but they do not con-



nect with each other by continuity: they connect by correspondence, else there would be no discrimination of base from building. The natural world is not the real world: it is but the image of the real world. The infinite is the sole reality which underlies all finite appearance. As books presuppose wit in the reader, so the natural world presupposes a spiritual world which will explain it, and it is utterly unintelligible unless light be thrown upon it from this spiritual world. This light is Revelation. We as creatures can have no intuitive knowledge of uncreated things: we can only know them through our reason, and our reason must be enlightened by revelation. Experience gives us self-knowledge; revelation, divine knowledge. An unrevealed God is practically no God at all to the human understanding. But revelation is not information. Information means knowledge which comes up to the soul from the senses; revelation, knowledge which comes down to the senses from the soul. To reveal is to unveil what has been hitherto concealed under a veil of contrary appearance. Revelation is an inverted image of the truth; information, a direct image. If a direct knowledge of God were imparted to us it would leave the human mind no chance to grow; hence revelation is symbolic, thus shielding and fostering human freedom. The re-

ligious history of the race is the veritable history of the human mind, and this history involves the doctrine of a Divine revelation.

Revelation has taken many forms, but the great revelation is in Christianity. Christianity is the doctrine of the eternal and perfect union of God and man in the person of Jesus Christ. Its spiritual meaning is that human nature itself is the adequate and ample abode of perfect love and wisdom, that the infinite and finite are in complete union in man. It is a recognition of God in man, in distinction from natural religion or paganism which is an acknowledgment of God in nature. The Divine life in man, which grows out of the conjunction of the infinite Divine Love with our finite natural loves, was perfectly manifested in Christ. In Him for the first time the private human bosom was brought into perfect experimental accord with infinite Love. Spiritually viewed, Christ is the inmost and vital selfhood of every individual. Whatever life was in him actually is potentially in all men. The incarnation is a revelation of the true principles of creative order, the order that binds the universe of existence to its source. It is the sole philosophic secret of creation, and the Christian facts in embodying the secret in a cipher until such time as the human mind had grown wise enough by experience to unriddle it, impose a definite end to men's crude speculations.

Mr. James holds the recorded facts of Christ's life to be authentic, because he sees them to be the needful exponents of otherwise undiscoverable and inconceivable spiritual truth. He considers them, indeed, to be the only facts of human history which are not in themselves illusory, because they alone base a new creation in man to which every fibre of his nature eagerly responds.

Christ came in history, because it is always in the course of the history of the human heart that it desires this knowledge of a possible Divine life. It is not until conscience has disclosed to us our need that we care to know the remedy for it.

We have seen that man is a unit of two forces: one infinite and Divine, the other finite and natural; and that the human consciousness is so framed that it identifies itself with nature, else it would have no way of distinguishing itself from God—if we were good spontaneously we should simply be God, because all goodness is one. Also we have seen that our natural selfhood is composite, consisting of a universal substance which is the same in every one, and a particular form which differences its subject from others, and that out of this duality the natural consciousness is generated. We have seen further that man recognizes his selfhood in his private force, feels a freedom to renounce the dominion of his inherited nature and act from the

promptings of his own individual will, and so attains to moral consciousness, which separates him from the lower existences and identifies him with his kind. Thus far we have only demonstrated the natural creation, which is God's descending movement by which the creature becomes posited and obtains a life of his own as the basis of a divine life which is to become his in the end. The next and final creative movement is the ascending one, the spiritual, which is the true creation.

Through the spiritual creation we become gradually freed from our inherent corruption and death, and progressively invested with God's own infinity and eternity. This implies the Creator's communication of Himself to the creature, which communication is contingent upon the creature's capacity of reception. God cannot communicate His gifts to man except in an inward way, or through the man himself. We have first the consciousness of a selfhood distinct from God, and then gradually we attain to the consciousness of a selfhood united with God. Man's infinite selfhood becomes evolved by the elimination of his finite selfhood. While the latter exists in full force he remains unconscious of the former, and it is only as he puts the finite selfhood from him accordingly that the true or infinite one flows in and becomes established. Spiritual creation first shapes itself to discriminate

the Divine element from all lower and temporary elements. The Divine element in man, Mr. James calls the truly-human element, because it is in man only, and not in the other subjects of nature. While the natural life controls his action, man cannot realize the life he has in God. If it weren't for the perpetual disappointment he encounters in the pursuit both of pleasure and righteousness, he would sink into the abject votary of nature and his fellow-man, and the immortal instincts he derives from God would expire; but these disappointments guard the interests of his unconscious destiny.

The growth from the natural to the spiritual life is Regeneration. As we are born into self-love, we must be re-born if we come into universal love. The regenerated man is the truly created man. Regeneration begins when a man abstains from doing evil, *when tempted*, out of reverent regard to the will of God; or when, some hereditary evil disposition having come to the surface in act, he sees it in its true light, inwardly loathes it, and outwardly averts himself from it. To bring this about is the office of conscience. But for conscience, we should go on feeling that life is as it seems; we should never learn that our true individuality is our regenerate spiritual one, and not the generic moral one which we derive from our ancestry.

When a man is regenerating, he acts from a sense of duty merely ; when he is regenerated, he acts from attraction or spontaneously. Our life has three degrees : First, instinct, in which our passions rule us ; second, the moral or voluntary life, in which the intellect rules ; third, the spontaneous life, in which the true individuality has become pronounced, and man acts from the promptings of his heart, which are then in entire accord with the judgments of his intellect.

In the instinctive life man seems to himself to be free, but is not. He acts from pleasure and thinks he is acting from his own private will, while he is in reality acting from his inherited nature. This is the exact inverse form of the Divine life. God is all individuality. He has no identity with other existences, consequently His life is always spontaneous. He is the controlling power, and the universe is controlled by Him. If, then, man's private power, his selfhood, which is his natural individuality, is under the control of an outside force, the force of his nature, he presents that exact contrariety to God which makes his subsequent spiritual creation possible.

In the moral life "man not only seems to be free, but he really is free to a certain extent. He is free to act according to his reason, but this very freedom implies a coercion of a part of himself. He

must make his passions obey his judgment; he must force himself away from what he thinks evil to what he considers good. In the spontaneous life, however, man is really free. Heart and head are in accord. The heart prompts what the head approves, and the head furthers what the heart prompts. This is the spiritual life.

When we act naturally or morally, the motive of our action lies without ourselves, in our physical organization or our fellow-man; when we act spontaneously, the motive of our action lies within ourselves. Moral existence is the alliance of an inward subject and an outward object; spiritual existence, of an outward subject and an inward object. In moral existence the universal dominates the individual; in spiritual existence the case is reversed, and the outward serves the inward.

In our moral experience begins our progress toward God. It is the first step out of our animal life of instinct towards the human life of spontaneity. It gives us a sense of alienation from (*otherness than*) our Maker, against which we instinctively react, and seek to reunite ourselves with God. When man is at discord with his inmost self he feels the lack of peace which no gratification of his outward life can satisfy. But the direct efforts which the moral subject makes to readjust himself to his creative source cannot

spiritually avail him, because his voluntary activity tends constantly to enhance his conscious remoteness from the infinite rather than to abridge it. The more he strives the more disheartening is his sense of his utter inward disproportion to the infinite goodness. At last he comes to perceive that this desire for personal righteousness, the desire to achieve his own spiritual safety, is really, though unconsciously, but the exercise of a devout self-love. Our morality, our will, is a part of our nature; it is our *human* nature. It is the power which every man *as man* possesses, to rise above those natural limitations which bind all lower existences and appear himself alone, unrelated to any one else. Its vital atmosphere is self-love, and therefore it cannot bring us into harmony with God. But God never violates our instincts. He does not force Himself upon us, but works ever to incline us towards a desire to seek Him of our own accord. He tenderly guards the natural instinct of selfhood, because it is the germ of the Divine life in us; it is the mould into which the true selfhood is to run and become manifested. Our natural selfish loves are therefore made interested factors in working out our spiritual destiny. If we are sincere in desiring personal righteousness, we seek it by endeavoring to fulfil all our obligations to our fellow-man. We cannot do this, but by this means our subjective

love is gradually bent into a regard for society, which is an objective love. We learn that our interests are inexorably bound up in the interests of the race, that we cannot become personally righteous except as all men become so. Thus morality finds its fulfilment in the social sentiment.

The spiritual life is a life of attraction, but the first step towards it is by self-denial. We must first unlove ourselves before we can love others. We must be primarily of use to others, and only subordinately to such use are we to have life, or delight, in ourselves. Finite love, so it be genuine and unaffected, is spiritually harmonic with infinite love. But finite love is only genuine when self-love is subordinated to it, when we love others at the expense of ourselves. If, then, it be the law of the finite intelligence to realize a life in harmony with that of its Creator only by inwardly dying to its own subjective tendencies, it follows that the subjective element in existence is an evil element, and must be overcome or set at naught before the creature can have any taste of true being. When conscience has taught us that, it has fulfilled its proper function. There can be no subjective identity, but, on the contrary, ever a subjective contrariety between Creator and creature. The only unity they can aspire to is an objective unity.

God's love is for the whole race of man; His activity is directed towards the welfare of all humanity: if, then, our love and our activity are the same, we are in unity with Him. We are spiritually creatures of God only in so far as we become identified in affection and thought with the interests of the Divine righteousness on earth, only in so far as we spontaneously renounce the interests of our proper person whenever they conflict with those of our common nature. *The only righteousness which man can attain to lies in his participation of the spirit of God, the spirit of universal love.* The true theatre of sin lies back of our activity and centres in our fundamental affections. In these is the seat of the only evil known to God—spiritual evil; and this evil does not depend upon inheritance, but besets every one equally.

Spiritual evil is inward exclusively. It does not belong to man in his relations to nature or society, but in his relation to God. It is the feeling that he is something in himself, apart from God and irrespective of his kind. It has two forms. One is the choice of evil from the love of it, or the voluntary identifying of ourselves with our nature, and the consequent renunciation of God from the life. The other is still more interior: it is self-righteousness, the acceptance of good, and the profanation of it, by making it subserve our own

glory and not the glory of God. This is the most fatal form of ungodliness.

Instinct causes us to shrink from physical evil, and conscience haunts us if we give ourselves up to moral evil; but spiritual evil has this peculiarity, that the subject of it does not call it evil, but good. It is not death to him, but life. He may perceive it to be evil through his reason, but his heart tells him that it is the vital breath of his being. There is no remedy for spiritual evil but in belief: not in the belief of an infinite Power outside of us,—the devils may believe that,—but of an infinite Goodness within us which is striving to woo us into harmony with its own deathless perfection. As Mr. James exquisitely says: "His [man's] belief saves him and his disbelief damns him only because the armory of the Divine Love furnishes no similar weapon capable of subduing the heart of his rebellion." The happiness of a created being *must* consist in the harmonious relations that bind him to his Creator. If, then, these relations are falsified at their very core by the creature putting himself practically in the place of God with respect to every important interest and responsibility of life, every form of disaster is bound to ensue.

The antagonism of good and evil in the physical and social spheres is a necessary part of our natural creation. Through physical evil we are defined

as animals, through moral evil as men. We are not spiritually hurt by moral evil more than by physical evil if we do not inwardly approve of it. But spiritual good and evil are positive: they do not exist from the antagonism of one another. When we have come into spiritual good we are endowed with a totally new motive of action, which is the love of God and our neighbor. He alone truly fulfils the law who regards it not with a view to its rewards, but with an inward delight, as breathing the divinest love. He must fulfil it *from* life, and not *to* life; must do it spontaneously, and not from a sense of obligation. In the process of regeneration, a man has a life of obedience to truth in his intellect; after his regeneration is complete, he lives from the inspiration of good in his heart. Regeneration means coming to have an interior sympathy with goodness and truth. To be spiritually like God is to undo the subjective inversion of the Divine perfection to which we find ourselves naturally born, and put on the direct presentation of it to which we are historically re-born. So we become allied no longer negatively and inversely, but positively and directly, with infinite power, peace, and innocence. The difference between the two states is the difference between being a servant and being a son.

By means of regeneration we realize immortality.



Post-mortem consciousness is not immortality. Immortal life is the realization of our true and God-given individuality symbolized by our natural selfhood. It is the prevalence of a man's inward life over his outward one. Death is the state of a man in love with himself more than with God and his neighbor. To pass from death to life means to cease from self-reliance and confide in the Love which is infinite and universal. Personal salvation is intimate and eternal exemption from the dominion of evil.

But the regeneration of individuals, important as it is to the individuals themselves, is only incidental and tributary to the great work of God in humanity, which is the regeneration of the human race itself; for the race has as rigid a unity as any of its individual members. It has, metaphysically speaking, the human form. It is the *maximus homo*, of which its members are *minimi homines*. It is evident, then, that the human race itself, this great human soul, may be regenerated, may be lifted into union with God, and so become the basis of a new spiritual development in the individual past all prophecy to foretell.

This *maximus homo*, this man which is to be, is the controller of our destiny. He is the Lord whom Christ typified. In him will the Divine and human natures be perfectly united.

This truth is the hidden Divine leaven which has been fermenting in all history and, even from its rudest beginnings, moulding the mind of man into conformity with itself. The gradual enlargement of our consciousness out of the personal limitations in which it begins into the largest social dimensions in which it ends constitutes the sole veritable stuff of human history. Nature gives us an infinitely modulated key wherewith to unlock all the secret chambers of the human heart, all the infinite possibilities of character among men; but nature of necessity is complicated with man's historic evolution, and it is not until history consequently has attained its culmination that we may expect to begin the realization of our spiritual creation.

A living knowledge of God must come about gradually. It is contingent upon the advent of a true society among men; the evolution of such society being itself contingent upon a previous experience and exhaustion of the patriarchal, the municipal, and the national or political administration of human affairs. Whatever is logically implied in man's nature, as a created and finite being, *must* come to consciousness in him, so as to constitute him to his own intelligence. Creation is not an incident of history; history is an incident of creation. It is the fermentation and ripening of

human nature. It means the continuity of an identical germ, through root and branch, through stalk and leaf, to fruit. It is simply a slow but unceasing approximation to the embodiment in institutions of the idea of the exact equality of man with man. No feature of it could have been different from what it has been. An infinite wisdom embeds all the phenomena of human experience, and creation exhibits the only order possible for it to exhibit. No truth is thrust upon the mind of the race prematurely. A watchful love prevents our receiving an excess of truth beyond the wants of the life.

The race has the same development in its degree that the individual has in its degree. In its infancy it feels a power in nature superior to herself, and thus it comes to the idea of a God. To this God it appeals for help against the oppressions of nature, and so the feeling arises that God cares more for man than for nature, and by implication more for his human soul than for his natural body. God's answer to the prayer of His petitioner is by giving him wit to invent protections for himself, and so step by step He helps him in an inward way. As the mind of the race progresses, mankind acquires the sentiment of human brotherhood. This is born of the necessity man feels of the aid of his fellow-man to enable him to attain the lordship of

nature. In the same way every issue of humanity depends upon the education and discipline of the human consciousness. By gradual steps the selfish principle which represents the finite man is changed into the social principle which represents the infinite humanity, so making at last God and man naturally one, as they have always been spiritually one. This is the Divine Natural Humanity. The regeneration of the race, being the slow accretion of experience, constitutes the very last result of human history, the crowning achievement of creative wisdom.

That which is the Regeneration of the race on the human side is, on the Divine side, Redemption. By redemption the nature of the creature becomes finally freed from its intrinsic limitations and eternally associated with infinite goodness and truth. This was accomplished potentially by Christ when he successively met all the temptations to which human nature is subject and overcame them, but it will not be accomplished actually until the race is completely regenerated, or exalted out of physical and moral into social and æsthetic lineaments, which, again, cannot come about until man shall have renounced his selfish instincts. To teach him this renunciation has been the great lesson of God's providence in all the dreary past. Our historic past has made manifest the evil which is latent in

the finite selfhood, and so has prepared a permanent foundation in experience for human society. The evil thus latent is commensurate in quantity and quality with the infinite Divine goodness, and no Diviner mercy could befall us than to allow it to be played out betimes in all its hideous malignity. The rule for both the individual and the race runs that no goodness endures but that which is qualified by intelligence. Natural innocence is destitute of the human element, spontaneity, and hence will not keep.

The feeling that God cares more for man than for nature prepared the way for the acceptance of Christianity. Christ's history was the grand starting-point for the hope of man. Henceforth Paganism, or the conception of a God in nature and apart from man, was at an end. His sole abode was seen to be in the heart of a truly-loving man, and His power to be exclusively exerted in the direction of his spiritual aggrandizement. Christ's whole divinity lay in the fact of his having no interest apart from the welfare of universal man. He had no will apart from the will of God, which will, of course, could only be the equal blessing of all mankind. At his coming the inheritance of evil had so accumulated that its power had got a greater purchase upon the mind of man than the power of good, so that his moral freedom was

almost lost. The equilibrium of good and evil, by which alone our natural freedom stands, was disturbed in favor of evil. Through Christ's life came a new power into humanity. In his soul the union of the Divine and Human natures was perfectly consummated, and thus in him was revealed the birthright of all humanity. Christianity may be styled a formal proclamation of the exhaustion of religion as a ceremonial and its revival as a life. Other religions swamp man in nature, are practically nothing more than a consecration of the ties of nature; Christianity lifts man out of these relations, and allies him in spirit with universal goodness and truth.

The social sentiment is possible only to man because in him alone of all the animals are the universal and individual elements essentially matched. The only real fellow that the individual man has in nature is by no means some other individual man,—for this would not be fellowship or equality, but identity,—but the complex or composite man, society. Nature quantifies us and spirit qualifies us, and the two exactly correspond to each other. To the primary instinct the private element is subordinate to the public one, while by redemption, regeneration, spiritual culture,—the terms all meaning the same as to result,—our consciousness is revolutionized, the private, internal, or specific

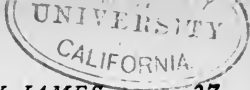
element, which is the specially human element through which comes our union with God, takes its rightful place as controlling, and the public, external or generic element takes the last or ministerial place; but neither element is forced, the natural does not overrule the spiritual, nor the spiritual the natural. The pivot of this great historic revolution is the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ.

In the absolute truth of things there is no variance between duty and pleasure, duty and taste, duty and inclination. Self-love and neighborly love are perfectly united. Fully to conform to the absolute truth of things constitutes man's destiny, and the accomplishment of this destiny will be signalized by the advent of a true society upon the earth, in which the principle of self-love will be spontaneously subject to the principle of universal love, and universal love, subject to the inmost ideal of life, *i.e.*, to God. Self-love itself will then become the invincible guarantee of endless peace and order.

Society is the fundamental principle of the Divine economy on earth, meaning by that word the essential brotherhood, fellowship, equality of each man with all men and all men with each. The created form, in order that it may fitly respond to the creative being, must be a unitary form express-

ing the unity of each and all creatures. An organized society is this form, in which one man shall not be allowed any arbitrary advantage over another, and every man's nature, whatever be his personal differences from other men, shall be alike honored. Once human society is fairly inaugurated by all men becoming endowed with an equal interest in it, then every man will be a law unto himself, and will spiritually execute justice and judgment upon himself whenever he thinks a thought or feels a desire of inequality with respect to the meanest man that lives.

But by Society Mr. James does not mean a herd of men. Society claims a qualitative, not a quantitative unity. It is a perfect hierarchy, in which each member is sacred with an equal though various sacredness. It is like the human body in which the head, the trunk, and the limbs occupy positions of different dignity according to the variety of their powers, but are alike essential to the integrity of the body. In every person there is a special aptitude to some divine end, if we could only get at it, a special potency for some beautiful function which no other person embodies so highly. To doubt this would be to doubt the Divine Love, would be to suppose that it did not design its creatures for harmony but for perpetual antagonism; for the more things resemble each other the more



they stand in each other's way. If men were literally equal to each other, they would have identity, but not unity. This special function, characteristic activity, or genius of each man is the real presence of God in him, and when human fellowship is rightly ordered we shall see God revealed in all men alike, from the least to the greatest. And there will be no room for envy, because there is an exact proportion between each one's personal and intellectual nature and his practical power, so that every one's outward fortunes will exactly respond to his inward desires.

Then at last, when we shall have become consciously one, each with all and all with each in God, we shall be able to be endued collectively and individually with all the potencies, felicities, and beatitudes of the Divine life.

In this great redemption all the participants of human nature are included. Even the tremendous issues of heaven and hell fall within creation, not outside of it. Heaven and hell are mere incidents of human progress; they exhibit the unfettered play of human freedom. The existence of hell marks an energy in the earth not as yet fully wrought into the tissue of human nature. That evil should be separated from good and come under its permanent though unconscious subjection, is necessary as a preliminary work. It is a

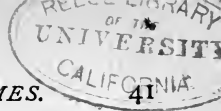
strictly defecating process, a means of purifying the human mind. For even in the angels self-love is not spontaneously subordinate to universal love, and if hell were not separated from heaven the angels would not be free. Hell would suffocate heaven, and the angels would preserve their purity only by constant self-control. But when the reconstruction of human nature is complete, then there will be no necessity for this separation; there will be but one richly unitary life. *Behold, I make a new heaven and a new earth*, saith the scripture; but nothing is said about a new hell.

But the redemption of the human race does not mean the spiritual regeneration of all its members. As the whole race is the macrocosm of which the individual is the microcosm, so just as the two loves, self-love and neighborly love, dwell always together in the regenerate private heart, there will still be correspondingly in the regenerate public life those who are in self-love side by side with those in universal love, though, as now, not obviously distinguishable from them. The principle of self-love, which is the principle of evil, *cannot* be destroyed, else the creature would be absorbed in the Creator, and creation would lapse. This would be Nirvâna or self-extinction. There is a race-destiny for man, but no such thing as an individual destiny. The individual either remains what he

already is by derivation from his ancestry and the circumstances of his own position, or else he becomes a new and regenerate form of life, according to his own pleasure. Freedom and rationality by no means give any of us a title to the Divine possibilities which inhere in human nature : they only inscribe us as candidates for such title. Where there is no susceptibility to inward life the Divine benefaction is thwarted. In all God's dealings with us He regards the interests of our freedom as jealously as a man guards the apple of his eye. Good and evil must both be presented to us in order that we may choose good from the love of it. Even in a true society there will be trials to be passed through in the process of regeneration ; temptations to spiritual pride and self-indulgence will doubtless always beset the natural life. In truth, while as a matter of philosophy we may speak of the finished creation of God, as a matter of fact creation will never be finished. Evil will ever be decreasing and good increasing, but God's perfections are infinite and our want is endless ; and creation, as it is never past, being renewed every moment, so it will never be done.

By self-love spontaneously subjecting itself to brotherly love, Mr. James cannot mean that it will do this through a sense of inferiority, because in that case its nature would be changed—it would

have humility which is the highest spiritual grace. And he cannot mean that it would be hypocritically seeking the welfare of all while it was consciously striving to make that welfare subservient to its own base ends; nor that it would look upon life as a mere give and take,—I will live for society in order that society may live for me,—for either of these last would be a very unhandsome form of life, unworthy of the perfected creation of God. He must mean, then, that self-love will in sincerity seek the good of society, while, all unconsciously to itself, its real motive for this will be to secure its own well-being. We often see this combination in children, and those in self-love will be in a perpetual childhood. They will have an arrested development; they will be in the innocence of ignorance, but will never attain to the innocence of wisdom. But because they will have the social sentiment, all manner of outward good will be showered upon them. For our freedom is, after all, conditioned: it cannot render us absolutely independent of God, since, even if we do not love Him, He loves us, and makes us, so far as our range of life will allow, the recipient of His mercies. The Divine goodness is really no greater towards a regenerate man than towards the greatest devil or degenerate man; the gospel may be preached as well in hell as in heaven, but the Divine good-



ness can only give what the man is willing to take.

This reduction of human nature, or the natural mind, to Divine order is not for its own sake, but for the sake of the spiritual mind, as a guarantee of the integrity and permanence of the spiritual creation which is wholly an inward one. The race is the natural end of creation; the individual, the spiritual end. The former is incidental to the latter. Our natural consciousness must put on the true form of life in order that there may be a basis of continuity between the natural and spiritual existence.

The distinctively human form of life is a life developed exclusively from within to without. When man shall have attained that, the Divinity of his source will be properly avouched, and not before. Then God will be able to fill him with the power and peace of His own life; for it is our destiny to have God's life in us our inmost and vital self, endowing us with sweetness of affection, reach of intellect, and a power of action spontaneous and infinite. In the spontaneous life man perfectly loses himself and perfectly finds himself. Here he can say what every true creature of God is bound to say: I and my Father are one.

I will hazard one comment upon a point in this philosophy.

As a metaphysical presentation, Mr. James's statement of the difference between Creator and creature is perfect [see "Substance and Shadow," pp. 412-418]; but it seems to me that another method of putting it, equally correct so far as it goes, would bring the thought more within the reach of the practical mind.

Unorganized being, or God, tends to give Itself utterly, and finds Its delight in so doing; organized existence, or Nature, tends ever to preserve and perpetuate itself; so one is the exact opposite of the other. In human nature this instinct of self-preservation has a double action, corresponding to the dual selfhood of its subject. One, which man has in common with inferior existences, has for its object simply the preservation of his life; the other, which is purely human, the preservation of some quality or love that he holds dearer than his bodily organization, which he feels to be, in fact, the life of his soul, and according as the animal or human side in him is more pronounced will one or the other action of this instinct be the stronger. In either case, however, the instinctive desire is to *keep*, while the Creator spontaneously *gives*.

Thus nature begins where spirit ends; the natural world sets *bounds*, so to speak, to the spiritual world, *i.e.*, as a conception of the mind; not in

space, of course, for to the spiritual world, which is the world of affection and thought, space does not exist.

But as nature, or the natural creation, is absolutely necessary in order that the spiritual creation may be begotten from it, so this instinct of self-preservation has a certain Divine permission to be which renders it innocent in itself, though it is the fruitful mother of all evil. It is to the mind like the earth to the body. We *must* stand upon it on penalty of being otherwise uncreated, but at every step of our progress we must cast it behind us.

When we have a perfect society, men will find not only their lives but their ruling loves so much better preserved and authenticated by the care of all than they could possibly be by the fussy attention of each individual to himself, that this instinct will perhaps lapse entirely to the consciousness, be swallowed up in the social sentiment, so that the inmost spiritual law, He that loses his life shall find it, will become the actuating principle of the most external natural life.

The peculiarity of Mr. James's mind of which we spoke in the beginning—his instinctively seeing creation from the creative side—is strikingly shown in one of his early essays, entitled "Prop-

erty as a Symbol," in which he explains the intrinsic significance of the value put by man upon the ownership of property. Now to most of us the selfish advantages arising from the possession of property ourselves and from association with those who possess it, are so obvious, that we should never think of being puzzled for an explanation of the estimation in which it is held. A much greater mystery would seem to attach to the value put upon birth, which in all ages and the most democratic countries has been able to hold its own side by side with wealth.

To Mr. James, every event of nature and history symbolizes some great feature of human destiny. Thus property symbolizes the perfect sovereignty which man is destined to exercise over nature ; its unequal distribution, the fact that a perfect society will be a hierarchy, not a literal equality. The church symbolizes a true society or brotherhood among men. Man symbolizes the external element, or the descending movement in creation ; woman, the internal element, or the ascending movement. The king symbolizes the power of the coming man ; the priest his goodness ; the artist his spontaneity, etc. ; " but it is the fate of symbols to be ignorant of their due subordination, and to claim to be the realities they only serve."

We close with a few quotations from our author

for which no place has been found in the body of the article.

“The final cause of a phenomenon is the use it promotes to something above itself.”

“Every lower thing is involved in a higher.”

“Every man claims to be estimated by himself; every animal, by its species.”

“The devil is a conscious subject without any unconscious object to control him.”

“The ideal of the State is to reproduce upon an enduring basis their lost paradise, while that of the Church is to show men paradise well lost for heaven.”

“Culture is God’s indwelling power in man.”

“The tap-root of every man’s spiritual character is the conception he entertains of God.”

“We rid ourselves of physical evils from moral causes, and of moral evils from spiritual causes.”

“The only possible damage we sustain from evil is not the suffering it causes, but the bosom-pleasure it affords.”

“Our vices and follies, collective and personal, have wrought us infinitely more advantage than our virtue and knowledge have ever achieved.”

“I am persuaded that no man ever suffered an hour in God’s universe without reaping, if he were a good man, a quite endless internal profit from

the occurrence or, if he were a bad man, a quite endless external profit."

"A man contains in himself the stupendous contrarities of heaven and hell, or the exactly equal possibilities of the brightest spiritual day and the murkiest spiritual night."

"The interests of our true manhood are our eternal interests, and they have no more relevancy to the life beyond the grave than they have to that now present."

"Man's true good never comes from without him, but only from the depths of Divinity within him."

"Our life is always deeper than we know, is always more Divine than it seems, and hence we are able to survive degradations and despairs which otherwise must have engulfed us."

"Our affections ally us with infinitude or God; our intelligence allies us with nature or the finite."

"Love is never voluntary, but always spontaneous. Its unconscious element controls its conscious element."

"God is the all of man's life; the power of man at bottom is the power of God."

"To give the feminine element its hard-earned but eternal supremacy of the masculine element has been the secret inspiration of all past history."

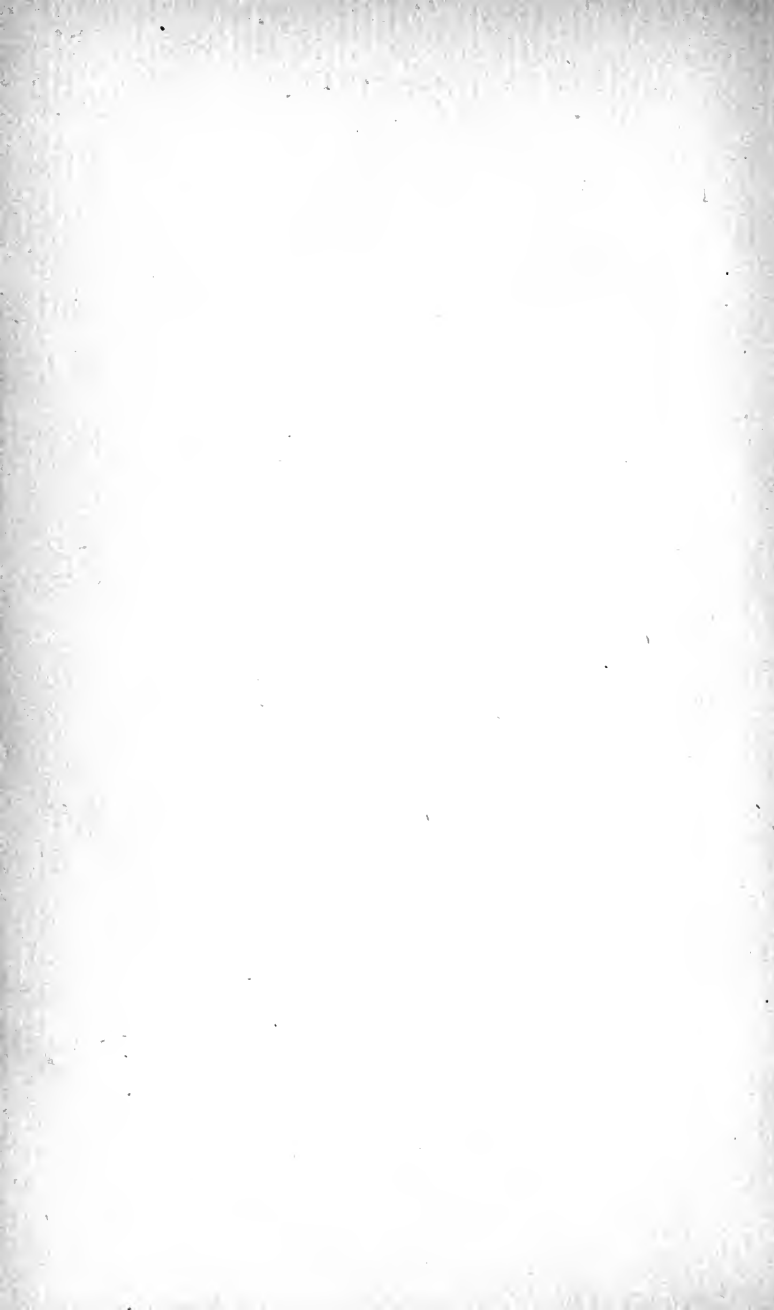
“Evil is unknown at the heart of things.”

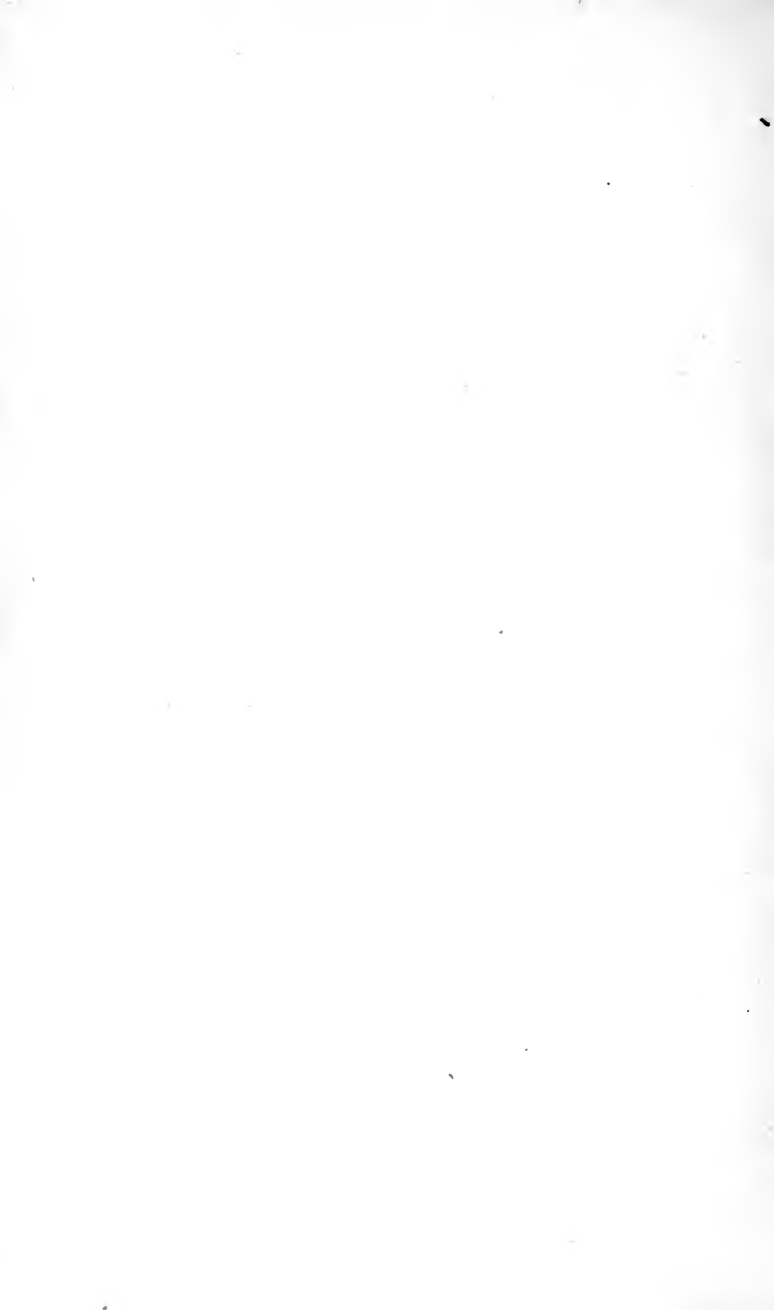
“This makes the eternal distinction of man, that the entire sparkling and melodious universe of sense is but the appanage of his nature, is but the furniture of his proper life, is but the platform of his true individuality ; while the source of that life or individuality is itself forever hidden in the inscrutable splendors of God.”

“Love—infinite Love—is the final word, the grand unuttered secret of Philosophy.”

SOMERVILLE, MASS., Feb. 15, 1883.









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