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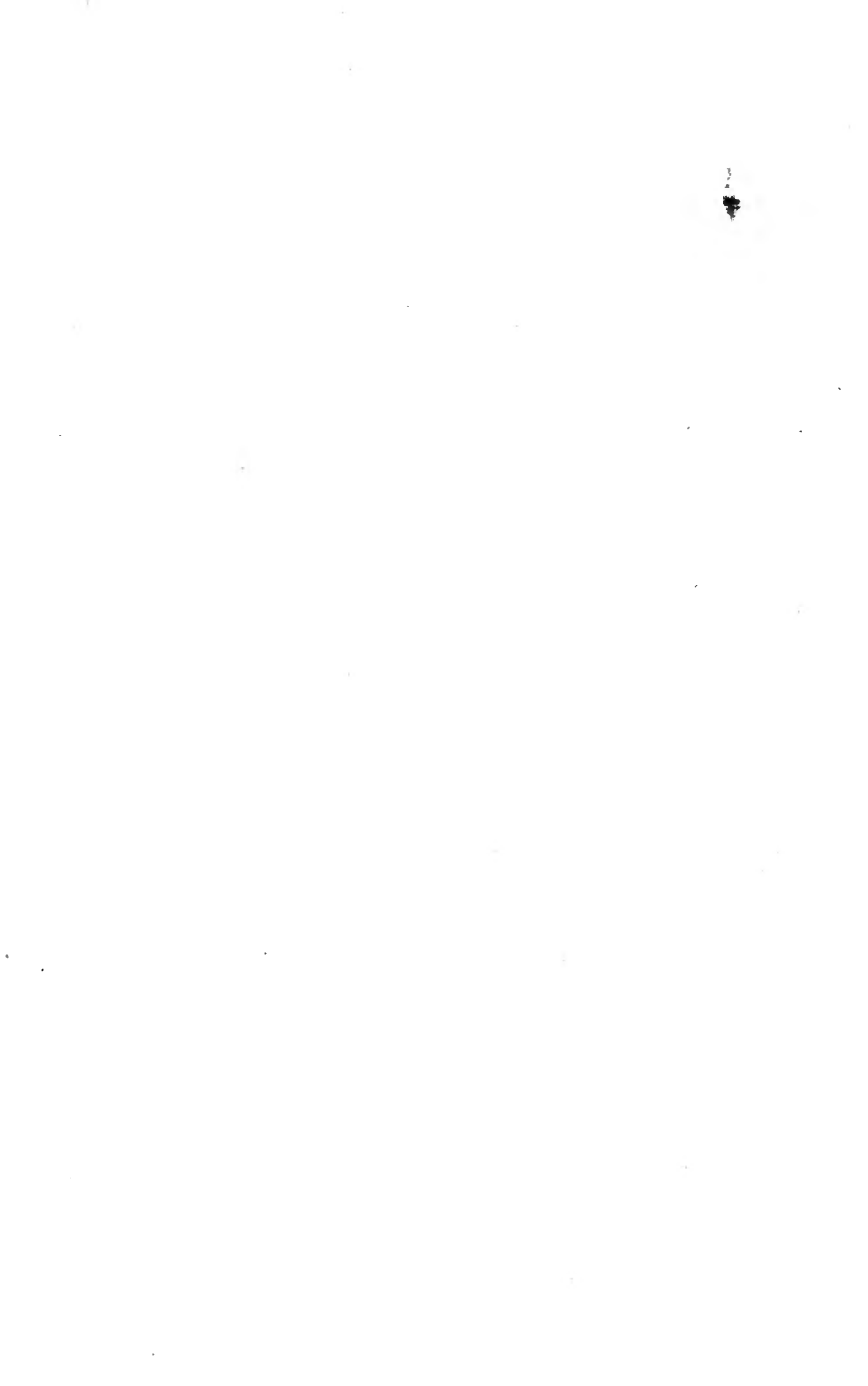
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MEMOIR

OF

JOHANN GOTTLIEB FICHTE



THE  
POPULAR WORKS  
OF  
JOHANN GOTTLIEB FICHTE

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

BY

WILLIAM SMITH, LL. D.

*WITH A MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR*

*Fourth Edition, in Two Volumes*

VOLUME I.

LONDON:  
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1889.

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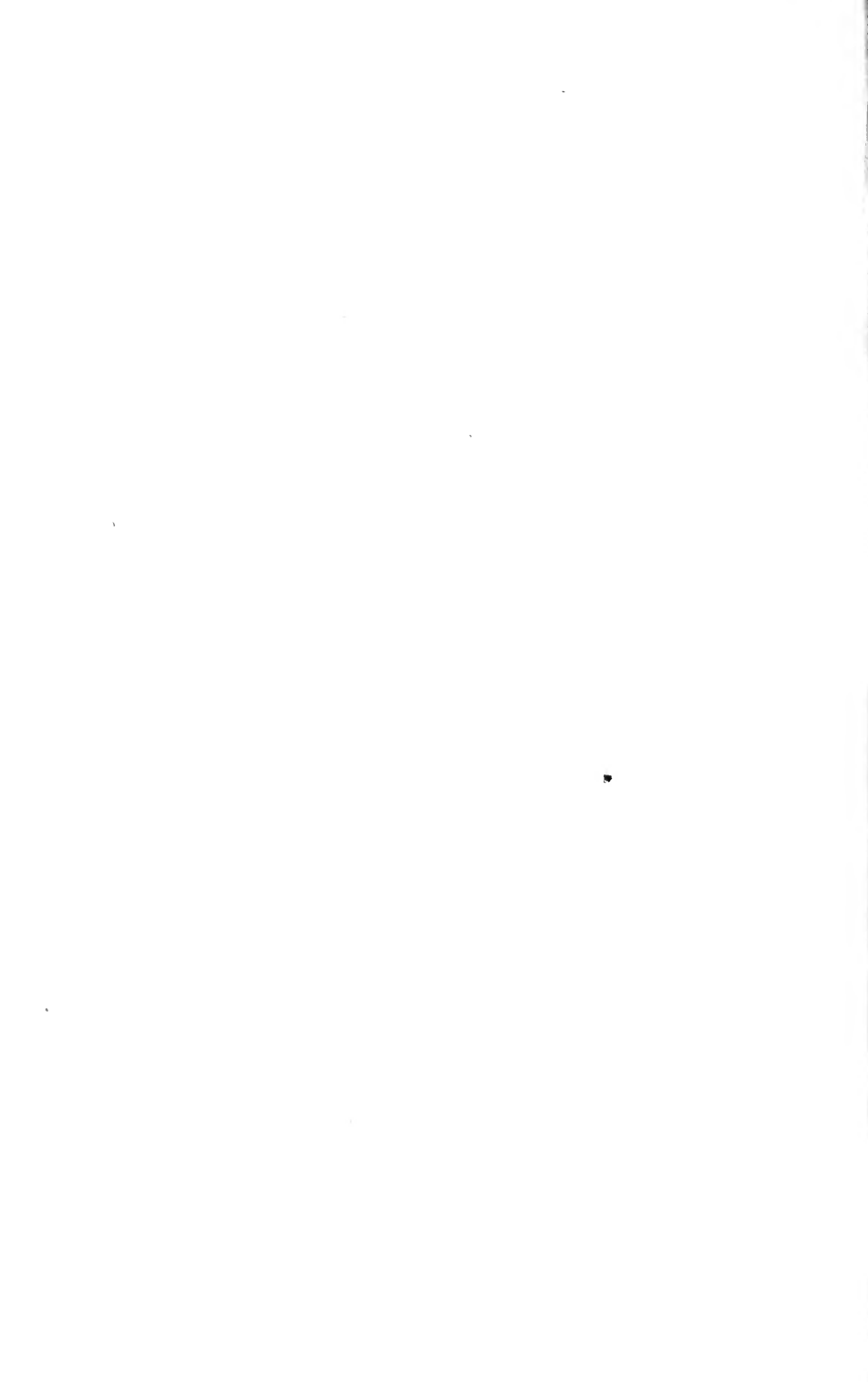
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*To the Memory*  
*of*  
*THOMAS CARLYLE*  
*these volumes are*  
*respectfully and gratefully inscribed*

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## PREFATORY NOTE TO THE FOURTH EDITION.

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OVER forty years have elapsed since these translations of the popular philosophical works of JOHANN GOTTLIEB FICHTE were first published in 1845-49. At that time comparatively little attention had been directed in this country to the strictly philosophical literature of Germany, and no one had even attempted any popular exposition of transcendental idealism. But many varied influences, — notably the writings of Coleridge, Emerson, and Carlyle, — had combined to awaken among us a sense of dissatisfaction with the common philosophy, and a desire for higher and more spiritual views of man and the universe. In the hope of contributing to the fulfilment of that desire, I ventured to undertake the task of making known to my fellow-countrymen, in their own tongue, a new mode of thought in which this highest region of enquiry had been approached by a profound and earnest German thinker, of whom it had been truly said that “a soul so calm, so lofty, massive, and immovable, has not mingled in philosophical discussion since the time of Luther.” The hope thus entertained has been realized to an extent far beyond what I could then anticipate. By kind acknowledgments that have reached me from many quarters, both here and in America, as well as by the issue of successive editions of these writings, I am warranted in the belief that the seed thus sown has borne fruit in due season and in many fields. In the preparation of these volumes for a fourth edition they have been once more subjected to careful revision; and in now taking final leave of them I venture again to indulge the hope that, favoured by the wider interest now taken in the higher philosophy, they may still be found a help and encouragement to the earnest student in his search, amid the doubts and confusion of our time, for some reassuring glimpse of the ‘Divine Idea of the World.’

W. S.

LENNOX LEA, MIDLOTHIAN,  
*September 1889.*





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THE VOCATION OF THE SCHOLAR

THE NATURE OF THE SCHOLAR

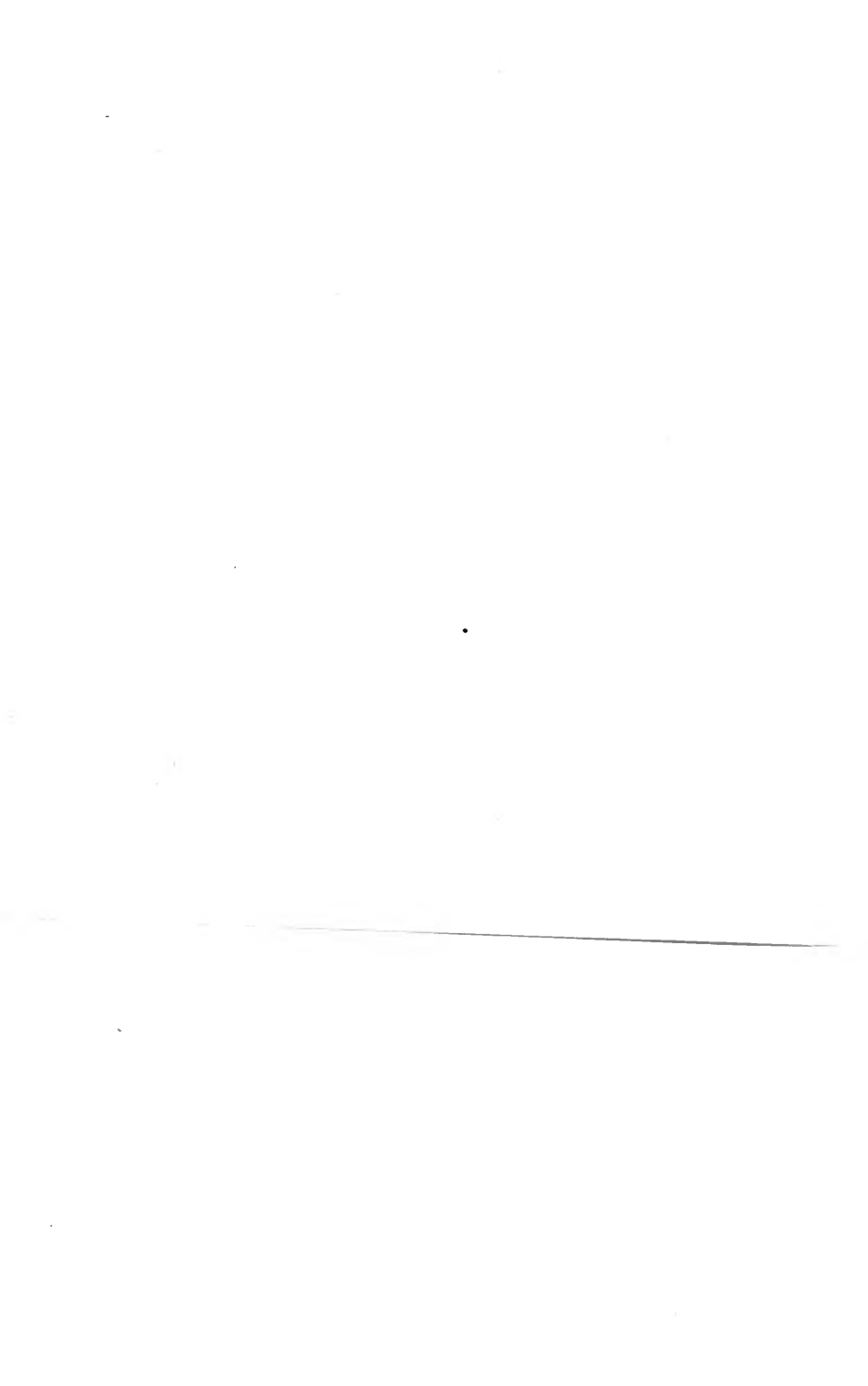
THE VOCATION OF MAN



## ERRATA.

### VOL. I.

- Page 5, line 19, *for* Neiderau, . . . *read* Niederau.  
„ 57, „ 3, *for* Lieb, . . . . *read* Lieb'.  
„ 77, „ 27, *for* "Algemeine, . *read* "Allgemeine.  
„ 88, „ 25, *for* hy, . . . . *read* by.  
„ 109, „ 2 of note, *for* begrissen, *read* begriffen.  
„ 171, „ 15, *for* alread, . . . *read* already.  
„ 186, „ 10, *for* means supplying, *read* means of supplying.  
„ 275, „ 16, *for* every, . . . *read* ever.  
„ 293, „ 7, *for* or, . . . . *read* of.  
„ 303, last line, *for* be be tested, . *read* be tested.



MEMOIR  
OF  
JOHANN GOTTLIEB FICHTE.

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AT the time of the great religious division, when Germany was torn by internal factions and ravaged by foreign armies,—when for thirty years the torch of devastation never ceased to blaze, nor the groan of misery to ascend on high,—a skirmish took place near the village of Rammenau, in Upper Lusatia, between some Swedish troops and a party of the Catholic army. A subaltern officer who had followed the fortunes of Gustavus was left on the field severely wounded. The kind and simple-hearted villagers were eager to render him every aid which his situation required, and beneath the roof of one of them, a zealous Lutheran, he was tended until returning health enabled him either to rejoin his companions in arms or to return to his native land. But the stranger had found an attraction stronger than those of war or home,—he continued an inmate in the house of his protector and became his son-in-law. The old man's other sons having fallen in the war, the soldier inherited his simple possessions, and founded a family whose generations flowed on in peaceful obscurity until its name was made illustrious by the subject of the following memoir.

The village of Rammenau is situated in a beautiful and well-cultivated district, diversified by wooded slopes and

watered by numerous streams. Its inhabitants are a frugal and industrious people, and preserve, even to the present day, the simple and unaffected manners of their forefathers. Amid this community, withdrawn alike from the refinements and the corruptions of more polished society, the descendants of the Swedish soldier bore an honourable reputation for those manly virtues of our nature which find in poverty a rugged but congenial soil. Firmness of purpose, sterling honesty in their dealings, and immovable uprightness of conduct, became their family characteristics. From this worthy stock the subject of our memoir took his descent. The grandfather of the philosopher, who alone out of a numerous family remained resident in his native place, inherited from his predecessor, along with the little patrimonial property, a small trade in ribbons, the product of his own loom, which he disposed of to the inhabitants of the village and its vicinity. Desirous that his eldest son, Christian Fichte, should extend this business beyond the limited sphere in which he practised it himself, he sent him as apprentice to Johann Schurich, a manufacturer of linen and ribbons in the neighbouring town of Pulsnitz, in order that he might there learn his trade more perfectly than he could do at home. The son conducted himself well during his apprenticeship, rose high in the esteem of his master, and was at last received into the house as an inmate. He there succeeded in gaining the affections of Schurich's daughter. This attachment was for some time kept secret, in deference to the pride of the maiden's father; but his prejudices having been overcome, young Fichte brought home his bride to his native village, and with her dowry he built a house there, in which some of his descendants still follow the paternal occupation.

JOHANN GOTTLIEB FICHTE was their first child, and was born on the 19th May 1762. At his baptism, an aged relative of the mother, who had come from a distance to be present

at the ceremony, and who was revered by all men for his wisdom and piety, foretold the future eminence of the child; and as death soon afterwards set his seal upon the lips by which this prophecy had been uttered, it became invested with all the sacredness of a deathbed prediction. Their faith in this announcement induced the parents to allow their first-born an unusual degree of liberty, and by thus affording room for the development of his nature, the prediction became in some measure the means of securing its own fulfilment.

The boy soon displayed some characteristics of the future man. He seldom joined the other children in their games, but loved to wander forth into the fields, alone with his own thoughts. There he would stand for hours, his eyes fixed on the far distance, until he was roused from his trance and brought home by the shepherds, who knew and loved the solitary and meditative child. These thoughtful hours, in which the first germs of his spiritual nature were unfolded, left impressions upon him which the cares of future years never obliterated, and they always continued among his most cherished recollections. His first teacher was his own father, who, after the business of the day was over and the garden work finished, instructed him in reading, and told him the story of his own journeyings in Saxony and Franconia. He was an eager scholar, soon mastered his Bible and Catechism, and even read the morning and evening prayers to the family circle. When he was seven years of age, his father, as a reward for his industry, brought him from the neighbouring town the story of Siegfried. He was soon so entirely rapt in this book, that he neglected his other lessons in order to indulge his fancy for it. This brought upon him a severe reproof; and finding that the beloved book stood between him and his duty, he with characteristic determination resolved to destroy it. He carried it to the brook which ran by his father's house, with the intention of throwing

it into the water, but long he hesitated before accomplishing his first act of self-denial. At length he cast it into the stream. No sooner, however, did he see it carried away from him, than regret for his loss triumphed over his resolution, and he wept bitterly. His father discovered him, and learned the loss of the book, but without learning the reason of it. Angry at the supposed slight cast upon his present, he punished the boy with unwonted severity. As in his childhood, so also in his after life, did ignorance of his true motives often cause Fichte to be misunderstood and misrepresented. When this matter had been forgotten, his father bought him a similar book, but the boy refused to accept it, lest he should again be led into temptation.

Young Fichte soon attracted the notice of the clergyman of the village, an excellent man who was beloved by the whole community. The pastor, perceiving that the boy possessed unusual abilities, allowed him frequently to come to his house in order to receive instruction, and resolved, if possible, to obtain for him a scientific education. An opportunity of doing so accidentally presented itself. When Fichte was about eight or nine years of age, the Freiherr von Miltitz, being on a visit to a nobleman resident in the neighbourhood, was desirous of hearing a sermon from the pastor of Rammenau, (who had acquired some reputation as a preacher), but had arrived too late in the evening to gratify his wishes. Lamenting his disappointment, he was told that there was a boy in the village whose extraordinary memory enabled him to repeat faithfully any address which he had once heard. Little Gottlieb was sent for, and appeared before the company in his linen jacket, carrying a nosegay which his mother had placed in his hand. He astonished the assembled guests by his minute recollection of the morning's discourse and the earnestness with which he repeated it before them. The Freiherr, who belonged to one of the



noblest families in Saxony, and possessed a high reputation for his disinterested benevolence and unaffected piety, determined to make further inquiries respecting this extraordinary child; and the friendly pastor thus finding the opportunity he wished, easily persuaded him to undertake the charge of the boy's education. The consent of the parents having been with difficulty obtained,—for they were reluctant to expose their son to the temptations of a noble house,—young Fichte was consigned to the care of his new protector, who engaged to treat him as his own child.

His first removal was to Siebeneichen (*Sevenoaks*), a seat on the Elbe belonging to the Freiherr. The stately solemnity of this place and the gloom of the surrounding forest scenery weighed heavily upon his spirits: he was seized with a deep melancholy, which threatened to injure his health. His kind protector prudently resolved to place him under the care of a clergyman in the neighbouring village of Neiderau, who, although himself without family, had a great love for children. Here Fichte spent the happiest years of his boyhood; receiving the kindest attentions from the good pastor and his wife, whom he soon learned to regard as his foster-parents, and whose names he never mentioned in after years without the deepest and most grateful emotion. Here the foundation of his education was laid in a knowledge of the ancient languages; and so rapid was his progress, that his instructor soon found his own learning insufficient for the further superintendence of his pupil's studies. In his twelfth year he was sent by the Freiherr von Miltitz, first to the town school of Meissen, and soon afterwards to the public school of Pforta near Raumburg.

The school at Pforta retained many traces of its monkish origin: the teachers and pupils lived in cells, and the boys were allowed to leave the interior only once a-week,

and then under supervision, to visit a particular play-ground in the neighbourhood. The stiffest formalism pervaded the economy of this establishment, and every trait of independence was carefully suppressed. In its antiquated routine, the living spirit of knowledge was unrecognised, and the generous desire of excellence gave place to the petty artifices of jealousy. Instead of the free communication, kind advice, and personal example of a home, secrecy, distrust, and deceit were the prevalent characteristics of the school.

When he was scarcely thirteen years of age, Fichte entered this seminary; and his protector von Miltitz dying soon afterwards, he was henceforward alone in the world, cast upon his own resources, trusting to his own strength and guidance. So soon was he called upon to exercise that powerful and clear-sighted independence of character by which he was afterwards so much distinguished.

The strange world into which he now entered, the gloom and confinement he encountered, so different from the free atmosphere of his native woods and mountains, made a deep impression on the boy. His sadness and tears exposed him to the mockery of his school-fellows: he wanted prudence to disregard them, and courage to to complain to a teacher.

He determined to run away. Shame, and the fear of being sent back to Pforta, prevented him from returning to his foster-parents: he conceived the idea of seeking some distant island, where, like Robinson Crusoe, he might lead a life of perfect freedom. But he would not steal away,—he would make it evident that necessity drove him to the course he adopted. He warned his senior, who oppressed him severely, that he would no longer suffer such treatment, and that if it were not amended he would leave the school. His threat was of course received with laughter and contempt, and the boy now thought he might quit the place with honour. An

opportunity was soon found, and he took the road to Raumburg. On the way he remembered the maxim of his old friend the pastor, that every undertaking should be begun with a petition for divine aid. He sunk to his knees on a rising ground. During prayer he called to mind his parents, their care for him, the grief which his sudden disappearance would cause them. "Never to see them again!"—this thought was too much for him: his courage and his joy in regained freedom were already gone. He determined to return and confess his fault. On the way back he met those who had been sent after him. When taken before the Rector, he admitted that it had been his intention to run away, but at the same time recounted so ingenuously the motives which had induced him to take this step, that the Rector not only forgave him his fault, but resolved to take him under his own special protection. He obtained another senior, who soon gained his affections, and was afterwards his companion and friend at the University.

From this time Fichte's residence at Pforta became gradually more agreeable to him. He entered zealously upon his studies, and found in them occupation, interest, and spiritual nourishment. The defects of his previous education were soon overcome by industry, and he found himself once more comfortable and happy. Among those older scholars with whom Fichte now associated, a spirit of independence sprang up,—they laboured assiduously to set themselves free from the degrading influences of the school-system, and from the antiquated and worn-out notions held by most of the teachers. The praise or blame of these masters was little valued among them if they could secure the esteem of each other. Books imbued with the new spirit of free inquiry were secretly obtained, and, in spite of the strictest prohibitions, great part of the night was spent in their perusal. The works of Wieland, Lessing, and Goethe were positively forbidden; yet they found

their way within the walls, and were eagerly studied. Lessing's controversy with Göze made a deep impression upon Fichte : each successive number of the *Anti-Göze* he almost committed to memory. A new spiritual life was awakened within him : he understood for the first time the meaning of scientific knowledge, and cast off the thralldom of scholastic pedantry. Lessing became to him an object of such deep reverence that he determined to devote his first days of freedom to seek a personal interview with his mental liberator. But this plan was frustrated by want of money ; and when afterwards it might have been carried into execution, an untimely death had deprived Germany of her boldest thinker.

In 1780 Fichte, then eighteen years of age, entered the University of Jena. He joined the theological faculty, not so much, probably, by his own choice as by desire of his parents and protector. By his interest in other branches of science, and by the marked direction of his mind to clearness and certainty of knowledge, it soon became evident that he would not accept the shortest and easiest way to the completion of his studies. Nothing definite is known of the early progress of his mind, but his later productions leave no doubt of its general tendency. He must soon have been struck with the disparity between the form of theology as it was then taught, and the wants of a philosophic intellect. Fichte's nature could only be satisfied with a consistent theory, deduced, through all its ramifications, from one fundamental principle. We may conjecture what doubts and obscurities dogmatic theology must have presented to his mind at this time, when we recollect that, even at an after period of his life, he still interested himself in the task of reconciling faith with knowledge,—revelation with science. He attended a course of Dogmatics by C. F. Pezold, at Leipzig, to which place he had removed from Jena ; and in the attempt to

attain a clear comprehension of the theological doctrines of the attributes of God, the creation, the freedom of the will, &c., he encountered unexpected difficulties, which led him into a wider circle of inquiry, and finally drove him to abandon the theological for the philosophical point of view. Thus his philosophical speculations had their origin in an attempt to create a tenable system of dogmatics, and to obtain light on the higher questions of theology.

Some hints as to the early direction of his philosophical studies may be gathered from his letters written about this time. The question which chiefly engaged his attention seems to have been that of Liberty and Necessity. Rejecting the doctrine of Free-will considered as *absolute indifferent self-determination*, he adopted the view which, to distinguish it from *fatalism*, may be named *determinism*. Every complete and consistent philosophy contains a deterministic side, for the thought of an all-directing Unity is the beginning and end of profound investigation. *Fatalism* sees in this highest Unity a dark and mysterious Nemesis,—an unconscious mechanical necessity: *determinism* sees in it the highest disposing Reason, the infinite Spirit and God, to whom the determination of each living being is not only to be referred, but in whom alone it becomes clear and intelligible.

Fichte seems to have adopted this view apart from any foreign influence; for he was as yet unacquainted with Spinoza, its most consistent expounder, whom he had only heard spoken of as an abstruse atheist. He communicated his opinions to a Saxon preacher, who had the reputation of distinguished philosophical attainments, and was well versed in the Wolffian metaphysics. He was informed that he had adopted Spinozism, and it was by receiving from his friend a copy of Wolff's refutation of Spinoza that he first became acquainted with that profound and systematic thinker. He engaged in the study of Spinoza's *Ethica*, and that great work made a deep impression upon

him, as it does upon all earnest students. Prolonged investigation, however, rendered him dissatisfied with these views;—the indestructible feeling of internal independence and freedom, rendered doubly powerful by the energy of his own character, could neither be removed, nor explained on an *exclusively* deterministic theory, which must ultimately have come into collision with his deepest spiritual want,—to look upon freedom—self-determination—as the only true and real being. This original tendency of his mind prepared him for the subsequent enthusiastic reception of the doctrines of Kant, and is, in fact, the very root of his own “*Wissenschaftslehre*,” which in this respect stands opposed to the doctrine of Spinoza, although there is, notwithstanding, an essential affinity between these two greatest systems of modern philosophy. Thus has every great theory its foundation in the individual character, and is indeed but the scientific expression of the spiritual life of its originator.

Amid these lofty speculations, poverty, the scholar's bride, knocked at his door, and roused him to that struggle with the world, in which so many purchase ease with degradation, but in which men such as he find strength, confidence, and triumph. His generous benefactor was now dead, and he was thrown on his own resources. From 1784 to 1788 he earned a precarious livelihood by acting as tutor in various houses in Saxony. His studies were desultory and interrupted; he had not even the means of procuring books; the strength which should have been devoted to his own mental cultivation was wasted in obtaining a scanty subsistence. But amid all his privations his courage never deserted him, nor the inflexible determination, which was not so much an act of his will as a law of his nature, to pursue truth for her own sake and at all hazards. “It is our business,” says he on another occasion—“it is our business to be true to our-

selves : the result is altogether in the hands of providence." His favourite plan of life at this period, and for a long time afterwards, was to become a village pastor in Saxony, and amid the leisure which he should find in that occupation to prosecute, without disturbance, his own mental culture. But his theological studies were not completed, and he was without the means of continuing them. In 1787 he addressed a letter to the President of the Consistory, requesting to be allowed a share of the support which many poor students enjoy at the Saxon Universities, until the following Easter when he should be ready to present himself before the Consistory for examination. "I have never," he says, "partaken in the public provision for students, nor have I enjoyed an allowance of any kind, although my poverty can be clearly proved. Is it not possible, then, to allow me a maintenance sufficient for this short time, that I may be enabled to devote myself to theology until Easter ? .

. . . Without this, my residence at Leipzig is of no avail to me, for I am compelled to give all my time to heterogeneous pursuits, in order that I may even live. .

. . . . Should it please you to grant my request, I assure you by all that I hold sacred, that I will devote myself entirely to this object; that I will consecrate my life to the Fatherland which supported me at school, and which since then has only become dearer to me; and that I will come before the High Consistory prepared for my examination, and submit my future destiny to its wisdom." No notice was taken of his request, partly, it may be conjectured, on account of doubts which were entertained of his orthodoxy—a reason which closed the gates of preferment against his friend Weissshuhn and many others.

In May 1788 every prospect had closed around him, and every honourable means of advancement seemed to be exhausted. The present was utterly barren, and there was no hope in the future. It is needful that natures

like his should be nurtured in adversity that they may discover their own strength ; prosperity might lull into an inglorious slumber the energies for whose appearance the world is waiting. He would not disclose his helpless situation to any of his well-wishers ; but the proud consciousness of his own worth enabled him, amid unmerited sufferings, to oppose the bold front of human dignity against the pressure of outward circumstances.

It was the eve of his birthday. With unavailing anxiety he had again pondered all his projects, and found all alike hopeless. The world had cast him out,—his country refused him food,—he thought his last birthday was at hand ; but he was determined that his honour, all that he could now call his own, should remain unsullied. Full of bitter thoughts, he returned to his solitary lodging. He found a letter awaiting him : it was from his friend the tax-collector Weisse, requesting him to come immediately to his house. He there placed in Fichte's hands an offer of a tutorship in a private family in Zurich. The sudden revulsion of feeling in the young man could not be concealed, and led to an explanation of his circumstances. The offer was at once accepted, and, aided by this kind friend in the necessary arrangements, he set out for Switzerland in 1788. His scanty means compelled him to travel on foot, but his heart was light, and the fresh hope of youth shone brightly on his path.

He arrived at Zurich on the 1st of September, and immediately entered upon his office. His employer was a wealthy citizen of Zurich who, having raised himself above many of the narrow prejudices of his class, had resolved to bestow a liberal education upon his children. A boy of ten and a girl of seven years of age were committed to Fichte's care. In the prosecution of his duties he soon found himself hampered by the prejudices of the mother, who became jealous of her children being educated for any



higher position than that of mere citizens of Zurich. Although the father, who was a man of considerable intelligence, was fully sensible of the benefits which a higher education must necessarily confer upon his family, yet his partner raised such a determined opposition to his plans, that it required all Fichte's firmness of purpose to maintain his position. These duties occupied him the greater part of the day, but he also engaged in some minor literary pursuits. His philosophical studies were in the meantime laid aside. At the request of a friend who had sketched out the plan of a scriptural epos, he wrote an essay on this form of poetry, with special reference to Klopstock's *Messias*. He also translated some of the odes of Horace, and the whole of Sallust, with an introduction on the style and character of this author. He preached occasionally in Zurich, at Flaach, and at several other places in the neighbourhood, with distinguished success. He likewise drew out a plan for the establishment of a school of oratory in Zurich, which however was never realized.

In the circle of his friends at Zurich were Lavater, Steinbruchel, Hottinger, and particularly the Canons Tobler and Pfenniger. In his letters he speaks also of Achelis, a candidate of theology from Bremen, and Escher, a young poet, as his intimate friends:—the latter died soon after Fichte's departure from Switzerland.

But of all the friendships which he formed here, the most important in its influence upon his future life was that of Hartmann Rahn, whose house was in a manner the centre of the cultivated society of Zurich. Rahn was the brother-in-law of Klopstock, with whom he had formed a close friendship during the poet's visit to Switzerland in 1750, and with whose eldest sister Johanna he was afterwards united. From this marriage with Klopstock's sister sprang, besides several other children, their eldest daughter Johanna Maria, then about thirty years of age, who at a later period became Fichte's wife. The founda-

tion of her character was deep religious feeling, and an unusual strength and faithfulness of affection. Her mother dying while she was yet young, she had devoted herself entirely to her father, and to his comfort sacrificed worldly show and many proffered alliances. As her family occupied a much higher station in point of worldly importance than any to which Fichte could, at that time, reasonably aspire, her engagement with him was the result of disinterested attachment alone. Fichte's love was worthy of the noble-minded woman who called it forth. It was a devotion of his whole nature,—enthusiastic like his love for his country, dignified like his love of knowledge, but softened by the deepest tenderness of an earnest and passionate soul. But on this subject he must speak for himself. The following are extracts from letters addressed to Johanna Rahn, while he resided at Zurich, or during short occasional absences. They reveal a singularly interesting and instructive picture of the confidential relations subsisting between two minds, in whom the warmest affections and deepest tenderness of which our nature is susceptible were dignified by unaffected respect for each other, and ennobled by the purest aspirations of humanity. It is necessary to premise that the termination of his engagement, at Easter 1790, led to the departure from Zurich which is alluded to in some of these passages. Fichte, tired of the occupation of a tutor, particularly where his views of a generous, comprehensive, and systematic education were thwarted by the caprices and prejudices of others, was desirous of obtaining a situation of a higher nature, and Rahn, through his connexions in Denmark, endeavoured to promote his views.

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## Letters to Johanna Rahm.

"I hasten to answer your questions—'Whether my friendship for you has not arisen from the want of other female society?' I think I can answer this question decidedly. I have been acquainted with many women, and held many different relations with them. I believe I have experienced, if not all the different *degrees*, yet all the different *kinds*, of feeling towards your sex, but I have never felt towards any as I feel towards you. No one else has called forth this perfect confidence, without the remotest suspicion of any reticence on your part, or the least desire on mine to conceal anything from you,—this wish to be wholly known to you even as I am,—this attachment, in which difference of sex has not the remotest *perceptible* influence (for farther can no mortal know his own heart),—this true esteem for your spiritual nature, and acquiescence in whatever you resolve upon. Judge, then, whether it be for want of other female society that you have made an impression upon me which no one else has done, and taught me a new mode of feeling.—'Whether I will forget you when distant?' Does man forget a new mode of being and its cause?"

"The warm sympathy which appears in all these inquiries, the delightful kindness you have shown me on all occasions, the rapture which I feel when I know that I am not indifferent to such a person,—these, dearest, deserve that I should say nothing to you which is profaned by flattery, and that he whom you consider worthy of your friendship should not debase himself by a false modesty. Your own fair, open soul deserves that I should never seem to doubt its pure expression, and hence I promise, on my side too, perfect openness."

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“ ‘ Whether there can be love without esteem ? ’ Oh yes,—thou dear, pure one ! Love is of many kinds. Rousseau proves that by his reasoning, and still better by his example. ‘ La pauvre Maman ’ and ‘ Madame N——— ’ love in very different fashions. But I believe there are many kinds of love which do not appear in Rousseau’s life. You are very right in saying that no *true* and *enduring* love can exist without cordial esteem ; that every other draws regret after it, and is unworthy of any noble human soul.

“ One word about pietism. Pietists place religion chiefly in externals ; in acts of worship performed mechanically, without aim, as bond-service to God ; in orthodoxy of opinion, &c. &c. ; and they have this among other characteristic marks, that they give themselves more solicitude about others’ piety than their own. It is not right to hate these men,—we should hate no one,—but to me they are very contemptible, for their character implies the most deplorable emptiness of the head, and the most sorrowful perversion of the heart. Such my dear friend can never be ; she cannot become such, even were it possible—which it is not — that her character were perverted ; she can never become such, her nature has too much reality in it. Your trust in Providence, your anticipations of a future life, are wise and Christian. I hope, if I may venture to speak of myself, that no one will take me to be a pietist or stiff formalist, but I know no feelings more thoroughly interwoven with my soul than these are.”

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“ I am once more within these walls, which are only dear to me because they enclose you ; and when again left to myself, to my solitude, to my own thoughts, my soul flies directly to your presence. How is this ? It is but three days since I have seen you, and I must often be absent from you for a longer period than that. Distance is but distance, and I am equally separated from you in

Flaach or in Zurich.—But how comes it that this absence has seemed to me longer than usual, that my heart longs more earnestly to be with you, that I imagine I have not seen you for a week? Have I philosophized falsely of late about distance? Oh that our feelings must still contradict the firmest conclusions of our reason!”

“You know doubtless that my peace has been broken by intelligence of the death of a man whom I prized and loved, whose esteem was one of the sweetest enjoyments which Zurich has afforded me, and whose friendship I would still seek to deserve; and you would weep with me if you knew how dear this man was to me.”

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“Your offer of Friday has touched me deeply; it has convinced me yet more strongly, if that were possible, of your worth. Not because you are willing, for my sake, to deprive yourself of something which may be to you a trifle, as you say it is,—a thousand others could do that,—but that, although you must have remarked something of my way of thinking (‘pride’ the world calls it), you should yet have made that offer so naturally and openly, as if your whole heart had told you that I could not misunderstand *you*; that although I had never accepted aught from any man on earth, yet I would accept it from you; that we were too closely united to have different opinions about such things as these. Dearest, you have given me a proof of your confidence, your kindness, your—(dare I write it?)—love, than which there could be no greater. Were I not now wholly yours I should be a monster, without head or heart,—without any title to happiness.

“But in order to show myself to you in a just light, you have here my true thoughts and feelings upon this matter, as I read them myself in my own breast.

“At first—I confess it with deep shame—at first it roused my pride. Fool that I was, I thought for a moment—not longer—that you had misunderstood what I

wrote to you lately. Yet even in this moment I was more grieved than hurt : the blow came from your hand. Instantly, however, my better nature awoke ; I felt the whole worth of your heart, and I was deeply moved: Had not your father come at this moment, I could not have mastered my emotions : only shame for having, even for a moment, undervalued you and myself, kept them within bounds.

“ Yet I cannot accept it :—not that your gift would disgrace me, or *could* disgrace me. A gift out of mere compassion for my poverty I would abhor, and even hate the giver :—this is perhaps the most neglected part of my character. But the gift of friendship, of a friendship which, like yours, rests upon cordial esteem, cannot proceed from compassion, and is an honour, not a dishonour. But, in truth, I need it not. I have indeed no money by me at present, but I have no unusual disbursements to make, and I shall have enough to meet my very small regular expenses till my departure. I seldom come into difficulties when I have no money,—I believe Providence watches over me. I have examples of this which I might term singular, did I not recognise in them the hand of Providence, which condescends even to our meanest wants.

“ Upon the whole, gold appears to me a very insignificant commodity. I believe that a man with any intellect may always provide for his wants ; and for more than this, gold is useless ;—hence I have always despised it. Unhappily it is here bound up with a part of the respect which our fellow-men entertain for us, and this has never been a matter of indifference to me. Perhaps I may by and by free myself from this weakness also : it does not contribute to our peace.

“ On account of this contempt of money, I have, for four years, never accepted a farthing from my parents, because I have seven sisters who are all young and in part uneducated, and because I have a father who, were

I to allow it, would in his kindness bestow upon me that which belongs of right to his other children. I have not accepted even presents from them upon any pretence; and since then, I have maintained myself very well, and stand more *à mon aise* than before towards my parents, and particularly towards my too kind father.

"However, I promise you—(how happy do I feel, dear, noble friend, to be permitted to speak thus with you!)—I promise you, that if I should fall into any pecuniary embarrassments (as there is no likelihood that I shall, with my present mode of thinking and my attendant fortune), you shall be the first person to whom I shall apply—to whom I shall have applied since the time I declined assistance from my parents. It is worthy of your kind heart to receive this promise, and it is not unworthy of me to give it."

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"Could anything indemnify me for the loss of some hours of your society, I should be indemnified. I have received the most touching proofs of the attachment of the good old widow, whom I have seen only for the third time, and of her gratitude for a few courtesies which were to me nothing,—absolutely nothing,—had they not cost me two days' absence from you. She wept when I took my leave, though I allowed her to expect that she would see me again before my departure. I desire to lay aside all vanities: with some, such as the desire for literary fame, I have in a certain degree succeeded; but the desire to be beloved—beloved by simple true hearts—is no vanity, and I will not lay it aside.

"What a wholly new, joyful, bright existence I have had since I became sure of being yours!—how happy I am that so noble a soul bestows its sympathy upon me, and such sympathy!—this I can never express. Would that I could, that I might be able to thank you.

"My departure, dearest, draws near, and you have discovered the secret of making the day which formerly seemed to me a day of deliverance the bitterest in my life. I shall not tell you whether the day is settled or not. If you do not absolutely command it, you shall not know of it. Leave-taking is bitter, very bitter, and even its announcement has always something painful in it. But one of us—and I shall be that one—must bear the consciousness that thenceforth (but only for a time, if God does not require the life of one of us) we see each other no more. Unless you absolutely require it, you shall not know when I am with you for the last time."

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"Bern or Copenhagen, Lisbon, Madrid or St. Petersburg, are alike to me, so far as I myself am concerned. I believe that I am able to endure all climates tolerably well. The true cold of winter, such as we find in Saxony, is never very oppressive to me. . . . On this account I am not afraid of Copenhagen. But I would rather, dearest, be nearer thee. I am deeply moved by your tenderness; I think of you with the warmest gratitude. On this matter I *feel* with you, even although I cannot entirely *think* with you. Letters go to Copenhagen, for example, as securely as to Bern, and create as much pleasure there. Journeying is journeying, be it long or short, and it is already almost indifferent to me whether I shall travel ten or a hundred miles. So my understanding decides, and I cannot refute it, however willingly this deceitful heart would do so.

"On the whole, I think of it in this way:—the great end of my existence is to acquire every kind of education—(not scientific education,—I find much vanity in that,—but education of character)—which fortune will permit me.

"Looking into the way of Providence in my life, I find that this is the plan of Providence itself with me. I have



filled many situations, played many parts, known many men, and many conditions of men, and on the whole I find that by all these occurrences my character has become more fixed and decided. At my first entrance into the world, I wanted everything but a susceptible heart. Many qualities in which I was then deficient I have since acquired; many I still want entirely, and among others that of occasionally accommodating myself to those around me, and bearing with false men, or men wholly opposed to my character, for the sake of accomplishing something great. Without these qualities I can never employ the powers which Providence has bestowed upon me as I could with them.

“Does Providence then intend to develop these capacities in me? Is it not possible that for this very purpose I may now be led upon a wider stage? May not my employment at a Court, my project of superintending the studies of a Prince, your father’s plan of taking me to Copenhagen,—may not these be hints or ways of Providence towards this end? And shall I, by confining myself to a narrower sphere, one which is not even natural to me, seek to frustrate this plan? I have no talent for bending; for dealing with people who are opposed to me in character; can only succeed with brave, good people;—I am too open;—this seemed to you a reason why I was unfit to go to a Court; to me, on the contrary, it is a reason why I *must go there*,—to have an opportunity of acquiring that wherein I am deficient.

“I know the business of the scholar; I have no new discoveries to make about it. I have very little fitness for being a scholar *à métier*; I must not only *think*, I must *act*: least of all can I think about trifles; and hence it is not exactly my business to become a Swiss professor,—that is, a schoolman.

“So stand my inclinations:—now for my duties.

“May not Providence,—who must know better than

I for what I am fit and where I am wanted,—may not Providence have determined *not* to lead me into such a sphere? And may not the favour bestowed upon me by you, whose destiny seems to be bound up with my own, be a hint, and your proposal a way, of this Providence? May not my impulse towards the great world be a delusion of sense, of my innate restlessness, which Providence would now fix? This is as possible as the first; and therefore we must just do in this matter what depends upon us, and leave the rest to God's guidance.

“Now I think that the way which you propose cannot have the effect you expect from it. My essays cannot create what is called a ‘sensation;’ this is not in them, nor in me. Many would not even understand their contents; those who did understand them, would, I believe, consider me as a useful man, but *comme il y en a beaucoup*. It is quite another thing when one takes an interest in the author, and knows him.

“If you should be able to excite such an interest among your relatives, then indeed something more might be expected. But the matter does not seem pressing. Before all things there must be a professorship vacant at Bern, and indeed such a one as I could undertake. Then it would be difficult, during my stay here, to make a copy of my essays. And perhaps I shall write something better afterwards, or I may hit upon some arrangement in Leipzig respecting these essays, which can easily be made known in Bern. At all events, you shall know, and every good man who takes any interest in me shall always know, where I am. At the same time I entreat of you,—although I know your good will towards me does not need the request,—both now and after my departure to omit no opportunity which presents itself of doing me any service, and to inform me of it. I believe in a Providence, and I watch its signs.

“I have but one passion, one want, one all-engrossing

desire,—to work upon those around me. The more I act, the happier I seem to be. Is this too delusion? It may be so, but there is truth at the bottom of it.

“But this is no delusion, that there is a heaven in the love of good hearts, in knowing that I possess their sympathies,—their living, heartfelt, constant, warm sympathies. Since I have known you intimately, this feeling has been mine in all its fulness. Judge with what sentiments I close this letter.”

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“So you desire this bitter leave-taking? Be it so, but under one condition: I must bid you farewell *alone*. In the presence of any other, even of your excellent father, I should suffer from the reserve of which I complain so much. I depart, since it must be told, to-morrow eight-days. This day week I see you for the last time, for I set out very early on Sunday. Try to arrange that I may see you alone: how it is to be arranged I know not, but I would far rather take no leave of you at all, than take a cold formal one.

“I thank you heartily for your noble letter of yesterday, particularly because your narrative confirms me so strongly in a much-cherished principle. God cares for us—He will forsake no honourable man.”

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“And so be convinced that nothing can turn my thoughts from you. The reasons you have long known. You know my heart; you know yourself; you know that I know you: can you then doubt that I have found the only woman’s soul which I can value, honour, and love?—that I have nothing more to seek from the sex,—that I can find nothing more that *is mine?*”

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Towards the close of March 1790, Fichte left Zurich on his return to his native land, with some letters of recom-

mentation to the Courts of Wirtemberg and Weimar. He was once more thrown upon the world;—his outward prospects as uncertain as when he entered Switzerland two years before. Poverty again compelled him to travel for the most part on foot; but, as before, the toil of his journey was lightened by a high sense of honour, an inflexible courage, an unwavering faith; and to these was now added a sweeter guide—a star of milder radiance, which cast a soft but steady light upon the wanderer's way and pointed out to him a happy though distant place of rest. His love was no fleeting passion, no transient sensibility, but united itself with his philosophy and his religion in one ever-flowing fountain of spiritual power. The world might turn coldly away from him, for it knew him not; but he did not stoop to its meannesses, because he did not seek its rewards. He had one object before him—the development of his own nature; and there was one who knew him, whose thoughts were with him from afar, whose sympathies were all his own. His labours might be arduous, but they could not now be in vain; for although his future calling did not as yet lie before him in perfect clearness, yet his integrity of purpose and purity of feeling unconsciously preserved him from error, while the energy of his will bore him bravely onward over the petty obstructions of life.

He arrived at Stuttgart in the beginning of April, but not finding his recommendations to the Wirtemberg Court of much advantage he left it after a short stay. On his way to Saxony he visited Weimar. He did not see Herder, who was ill; nor Goethe, who was absent on his Italian tour; nor Schiller, who was at that time commencing his labours as Professsr of History at Jena. He returned to Leipzig about the middle of May, his small stock of money exhausted by the expenses of his journey; and was kindly received by his friend Weisse, through whose recommendation he had obtained the appointment at Zurich. Dis-

covering no prospect of obtaining any preceptorship of a superior kind, he engaged in miscellaneous literary occupations in order to procure a livelihood. He conceived the plan of a monthly literary journal, the principal objects of which should be to expose the dangerous tendencies of the prevalent literature of the day, to show the mutual influence of correct taste and pure morality, and to direct its readers to the best authors both of past and present times. But such an undertaking was too much opposed to the interests of the booksellers to find favour in their eyes. "I have," he says, "spoken to well-disposed people on this matter, to Weisse and Palmer; they all admit that it is a good and useful idea, and indeed a want of the age, but they all tell me that I shall find no publisher. I have therefore, out of sorrow, communicated my plan to no bookseller, and I must now write,—not pernicious writings, *that* I will never do,—but something that is neither good nor bad, in order to earn a little money. I am now engaged on a tragedy, a business which of all possible occupations least belongs to me, and of which I shall certainly make nothing; and upon novels, small romantic stories, a kind of reading good for nothing but to kill time; this, however, it seems, is what the booksellers will take and pay for."

So far as his outward existence was concerned, this residence at Leipsic was a period of harassing uncertainty too often approaching the verge of misery,—full of troubled schemes and projects which led to no result. He could obtain no settled occupation, but was driven from one expedient to another to procure the means of subsistence. At one time he gives "a lesson in Greek to a young man between 11 and 12 o'clock," and spends the rest of the day in study and starvation. His tragedy and novel-writing could not last long, nor be very tolerable while it did last. In August he writes—"Bernstorff must have received my letter and essay; I gave it into Herr Bohn's own hands,

and he promised to take care of it; yet I have no answer. A lady at Weimar had a plan to obtain for me a good situation; it must have failed, for I have not heard from her for two months. Of other prospects which I thought almost certain, I shall be silent. As for authorship, I have been able to do little or nothing, for I am so distracted and tossed about by many schemes and undertakings that I have had few quiet days. . . . In short, Providence either has something else in store for me, and hence will give me nothing to do here, as indeed has been the case; or intends by these troubles to exercise and invigorate me still further. I have lost almost everything except my courage." Again we hear of a distant prospect of going to Vienna to prosecute his literary schemes, and thus of being nearer—nay, when on his way, of even visiting—Zurich. And then again—"This week seems to be a critical time with me;—all my prospects have vanished, even this last one." But his strength never failed him; alone and unfriended, he shrank not from the contest. Adversity might roll her billows over his head, but their force was spent in vain against a soul which she could bend to no unworthy deed.

And yet he was not alone. A fair and gentle spirit was ever by his side, whispering to him of peace, happiness, and love. "In the twilight," says he, "before I light my lamp, I dream myself back to thee, sit by thy side, chat with thee, and ask whether I am still dear to thee;—ask indeed, but not from doubt—I know beforehand that thou wilt answer yes. I am always with thee on Saturdays. I cannot give up those Saturday meetings. I think I am still in Zurich, take my hat and stick, and will come to thee; and then I remember, and fret at fortune, and laugh at myself."

And again,—"**K**nowest thou all that thou art to me, even in this separation? When I feel vexed that of all my thoughts there is scarcely one which I can pour forth

confidently into any human breast, then I *think* thee to me, and tell them all to thee. I imagine what thou wouldst answer me, and I believe that I hit it pretty nearly. When I walk alone, thou art by my side. When I find that my walks hereabouts lose their charms for me, either through force of habit, or from the sameness which is their prevailing character; then I show them to thee; tell thee what I have thought, or read, or felt here;—show thee this tree under which I have lain and meditated,—this bench on which I have conversed with a friend,—and then the dull walk acquires a new life. There is a garden in Leipsic which none of my acquaintances can endure, because it is very unfrequented, and almost wholly obscured by a thick alley. This garden is almost the only one which is still dear to me, because it is that to which I first resorted in my transition state from boyhood to youth, with all the fresh outbursting feelings of that spring-time in which I felt so much. Here I often lead thee to walk, and recount to thee the history of my heart.

“Farewell, and remain the protecting spirit of my solitude.”

Thus amid the desolation of his outward prospects the current of his affections seems to have flowed with a fuller and more powerful tide. Like a strong man proud of his own strength, he bore the burden of privation and neglect; but in the secret chamber of his heart there was a fountain of untold bliss which sweetened even the bitterest trials: there he found a refuge from unworthy thoughts, a strong support in the conflict with misery and want.

“Thou dear angel-soul,” he writes, “do thou help me, do thou keep me from falling! And so thou dost. What sorrow can grieve, what distress can discourage me, so long as I possess the firm assurance that I have the sympathy of the best and noblest of women,—that she looks upon her destiny as inseparably bound up in mine,—that our

hearts are one? Providence has given me thy heart, and I want nothing more. Mine is thine for ever."

Of a project for engaging him in the ministry he thus writes:—"I know my opinions. I am neither of the Lutheran nor of the Reformed Church, but of the Christian; and were I compelled to choose, I should (since no purely *Christian* community now exists) attach myself to that community in which there is most freedom of thought and charity of life; and that is not the Lutheran, I think. . . . I have given up these hopes in my fatherland entirely. There is indeed a degree of enlightenment and rational religious knowledge existing among the younger clergy of the present day, which is not to be found to the same extent in any other country of Europe. But this is crushed by a worse than Spanish inquisition, under which they must cringe and dissemble, partly because they are deficient in ability, partly because in consequence of the number of clergy in our land their services can be spared, while *they* cannot sacrifice their employment. Hence arises a slavish, crouching, hypocritical spirit. A revolution is indeed impending: but when? and how? In short, I will be no preacher in Saxony." Thus were finally overthrown the early aspirations of his parents regarding his future career.

The only record that has been preserved of the opinions he entertained at this time on the subject of religion is a remarkable fragment entitled "Aphorisms on Religion and Deism." The object of this essay was to set at rest the much-vexed questions between Philosophy and Christianity, by strictly defining the respective provinces of each; by distinguishing between the objective reality which reason demands of Philosophy, and the incarnate form of truth which Religion offers to the feelings and sympathies of men. In the adaptation of Christianity to the wants of the sinner, in its appeal to the heart rather than to the understanding, he finds the explanation of its nature and



purposes :—"Those who are whole need not the physician, but those who are sick." "I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." This fragment, by its distinct recognition of the radical difference between feeling and knowledge, and the consequent vanity of any attempt to decide between the different aspects which the great questions of human destiny assume before the cognitive and emotional parts of our nature, may be looked upon as the stepping-stone to that important revolution in Fichte's mental world, to which the attention of the reader must now be directed.

The Critical or Kantian philosophy was at this time the great topic of discussion in the higher circles of Germany. Virulently assailed by the defenders of the existing systems, with Herder at their head, it was as eagerly supported by a crowd of followers who looked upon Kant with an almost fanatical veneration. Fichte's attention was turned to it quite accidentally. Some increased success in teaching during the winter of 1790, rendered his outward circumstances more comfortable than before, and left his mind more at liberty to engage in serious study. He plunged with enthusiasm into the new philosophy.

The system of religious necessarianism before alluded to, which frequently shows itself in his letters, was by no means in harmony with the natural bent of his character. His energy of will and restless spirit of enterprise assorted ill with a theory in which he was compelled to regard himself as a passive instrument in the hands of a higher power. This inconsistency must have often suggested itself to him before he met with its remedy; he must have frequently felt that the theory which seemed to satisfy his understanding stood in opposition to his feelings. He could not be contented with any superficial or partial reconciliation of this opposition. But he was now introduced to a system in which his difficulties disappeared; in which, by a rigid examination of the cognitive

faculty, the boundaries of human knowledge were accurately defined, and within those boundaries its legitimacy successfully vindicated against scepticism on the one hand and blind credulity on the other; in which the facts of man's moral nature furnished an indestructible foundation for a system of ethics where duty was neither resolved into self-interest nor degraded into the slavery of superstition, but recognised by Free-will as the absolute law of its being, in the strength of which it was to front the Necessity of nature, break down every obstruction that barred its way, and rise at last, unaided, to the sublime consciousness of an independent, and therefore eternal, existence. Such a theory was well calculated to rouse Fichte's enthusiasm and engage all his powers. The light which he had been unconsciously seeking now burst upon his sight, every doubt vanished before it, and the purpose of his being lay clear and distinct before him. The world, and man's life in it, acquired a new significance, every faculty a clearer vision, every power a fresh energy. But he must speak for himself:—

#### **To Achelis at Bremen.**

“The last four or five months which I have passed in Leipzig have been the happiest period of my life; and what is most satisfactory about it is that I have to thank no man for the smallest ingredient in its pleasures. You know that before leaving Zurich I became somewhat sickly; either through imagination, or because the cookery did not agree with me. Since my departure from Zurich I have been health itself, and I know how to prize this blessing. The circumstances of my stay in Zurich, and still more of my travels, had strained my fancy to an unnatural height. When I came to Leipzig my brain swarmed with great plans. All were wrecked; and of so many soap-bubbles there now remains not even the light froth which composed them. This disturbed my peace

of mind a little, and it was half in despair that I joined a party to which I ought long ere now to have belonged. Since I could not alter my outward circumstances, I resolved upon internal change. I threw myself into philosophy, and, as you know, into the Kantian. Here I found the remedy for all my evils, and joy enough to boot. The influence of this philosophy, and particularly the moral part of it (which however is unintelligible without previous study of the Critique of Pure Reason), upon the whole spiritual life, and particularly the revolution which it has caused in my own mode of thought, is indescribable. To you, especially, I owe the acknowledgement that I now heartily believe in the Freedom of Man, and am well convinced that it is only on this supposition that Duty, Virtue, or Morality of any kind, is so much as possible;—a truth which indeed I saw before, and perhaps acquired from you. Further, it is very evident to me that many pernicious consequences to society flow from the commonly-received principle of the Necessity of all human actions; that it is the source of a great part of the immorality of the so-called higher classes; and that if any one, accepting this principle, yet preserve himself pure from such corruption, it is not on account of the innocence, much less the utility, of the principle itself. Your uncorrupted moral feelings guided you more truly than did my arguments; and you must admit that, in the latter respect, error is pardonable. A multitude of others, who do not err, have to thank, not their greater acuteness, but their inconsequential reasoning. I am also firmly convinced that there is no land of enjoyment here below, but a land of labour and toil, and that every joy of life should be only a refreshment and an incentive to greater exertion; that the ordering of our fortune is not demanded of us, but only the cultivation of ourselves. Hence I do not trouble myself about outward things,—endeavour not to *seem*, but to *be*; and it is to these convictions that I am

indebted for the deep tranquillity of soul which I enjoy. My external circumstances suit well with these dispositions. I am master of no one, and no one's servant. I have no farther prospects: the present constitution of the church, and indeed the men who compose it, do not please me. So long as I can maintain my present independence, I shall do so at all hazards.

"You ask whether I contribute to the journals? No, to none of them. It was my intention, at first, to write for the 'Bibliothek der Schönen Wissenschaften.' But all is anarchy there. Weisse *is called* the editor, but the bookseller *is* the editor; and I will have nothing to do with a bookseller in matters of this kind. I sent my essay upon Klopstock's Messiah to B. for the 'Deutsche Museum.' He replied, that he feared the poet, who had for some time honoured him with his friendship, would take it ill if he should publish an essay which might put his Messiah in danger, &c. &c. I was satisfied with his answer, for I had already repented of the sin. If ever I become an author, it shall be on my own account. Moreover, authorship as a trade is not for me. It is incredible how much labour it costs me to accomplish something with which after all I am but half satisfied. The more I write, the more difficult does it become. I see that I want the living fire."

On the same subject he writes to his school and college friend Weissshuhn:—

"I have lived in a new world since I have read the Critique of Practical Reason. Principles which I believed were irrefragable, are refuted; things which I thought could never be proved,—as for example, the idea of absolute Freedom, of Duty,—are proved; and I am so much the happier. It is indescribable what respect for humanity, what power this system gives us! But why should I say this to you, who have known it longer than I have done? What a blessing to an age in which morality was torn

up by the roots, and the name of Duty obliterated from every vocabulary!"

And with still greater warmth he speaks of his new studies to Johanna Rahn:—

"My schenning spirit has now found rest, and I thank Providence that, shortly before all my hopes were frustrated, I was placed in a position which enabled me to bear the disappointment with cheerfulness. A circumstance which seemed the result of mere chance, led me to give myself up entirely to the study of the Kantian philosophy,—a philosophy that restrains the imagination which was always too powerful with me, gives reason the sway, and raises the soul to an indescribable elevation above all earthly concerns. I have accepted a nobler morality, and instead of occupying myself with outward things, I employ myself more with my own being. This has given me a peace such as I have never before experienced: amid uncertain worldly prospects I have passed my happiest days. I shall devote some years of my life to this philosophy; and all that I write, at least for several years to come, shall be upon it. It is difficult beyond all conception, and stands much in need of simplification. . . . The principles, it is true, are hard speculations which have no direct bearing on human life, but their consequences are most important for an age whose morality is corrupted at the fountain-head; and to set these consequences before the world in a clear light, would, I believe, be doing it a good service. Say to thy dear father, whom I love as my own, that we erred in our inquiries into the Necessity of human actions, for although we proceeded with accuracy, we set out from a false principle. I am now thoroughly convinced that the human will is free, and that to be happy is not the purpose of our being,—but to deserve happiness. I have to ask pardon of thee too, for having often led thee astray by such assertions. Achelis was right,—without knowing it indeed; and why? Henceforth

believe in thine own feelings; thou mayst not be able to confute opposing reasoners, yet they shall be confuted, and are so already, though they do not understand the confutation."

Inspired with this enthusiastic admiration for the Critical Philosophy, he resolved to become the exponent of its principles, and to rescue it from the obscurity which an uncouth terminology had thrown around it. Such an attempt had indeed been made already, and was still being made, by a host of commentators, but the majority of these were either deficient in capacity, or, actuated by sordid motives, had eagerly seized the opportunity of gain which the prevalent excitement afforded, and crowded the literary market with crude and superficial productions. Fichte accordingly commenced an expository abridgment of Kant's Critique of the faculty of judgment. It was to be divided into two parts,—the one devoted to the power of æsthetical, the other to that of teleological judgment. The first part was completed and sent to his friend Weiss-huhn for correction, but the progress of the work was interrupted by events which caused him to leave Leipzig: it was never finished, and no part of it was ever published.

Interesting, and remarkable too, in this connexion, is the following passage from a letter written about this time to a literary friend:—

"If I am not deceived by the disposition of youth, which is more ready to hope than to fear, the golden age of our literature is at hand; it will be enduring, and may perhaps surpass the most brilliant period in that of any other nation. The seed which Lessing sowed in his letters, and in his '*Dramaturgie*,' now begins to bear fruit. His principles seem every day to be more extensively received, and made the foundation of our literary judgments; and Goethe's '*Iphigenie*,' is the strongest proof of the possibility

of their realization. And it seems to me that he who in his twentieth year wrote the 'Robbers,' will, sooner or later, tread in the same path, and in his fortieth become our 'Sophocles.'

And so it was!—He who in his twentieth year wrote the "Robbers," did literally in his fortieth produce his "Wallenstein," followed in brilliant succession by "Mary Stuart,"—"The Maid of Orleans,"—and, last and brightest of the train, by "William Tell,"—a parting gift to the world from the "Sophocles" of Germany.

And now the time drew near which was at once to terminate his struggles with fortune, and realize the dearest wish of his heart. He had received many pressing invitations from Rahn to return to Zurich, but he had hitherto declined to do so until he should be enabled to earn for himself a name and position in the world. "It would be disgraceful," said he, "were I to re-appear in Zurich, without having accomplished anything since I left it. What should I call myself? Suffer me at least to vindicate my claim to the name of a Scholar." No prospect, however, appearing of a permanent settlement in Germany, it had been arranged that he should return to Zurich in 1791, to be united to her whom he most loved and honoured upon earth. The noble-minded woman who was now to bind herself to him for ever, had resolved that henceforth he should pursue his literary undertakings free from the cares of life. But Fichte looked forward to no period of inglorious repose; his ardent spirit had already formed a thousand plans of useful and honourable activity. "Not happiness, but labour," was his principle—a principle which ruled all his actions, in prosperity as well as in adversity. His letters to Johanna Rahn, in anticipation of this joyful event, breathe the same dignified tenderness which characterized their earlier correspondence:—

“And so, dearest, I solemnly devote myself to thee,—consecrate myself to be *thine*. I thank thee that thou hast thought me not unworthy to be thy companion on the journey of life. I have undertaken much: one day,—God grant it be a distant one!—to take the place of thy noble father; to become the recompense of thy early wisdom, of thy child-like love, of thy steadfast virtue. The thought of the great duties which I take upon me, makes me feel how little I am. But the sense of the greatness of these duties shall exalt me, and thy love, thy too favourable opinion of me, will lend to my imperfection all that I want. There is no land of happiness here below,—I know it now,—but a land of toil, where every joy but strengthens us for greater labour. Hand in hand we shall traverse it, and encourage and strengthen each other, until our spirits—O may it be together!—shall rise to the eternal fountain of all peace. I stand now in fancy at the most important point of my earthly existence, which divides it into two different, very different portions,—and marvel at the unseen hand which has led me through the first dangerous part, through the land of perplexity and doubt! How long had I despaired of such a companion as thou, in whom manly dignity and female tenderness are united! What if I had contented myself with some decorated puppet of thy sex? That Being who rules all things was kinder to me than, in the feeling of my unworthiness, I had dared to wish or hope;—I was led to thee. That Being will do yet more for me. We shall one day, O dearest, stand again at the partition-wall which shall divide our *whole* life into two parts,—into an earthly and a spiritual;—and then shall we look back upon the latter part of the earthly which we shall have traversed together, as we do now upon its first part; and surely we shall then, too, marvel at the same wisdom which now calls forth our wonder, but with loftier feelings and with clearer insight. I love to place myself in that position. . . . .



“The surèst means of acquiring a conviction of a life after death is so to act in this life that we can venture to wish for another. He who feels that if there be a God he must look down graciously upon him, will not be disturbed by arguments *against* his being, and he needs none *for* it. He who has sacrificed so much for virtue that he looks for recompense in a future life, needs no proof of the reality of such a life;—he does not *believe* in it,—he *feels* it. And so, thou dear companion for this short life and for eternity, we shall strengthen each other in this conviction, not by arguments but by deeds.”

LEIPZIG, 1st March 1791.

“At the end of this month I shall be free, and have determined to come to thee. I see nothing that can prevent me. I indeed still await the sanction of my parents; but I have been for a long time so well assured of their love,—almost, if I may venture to say it, of their deference to my opinion,—that I need not anticipate any obstacle on their part.

\* \* \* \* \*

“And now, dearest, I turn to thee, passing over all things unconnected with thee, which therefore do not interest me. Is it true, or is it but a sweet dream, that I am so near to the one best joy of my life,—the possession of the noblest of souls, chosen and destined for me by the Creator from among all other souls?—that my happiness, my peace, shall be the object of your wishes, your cares, your prayers? Could my feelings but flow to thee, warm as at this moment they are streaming through my heart, and threatening to burst it asunder!

“Accept me then, dearest maiden, with all my faults. How glad am I to think that I give myself to one who can take me with these faults; who has wisdom and strength enough to love me with them all,—to help me to overcome them, so that I may one day appear with her, purified from all blemish, before Him who created

us for each other!—Never have I been more sincerely penetrated by this feeling of my weakness, than since I received thy last letter, which reminds me of the poverty of all that I have said to thee; which reminds me of the vacillating state of mind in which I have written to thee. O what a *man* I have been!—People have sometimes attributed to me firmness of character, and I have been vain enough to accept their flattery as truth. To what accident am I indebted for this opinion,—I who have always allowed myself to be guided by circumstances,—whose soul has constantly taken the colours of surrounding events? With great pretensions, which I could never have maintained, I left Zurich. My hopes were all wrecked. Out of despair, more than from taste, I threw myself into the Kantian philosophy and found peace, for which in truth I have to thank my good health and the free flight of my fancy, and even deceived myself so far as to believe that the sublime thoughts which I imprinted upon my *memory* were natives of my soul. Circumstances led me to another employment less satisfactory to the mind; and the change in my mode of living,—the winter, which never agrees with me,—an indisposition, and the troubles of a short journey,—these things could disturb the deeply-rooted peace of the philosopher, and bring me into a frightful humour! Shall I always be thus tossed to and fro like a wave! Take thou me, then, thou brave soul, and strengthen this indecision.

“Yet while I lament my inconstancy, how happy am I that I can pour out these complaints to a heart which knows me too well to misunderstand me! One of my feelings I can acquit of all fickleness: I can say it boldly, that I have never been untrue to thee, even in thought; and it is a touching proof of thy noble character, that amid all thy tender cares for me, thou hast never been anxious about this.

“The day of my departure is not exactly fixed, and I

cannot determine it until I am about to set out. But it will be one of the first days of April. I shall write to thee of it, and I shall also write to thee on my journey."

And now all his brightest dreams were about to be fulfilled, his cup was brimming with anticipated delight, the draught of joy was almost at his lips, when it was rudely dashed from his grasp. The day of his departure was already fixed, when the bankruptcy of a mercantile house to which Rahn had entrusted his property, threw the affairs of the latter into disorder, and even threatened to reduce him to indigence in his old age. Happily a part of his property was ultimately saved; but, in the meantime at least, all plans which were founded on his former prosperity were at an end. His misfortunes brought upon him a lingering sickness, by which he was reduced to the brink of the grave. His life was preserved by the tender and unremitting cares of his daughter. In those dark years, when scarcely a ray of hope broke the gloom of present calamity, her conduct displayed that high-minded devotion which bears inevitable suffering without a murmur, and almost raises the passive above the active virtues of our nature.

As for Fichte, he had now become inured to disappointment. His courage soon returned to him, and he encountered with unfaltering trust the new disappointment with which fortune had visited him;—but he was filled with chagrin at having no power either to alleviate, or to share, the distress of one dearer to him than life itself. The world with its difficulties and doubts was once more before him, and once more his indomitable spirit rose superior to them all. He obtained an appointment as tutor in the house of a Polish nobleman at Warsaw, and having announced his departure to Johanna Rahn in a letter in which he bids her be of good courage, and assures her earnestly of his own faithfulness, he once

more assumed his pilgrim staff and turned his back upon Leipzic.

His diary written during this pedestrian journey to Poland evinces a clear and acute faculty of observation, and sketches very distinctly the peculiarities of the Saxon and Silesian character. One passage only, and that relative to a different subject, is here quoted :—

*“9th May.*—Arrived at Bischofswerda in good time; drank tea at the inn, and sent my letter to Rammenau. Soon appeared my brother Gotthelf, the kind soul, whom I looked for the previous day at Pillnitz; and immediately after him, Gottlob. My father had not been at home, but he came soon after—the good, honest, kind father! His look, his tone, his reasoning,—how much good they always do me. Take away all my learning, O God! and make me such a good, true, faithful *man*!—how much should I gain by the exchange!”

On the 7th of June he arrived at Warsaw, and immediately waited upon his employer the Count Von P——. The Count was a good, easy man, perfectly submissive to the guidance of his wife, a vain, haughty, and whimsical woman. Fichte's pronunciation of the French language was found to be unsatisfactory, and his German bluntness of demeanour still more so. He soon discovered that this was no place for him, where the teacher was regarded as the hanger-on of the Countess, and no respect was paid to the dignity of his profession. He resigned his office without having entered upon its duties; and having with some difficulty obtained from the Countess, by way of compensation, a sum sufficient for his maintenance for the succeeding two months, he resolved to visit Königsberg instead of returning directly to his native country, in order that he might have an opportunity of cultivating a personal acquaintance with Kant, his great master in

philosophy. Having preached in the Evangelical Church at Warsaw before his departure, he left that city on the 25th of June for Königsberg.

Immediately on his arrival he visited Kant, but his first impressions of the Critical Philosopher do not seem to have been very favourable. His impetuous enthusiasm was chilled by a cold, formal reception, and he retired deeply disappointed. Unwilling, however, to abandon the purpose which had led him to Königsberg, he sought some means of obtaining a more free and earnest interview, but for some time without success. At last he determined to write a "*Kritik aller Offenbarung*." (Critique of all Revelation), which should serve as an introduction. He began his labours on the 13th July, and wrought with unremitting assiduity at his task. It is perhaps one of the most touching and instructive passages of literary history, to find a young man, at a distance from his own country, without a friend, without even the means of personal subsistence, and sustained only by an ardent and indomitable love of truth, devoting himself with intense application to the production of a systematic work on one of the deepest subjects of philosophic thought, that he might thereby attain the friendship and confidence of one whom he regarded as the greatest of living men. The finished work,—a work which on its publication raised him at once to the level of the most profound thinkers of his age,—was sent to Kant on the 18th of August. He went on the 23rd to hear the opinion of the philosopher upon it, and was kindly received. He heard a very favourable judgment passed upon his book, but did not attain his principal object—the establishment of a scientific confidence. For the solution of his philosophical doubts he was referred to the Critique of Pure Reason, or to some of the philosopher's friends.

On revising his "*Critique of all Revelation*," he found that it did not thoroughly express his profoundest thoughts

on the subject, and he therefore began to remodel and re-write it. But here again he was overtaken by want. Counting over his meagre store of money, he found that he had only sufficient for another fortnight. Alone and in a strange country, he knew not what to resolve upon. After having in vain endeavoured to get some employment through the friends to whom he had been introduced by Kant, he determined, though with great reluctance, to reveal to Kant himself the situation in which he was placed, and request his assistance to enable him to return to his own land. His letter to Kant on this subject is so strikingly characteristic of its writer, and describes so truly his position at the time, that it is here given at length :—

### To Kant.

“You will pardon me, sir, if on the present occasion I address you in writing rather than in speech.

“You have already favoured me with kind recommendations which I had not ventured to ask from you,—a generosity which infinitely increases my gratitude, and gives me courage to disclose myself entirely to you, which otherwise I could not have ventured to do without your direct permission,—a necessity which he who would not willingly reveal himself to every one, feels doubly towards a truly good man.”

“In the first place, allow me to assure you, sir, that my resolution to proceed from Warsaw to Königsberg, instead of returning to Saxony, was indeed so far an interested resolution, that it gave me an opportunity of expressing my feelings towards the man to whom I owe all my convictions, principles, character, and even the very effort to possess them,—of profiting, so far as possible in a short time, by your society, and, if allowed, of recommending myself to your favourable notice in my after-life ;—but that I never could have anticipated my present need of

your kindness, partly because I considered Königsberg to be fertile in resources,—much more so for example than Leipzig,—and partly because I believed that, in the worst case, I should be able to find employment in Livonia, through a friend who occupies a creditable situation at Riga. I consider this assurance is due,—partly to myself, that the feelings which flow purely from my heart may not incur the suspicion of mean selfishness;—partly to you, because the free open gratitude of one whom you have instructed and improved cannot be indifferent to you.

“ I have followed the profession of a private tutor for five years, and during this time have felt so keenly its disagreeable nature,—to be compelled to look upon imperfections which must ultimately entail the worst consequences, and yet be hindered in the endeavour to establish good habits in their stead,—that I had given it up altogether for a year and a half, and, as I thought, for ever. I was induced again to undertake this occupation in Warsaw, without due consideration, by the ill-founded hope that I should find this attempt more fortunate, and perhaps imperceptibly by a view to pecuniary advantage,—a resolution the vanity of which has given rise to my present embarrassments. I now, on the contrary, feel every day more strongly the necessity of going over again, before the years of youth have altogether passed away, all those things which the too-early praise of well-meaning but unwise teachers, an academic course almost completed before my entrance on the proper age of youth, and, since that time, my constant dependence on circumstances, have caused me to neglect; and, resigning all the ambitious views which have impeded my progress, to train myself to all of which I am capable, and leave the rest to Providence. This object I cannot attain anywhere more surely than in my fatherland. I have parents, who cannot indeed relieve my necessities, but with whom I can live at less expense than elsewhere. I can there occupy myself with

literary pursuits—my true means of culture, to which I must devote myself, and for which I have too much respect to print anything of the truth of which I am not thoroughly assured. By a residence in my native province, too, I could most easily obtain, as a village pastor, the perfect literary quiet which I desire until my faculties are matured. My best course thus seems to be to return home ;—but I am deprived of the means : I have only two ducats, and even these are not my own, for I have yet to pay for my lodgings. There appears, then, to be no rescue for me from this situation, unless I can find some one who, although unknown to me, yet, in reliance upon my honour, will advance me the necessary sum for the expenses of my journey, until the time when I can calculate with certainty on being able to make repayment. I know no one to whom I could offer this security without fear of being laughed at to my face, except you, excellent man.

“ It is my maxim never to ask anything from another, without having first of all examined whether I myself, were the circumstances reversed, would do the same thing for some one else. In the present case I have found that, supposing I had it in my power, I would do this for any person of whom I believed that he was animated by the principles by which I know that I myself am now governed.

“ I am so convinced of a certain sacrifice of honour in thus placing it in pledge, that the very necessity of giving you this assurance seems itself to deprive me of a part of it ; and the deep shame which thus falls upon me is the reason why I cannot make an application of this kind verbally, for I must have no witnesses of that shame. My honour seems to be really doubtful until the engagement be fulfilled, because it is always possible for the other party to suppose that I may never fulfil it. Thus I know that if you, sir, should consent to my request, I would think of you with heartfelt respect and gratitude indeed, but yet



with a kind of shame; and that only after I had redeemed my word would it be possible for me to call to mind with perfect satisfaction an acquaintance with which I hope to be honoured during life. I know that these feelings arise from temperament, not from principle, and are perhaps reprehensible; but I cannot eradicate them until principle has acquired sufficient strength to take their place, and so render them superfluous. Thus far, however, I can rely upon my principles, that, were I capable of forfeiting my word pledged to you, I should despise myself for ever afterwards, and could never again venture to cast a glance into my own soul;—principles which constantly reminded me of you, and of my own dishonour, must needs be cast aside altogether, in order to free me from the most painful self-reproach.

“If I were well assured of the existence of such a mode of thinking as this in a man, I would do that for him with confidence, which I now ask from you. *How and by what means* I could assure myself, were I in your place, of the existence of such principles, is likewise clear to me.

“If it be permitted me to compare very great things with very small, I argue from your writings, most honoured sir, a character in their author above the ordinary mass of men, and, before I knew anything at all of your mode of acting in common life, I would have ventured to describe it as I now know it to be. For myself, I have laid open before you only a small part of my nature, at a time however when I had no idea of making such a use as this of your acquaintance, and my character is not sufficiently formed to express itself fully;—but to compensate for this, you are without comparison a better judge of men than I am, and perhaps may have perceived, even from the little you have seen of me, whether or not a love of truth and honour belongs to my character.

“Lastly,—and I add this with shame,—if I should be found capable of forfeiting my pledge, my worldly repu-

tation is in your hands. It is my intention to become an author in my own name, and when I leave Königsberg, I wish to request from you introductions to some literary men of your acquaintance. To these, whose good opinion I would then owe to you, it would be your duty to communicate my disgrace; as it would generally be a duty, I think, to warn the world against a person of such incorrigible character as he must needs be who could approach a man whose atmosphere is untainted by falsehood, and, by assuming the outward mien of honesty, deceive his acuteness, and so laugh to scorn all virtue and honour.

"These were the considerations, sir, which induced me to write this letter. I am very indifferent about that which does not lie within my power, more indeed through temperament and personal experience, than on principle. It is not the first time that I have been in difficulties out of which I could see no way; but it would be the first time that I remained in them, if I did so now. Curiosity as to what is to come of it, is generally all that I feel in such emergencies. I merely adopt the means which appear the best to my mind, and then calmly await the consequence. And I can do this the more easily in the present case, that I place it in the hands of a good and wise man. But in another point of view I send off this letter with unwonted anxiety. Whatever may be your determination, I shall lose something of comfort and satisfaction in my relation towards you. If it be in the affirmative, I can indeed again acquire what I have lost;—if in the negative, never.

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"For the tone which predominates in this letter, I cannot, sir, ask your pardon. It is one of the distinctions of sages, that he who speaks to them, speaks as a man to men. As soon as I can venture to hope that I do not disturb you, I shall wait upon you to learn your resolution; and I am, with heartfelt reverence and admiration," &c.

It is difficult to conceive of any circumstances short of absolute inability, which could induce a man of refined sentiments, and especially a scholar and a philosopher, to refuse the request contained in this singular letter. We are not informed of the cause of Kant's refusal, and can therefore only hope that it arose from no motive less honourable than that which animated his suitor. It is certain that Fichte continued, after this occurrence, to regard Kant with the same sentiments of deep admiration, and even reverence, which he had previously entertained towards him. But the request *was* refused, and Fichte once more reduced to extremity. He endeavoured to dispose of the manuscript of his "Kritik aller Offenbarung;"—but Hartung, the bookseller to whom Kant recommended him to apply, was from home, and he offered it in vain to any other. The very heroism of his life seemed to be the source of his ever-recurring difficulties;—and truly, he who has resolved to lead a life of high purpose and endeavour, must be content to relinquish the advantages which are the common reward of plodding worldliness. He does relinquish them without a murmur, or rather he never seeks them;—his thoughts aspire to a loftier recompense, and that he does surely attain.

But light once more dawned on these dark and hopeless prospects; and that from a quarter whence it was least of all expected. When the little money which he had remaining was almost entirely exhausted, he received an invitation, through the Court-preacher Schulz, to a tutorship in the family of the Count of Krokow, in the neighbourhood of Dantzig. Although, as we have seen, his views were now directed to a life of literary exertion, yet necessity compelled him to accept this proposal; and he entered on his new employment, experiencing the most friendly reception and the kindest attentions. The amiable character and excellent abilities of the Countess rendered his residence in her family not only happy, but

interesting and instructive;—his letters at this period are full of her praises. This fortunate appointment was but the beginning of many years of uninterrupted prosperity which now awaited him.

Through the instrumentality of his friends at Königsberg he now made arrangements with Hartung for the publication of his “*Kritik aller Offenbarung*.” An unexpected difficulty, however, prevented its immediate appearance. When the book was submitted to the censorship of the Dean of the Theological Faculty at Halle, where it was to be printed, he refused his sanction on account of the principle contained in it,—*That no proof of the divinity of a Revelation can be derived from an appeal to Miracles occurring in connexion with it, but that the question of its authenticity can be decided only by an examination of its contents.* Fichte urged that his book was a philosophical, not a theological essay, and that therefore it did not properly come under the cognizance of the Theological Faculty; but this plea was urged in vain. His friends advised him to withdraw the obnoxious passages; even Schulz, who united theological orthodoxy with his ardent Kantism, advised him to do so. But on this point Fichte was inflexible; he determined that the book should be printed entire, or not printed at all. He resolved, however, to consult Kant on the subject, as the highest authority to whom he could appeal. As this question has now for some time engaged the attention of the philosophico-theological world of England and America, it is deemed advisable to insert here the gist of this somewhat characteristic correspondence.

### Fichte to Kant.

“22d January, 1792.

“A friend whom I respect has written to me a kind and touching letter upon this subject, in which he requests that, in the event of a possible revision of the work during the

delay which has occurred in printing, I should endeavour to set two points, upon which we are at issue, in another light. I have said, that faith in a given Revelation cannot reasonably be founded upon belief in Miracles, because no miracle is demonstrable *as such*; but I have added in a note, that it may be allowable to employ the idea of Miracles having occurred in connexion with a Revelation, in order to direct the attention of those who need the aid of outward and sensible manifestations to the other sufficient grounds upon which the Revelation may be received as divine;—the only modification of the former principle which I can admit. I have said, further, that a Revelation cannot extend *the materials* of either our dogmatic or our moral knowledge; but I admit, that as regards transcendental objects, in the *fact* of whose existence we believe, while we know nothing whatever of the *mode* of that existence, it may furnish us with something in the room of experience,—something which, for those who so conceive of such matters, shall possess a subjective truth, —which, however, is not to be received as a substantial addition to, but only as an embodied and formal manifestation of, those spiritual things possessed by us *a priori*. Notwithstanding continued reflection upon these points, I have hitherto discovered nothing which can justify me in altering my conclusions. May I venture to ask you, sir, as the most competent judge, to tell me in two words, whether any other results upon these points are to be sought for, and if so, in what direction;—or if these are the only grounds on which a critique of the Revelation-idea can safely proceed? If you will favour me with these two words of reply, I shall make no use of them inconsistent with the deep respect I entertain for you. As to my friend's letter, I have already said in answer, that I do not cease to give my attention to the subject, and shall always be ready to retract what I am convinced is erroneous.

“As to the prohibition of the censor, after the clearly-

declared object of the essay, and the tone which predominates throughout its pages, I can only wonder at it. I cannot understand where the Theological Faculty acquired the right to apply their censorship to such a mode of treating such a subject."

### Kant's Reply.

2d February, 1792.

"You desire to be informed by me whether any remedy can be found against the strict censorship under which your book has fallen, without entirely laying it aside. I answer, none, so far as, without having read the book thoroughly, I can determine from what your letter announces as its leading principle, namely,—‘that faith in a given Revelation cannot reasonably be founded on a belief in Miracles.’

"For it inevitably follows from this, that a religion can contain only such articles of faith as likewise belong to the province of Pure Reason. This principle is in my opinion quite unobjectionable, and does not abolish the subjective necessity either of Revelation or of Miracle (for it may be assumed, that whether or not it might have been possible for Reason, unaided by Revelation, to have discovered those articles of faith, which, now when they *are* actually before us, may indeed be comprehended by Reason,—yet it may have been necessary to *introduce* them by Miracles,—which, however, now when religion can support itself and its articles, need no longer be relied upon as the foundation of belief):—but, according to the maxims which seem to be adopted by the censor, this principle will not carry you through. For, according to these, certain writings must be received into the profession of faith *according to their letter*, since it is difficult for the human understanding to comprehend them, and much more for human reason to conceive of them as true; and hence they really need the continued support of

Miracle, and thus only can become articles of reasonable belief. The view which represents Revelation as merely a sensible manifestation of these principles in accommodation to human weakness, and hence as possessed of subjective truth only, is not sufficient for the censor, for his views demand the recognition of its objective truth according to the letter.

“One way however remains open, to bring your book into harmony with the ideas of the censor: *i. e.* if you can make him comprehend and approve the distinction between a *dogmatic belief* raised above all doubt, and a mere *moral admission* resting on the insufficiency of reason to satisfy its own wants; for then the faith which good moral sentiment reposes upon Miracle may probably thus express itself: ‘Lord, I believe’—that is, I *receive* it willingly, although I cannot *prove* it sufficiently—‘help thou mine unbelief!’—that is, ‘I have a moral faith in respect of all that I can draw from the miraculous narrative for the purposes of inward improvement, and I desire to possess an historical belief in so far as that can contribute to the same end. My unintentional non-belief is not confirmed unbelief.’ But you will not easily make this distinction acceptable to a censor who, it is to be feared, makes historical belief an unconditional religious duty.

“With these hastily, but not inconsiderately thrown out ideas, you may do whatever seems good to you (provided you are yourself convinced of their truth), without making any direct or indirect allusion to him who communicates them.”

### Fichte to Kant.

“17th February, 1792.

“Your kind letter has given me much gratification, as well because of the goodness which so soon fulfilled my request, as on account of the matter it contains: upon that subject I now feel all the peace of mind which, next

to one's own conviction, the authority of a man who is honoured above all other men can give.

"If I have rightly conceived your meaning, I have actually pursued in my work the middle course which you point out,—of distinguishing between an affirmative belief, and a faith founded on moral considerations. I have endeavoured carefully to distinguish between that which, according to my principle, is the only possible and reasonable kind of faith in the divinity of a given Revelation (that faith, namely, which has for its object only a *certain form* of the truths of religion)—and the belief which accepts these truths in themselves as postulates of Pure Reason. This faith is only a free acceptance of the divine origin of a particular form of religious truth, grounded on experience of the efficacy of such a form as a means of moral perfection;—such an acceptance, indeed, as no one can *prove* either to himself or to others, but which, on the other hand, cannot be refuted; an acceptance which is merely subjective, and, unlike the faith of Pure Reason, is not universally binding, since it is founded on individual experience alone. I believe that I have placed this distinction in a tolerably clear light, and I have endeavoured to set forth fully the practical consequences of these principles: namely, that while they save us the labour of enforcing our own subjective convictions upon others, they secure to every one the undisturbed possession of everything in religion which he can apply to his own improvement, and thus silence the opponents of positive religion, not less than its dogmatical defenders;—principles for which I do not deserve the anger of the truth-loving theologian. But yet it has so fallen out; and I am now determined to leave the book as it is, and to allow the publisher to deal with the matter as he chooses."

The difficulty which gave rise to the preceding letters was happily got rid of by a change in the censorship. The



new dean, Dr. Knapp, did not partake in the scruples of his predecessor, and he gave his consent to the publication. The work appeared at Easter 1792, and excited great attention in the literary world of Germany. At first it was universally ascribed to Kant, the critics declaring that the hand of the venerable philosopher could be recognized beyond the possibility of doubt. The journals devoted to the Critical Philosophy teemed with laudatory notices, until at length Kant found it necessary publicly to correct this mistake by disclosing the real author, of whose abilities he spoke in terms of high respect and commendation. Thus through an incidental error, Fichte at once acquired a high literary reputation.

The "Kritik aller Offenbarung" is an attempt to determine the natural and necessary conditions under which alone a Revelation from a superior intelligence to man is possible, and consequently to lay down the criteria by which anything that claims the character of such a Revelation is to be tested. The design, as well as the execution, of the work is strikingly characteristic of its author; for, although the form of the Kantian philosophy is much more distinctly impressed upon this, his first literary production, than upon his subsequent writings, yet it does not and cannot conceal those brilliant qualities to which he owed his future fame. That profound and searching intellect, which, in the province of Metaphysics, cast aside as fallacious and deceptive those solid-seeming principles on which ordinary men are content to take their stand, and clearing its way to the most hidden depths of thought, sought there a firm foundation on which to build a structure of human knowledge, whose summit should tower as high above common faith as its base was sunk deep below common observation,—does here, when applied to a question of practical judgment, exhibit the same clearness of vision, strength of thought, and subtilty of discrimination. In the conduct

of this enquiry, Fichte manifests that single eye to truth, and reverent devotion to her when found, which characterize all his writings and his life. His book has nothing in common with those superficial attacks upon Revelation, or equally superficial defences of it, which are still so abundant, and which afford so much scope for petty personal animosities. The mathematician, while constructing his theorem, does not pause to inquire who may be interested in its future applications; nor does the philosopher, while calmly settling the conditions and principles of *knowledge*, concern himself about what *opinions* may ultimately be found incompatible with them:—these may take care of themselves. Far above the dark vortex of theological strife in which punier intellects chafe and vex themselves in vain, Fichte struggles forward to the sunshine of pure thought, which sectarianism cannot see, because its weakened vision is already filled with a borrowed and imperfect light. “Form and style,” he says in his preface, “are my affair; the censure or contempt which these may incur affects me alone;—and that is of little moment. The result is the affair of truth, and *that* is of moment. That must be subjected to a strict, but careful and impartial examination. I at least have acted impartially. I may have erred, and it would be astonishing if I had not. What measure of correction I may deserve, let the public decide. Every judgment, however expressed, I shall thankfully acknowledge; every objection which seems incompatible with the cause of truth, I shall meet as well as I can. To truth I solemnly devote myself, at this my first entrance into public life. Without respect of party or of reputation, I shall always *acknowledge* that to be truth which I recognise as such, come whence it may; and never acknowledge that which I do not believe. The public will pardon me for having thus spoken of myself on this first and only occasion. It may be of little importance to the world to receive this assu-

rance, but it is of importance to me to call upon it to bear witness to this my solemn vow."—Never was vow more nobly fulfilled!

In the spring of 1793 Fichte left Dantzic for Zurich, to accomplish the wish dearest to his heart. A part of Rahn's property had been saved from the wreck of his fortunes, and had been increased by the prudence and economy of his daughter. He was now anxious to see his children settled beside him, and to resume his personal intercourse with his destined son-in-law. It was arranged that wherever Fichte's abode might ultimately be fixed, the venerable old man should still enjoy the unremitting care and attention of his daughter. The following extracts are from a letter written shortly before Fichte's departure for Switzerland:—

### To Johanna Rahn.

*"Dantzic, 5th March 1793.*

"In June, or at the latest, July, I shall be with thee: but I should wish to enter the walls of Zurich as thy husband:—Is that possible? Thy kind heart will give no hindrance to my wishes; but I do not know the circumstances. But I hope, and this hope comforts me much.—God! what happiness dost thou prepare for me, the unworthy!—I have never felt so deeply convinced that my existence is not to be in vain for the world as when I read thy letter. What I receive in thee I have not deserved; it can therefore be only a means of strengthening me for the labour and toil which yet await me. Let thy life but flow smoothly on,—thou sweet, dear one!

"Thou wilt fashion thyself by me! What I could perhaps give thee, thou dost not need; what thou canst bestow on me I need much. Do thou, good, kind one, shed a lasting peace upon this tempestuous heart; pour gentle and winning mildness over my fiery zeal for the enno-

bling of my fellow-men. By thee will I fashion myself, till I can go forth again more usefully.

"I have great, glowing projects. My ambition (pride rather) thou canst understand. It is to purchase my place in the human race with deeds; to bind up with my existence eternal consequences for humanity and the whole spiritual world: no one need know that I do it, if only it be done. What I shall be in the civil world, I know not. If instead of immediate *activity* I be destined to *speech*, my desire has already anticipated thy wish that it should be rather from a pulpit than from a professorial chair. There is at present no want of prospects of that kind. Even from Saxony I receive most promising invitations. I am about to go to Lubeck and Hamburg. In Dantzic they are unwilling to let me go. All that for the future! That I am not idle I have shown by refusing, within this half year, many invitations which would have been very alluring to idlers. For the present I will be nothing but *Fichte*.

"I may perhaps desire an office in a few years. I hope it will not be wanting. Till then I can get what I require by my pen: at least it has never failed me yet, in my many wanderings and sacrifices."

Fichte arrived in Zurich on the 16th day of June 1793, after having once more visited his parents, and received their entire approbation of his future plans. He was received with cordial welcome by a numerous circle of his former friends, who were well acquainted with his growing reputation and his prospects of future eminence. After a residence of a few months in the family of Rahn,—a delay rendered necessary by the laws of the state regarding foreigners,—his marriage with Johanna Rahn took place on the 22d of October at Baden, near Zurich. Lavater sent his congratulations, after his friendly fashion, in the following lines :—

**An Fichte-Rahn und an Rahn-Fichte.**

"Kraft und Demuth vereint wirkt nie vergängliche Freuden,  
 Lieb im Bunde mit Licht erzeugt unselbische Kinder :  
 Freude der Wahrheit dich, so oft dieß Blättchen du anblüest."

After a short tour in Switzerland, in the course of which his already wide-spread fame brought him into contact with several distinguished men, — Baggesen, Pestalozzi, &c.—Fichte took up his residence in the house of his father-in-law. Here he enjoyed for several months a life of undisturbed repose, in the society of her whose love had been his stay in times of adversity and doubt, and now gave to prosperity a keener relish and a holier aim.

But while happiness and security dwelt in the peaceful Swiss canton, the rest of Europe was torn asunder by that fearful convulsion which made the close of last century the most remarkable period in the history of the world. Principles which had once bound men together in bonds of truth and fealty had become false and hollow mockeries ; and that evil time had arrived in which those who were nominally the leaders and rulers of the people had ceased to command their reverence and esteem ; nay, by countless oppressions and follies had become the objects of their bitter hatred and contempt. And now one nation speaks forth the word which all are struggling to utter, and soon every eye is turned upon France,—the theatre on which the new act in the drama of human history is to be acted ; where freedom and right are once more to become realities ; where man, no longer a mere appendage to the soil, is to start forth on a new career of activity and honour, and show the world the spectacle of an ennobled and regenerated race. The enslaved of all nations rouse themselves at the shout of deliverance ; the patriot's heart throbs higher at the cry ; the poet dreams of a new golden age ; the philosopher looks with eager eye for the solution of the mighty problem of human destiny. All, alas ! are

doomed to disappointment; and over the grave where their hopes lie buried, a lesson of fearful significance stands inscribed in characters of desolation and blood, proclaiming to all ages that where the law of liberty is not written upon the soul, outward freedom is a mockery and unchecked power a curse.

In 1793 Fichte published his "Contributions to the correction of public opinion upon the French Revolution." The leading principle of this work is, that there is, and can be, no absolutely unchangeable political constitution, because none absolutely perfect can be realized;—the relatively best constitution must therefore carry within itself the principle of change and improvement. And if it be asked from whom this improvement should proceed, it is replied, that all parties to the political contract ought equally to possess this right. And by this political contract is to be understood, not any actual and recorded agreement,—for both the old and new opponents of this view think they can destroy it at once by the easy remark that we have no historical proof of the existence of such a contract,—but the abstract idea of a State, which, as the peculiar foundation of all rights, should lie at the bottom of every actual political fabric. The work comprises also an enquiry concerning the privileged classes in society, particularly the nobility and clergy, whose prerogatives are subjected to a prolonged and rigid scrutiny. In particular, the conflict between the universal rights of reason and historical privileges which often involve great injustice is brought prominently into notice. This book brought upon Fichte the charge of being a democrat, which was afterwards extended into that of atheism! The following passage is from his own defence against the former charge, written at a later period:—

"And so I am a democrat!—And what is a democrat? One who represents the democratic form of government

as the only just one, and recommends its introduction ? I should think, if he does this merely in his writings, that, even under a monarchical government, the refutation of his error, if it be an error, might be left to other literary men. So long as he makes no direct attempt to overthrow the existing government and put his own scheme in its place, I do not see how his opinions can come before the judgment-seat of the State, which takes cognizance of actions only. However, I know that my opponents think otherwise on this point. Let them think so if they choose ; does the accusation then justly apply to me ?—am I a democrat in the foregoing sense of that word ? They may indeed have neither heard nor read anything about me, since they settled this idea in their minds and wrote “democrat” over my head in their imaginations. Let them look at my “Principles of Natural Law,” vol. i. p. 189, &c. It is impossible to name any writer who has declared more decidedly, and on stronger grounds, *against* the democratic form of government as an absolutely illegitimate form. Let them make a fair extract from that book. They will find that I require a submission to law, a jurisdiction of law over the actions of the citizen, such as was never before demanded by any teacher of jurisprudence, and has never been realized in any constitution. Most of the complaints which I have heard against this system have turned on the assertion that it derogated too much from the freedom (licentiousness and lawlessness) of men. I am thus far from preaching anarchy.

“But they do not attach a definite and scientific meaning to the word. If all the circumstances in which they use this expression were brought together, it might perhaps be possible to say what particular sense they annex to it ; and it is quite possible that, in this sense, I may be a very decided democrat ;—it is at least so far certain, that I would rather not be at all, than be the subject of caprice and not of law.”

During the period of his residence at Zurich, however, Fichte's attention was occupied with another subject, more important to science and to his own future fame than his political speculations. This was the philosophical system on which his reputation chiefly rests. It would be altogether out of place in the present Memoir to enter at large upon a subject so vast and so profound, if indeed it might not prove altogether impossible to present, in any form intelligible to the ordinary English reader, the results of these abstruse and difficult speculations. Yet the peculiarities of Fichte's philosophical system are so intimately bound up with the personal character of its author, that both lose something of their completeness when considered apart from each other. And it is principally with a view to illustrate the harmony between his life and his philosophy that an attempt is here made to indicate in a popular way some of its distinguishing features. As Fichte's system may be considered the complement of those which preceded it, we must view it in connexion with the more important of these.

The final results of the philosophy of Locke were twofold. In France, the school of Condillac, imitating the example of the English philosopher rather than following out his first principles, occupied itself exclusively with the phenomena of sensation, leaving out of sight the no less indisputable facts to which reflection is our sole guide. The consequence was a system of unmixed materialism, a deification of physical nature, and ultimately, avowed atheism. In Great Britain, the philosophy of experience was more justly treated: both sources of human knowledge which Locke indicated at the outset of his inquiry—although in the body of his *Essay* he analyzed one of them only—were recognised by his followers in his own land, until Berkeley resolved the phenomena of sensation into those of reflection, and the same method which in France led to materialism, in England produced a system



of intellectual idealism. Berkeley's principles were pushed to the extreme by Hume, who, applying to the phenomena of reflection precisely the same analysis which Berkeley applied to those of sensation, demolished the whole fabric of human knowledge, and revealed, under the seemingly substantial foundations on which men had hitherto built their faith, a yawning gulf of impenetrable obscurity and scepticism. Feeling, thought, nay consciousness itself became but fleeting phantasms without any abiding subject in which they could inhere.

It may be safely affirmed that, notwithstanding the outcry which greeted the publication of the "Essay of Human Nature," and the senseless virulence which still loads the memory of its author with abuse, none of his critics have hitherto succeeded in detecting a fallacy in his main argument. Admit his premises, and you cannot consistently stop short of his conclusions. The Aristotelian theory of perception, which up to this period none had dared to impugn, having thus led, by a strictly necessary movement, to the last extreme of scepticism, the reaction which followed, under Reid and the school of Common Sense, was naturally founded on a denial of the doctrine of representation, and on a more close analysis of our knowledge of the external world, and of the processes by which we acquire that knowledge. It has thus occurred that the distinguished philosophers of the Scotch School, although deserving of all gratitude for their acute investigations into the intellectual and moral phenomena of man, have yet confined themselves exclusively to the department of psychological analysis, and have thrown little direct light on the higher questions of philosophical speculation. This was reserved for the modern school of Germany, of which Kant may be considered the head. Stewart, although contemporary with the philosopher of Königsberg, seems to have had not only an imperfect, but a quite erroneous, conception of his doctrines.

Kant admitted the validity of Hume's conclusions respecting our knowledge of external things on the premises from which they were deduced. He admitted that the human intellect could not go beyond itself, could not furnish us with any other than subjective knowledge. We are indeed constrained to assume the existence of an outward world to which we refer the impressions which come to us through our senses, but these impressions having to pass through the prism of certain inherent faculties or "categories," of the understanding, by which their original character is modified, or perhaps altogether changed, we are not entitled to draw from them any conclusions as to the real nature of the source whence they emanate. Our knowledge of the outward world is thus limited to the bare admission of its existence, and stands in the same relation to the outward world itself as the impressions conveyed to the eye through a kaleidoscope do to the collection of objects within the instrument. But is the outward world, which we are thus forced to abandon to doubt, the only reality for man? Do we not find in consciousness something more than a cognitive faculty? We find besides, Will, Freedom, Self-determination; and here is a world altogether independent of sense, and of the knowledge of outward things. Freedom is the root, the very ground-work of our being; free determination is the most intimate and certain fact in our nature. To this freedom we find an absolute law addressed,—the unconditional law of morality. Here, then, in the practical world of duty, of free obedience, of moral determination, we have the true world of man, in which the moral agent is the only existence, the moral act the only reality. In this super-sensual world we regain, by the practical movement of Reason, our convictions of infinite and absolute existence, from the knowledge of which, as objective realities, we are shut out by the subjective limitations of the Understanding. Between the world of sense and the

world of morality, and indissolubly connected with both, stands the æsthetic world, or the system of relations we hold with external things through our ideas of the Beautiful, the Sublime, &c. ; which thus forms the bond of union between the sensible and spiritual worlds. These three worlds exhaust the elements of human consciousness.

But while Kant, by throwing the bridge of æsthetic feeling over the chasm which separates the sensible from the purely spiritual world, established an outward communication between them, he did not attempt to reconcile—he maintained the impossibility of reconciling—their essential opposition. So far as the objective world is concerned, his system is one of mere negation. It is in this reconciliation,—in tracing this opposition to its source,—in the establishment of the unity of the sensible and spiritual worlds, that Fichte's "Wissenschaftslehre" follows out and completes the philosophical system of which Kant had laid the foundation. In it, for the first time, philosophy becomes, not a theory of knowledge, but knowledge itself: for in it the apparent division of the subject thinking from the object thought of is abolished, by penetrating to the primitive unity out of which this opposition arises.

The origin of this opposition, and the principle by which it is to be reconciled, must be sought for in the nature of the thinking subject itself. Our own consciousness is the source of all our positive and certain knowledge. It precedes, and is the ground of, all other knowledge; nay it embraces within itself everything which we truly *know*. The facts of our own mental experience alone possess true reality for us; whatever is more than these, however probable as an inference, does not belong to the sphere of knowledge. Here, then, in the depths of the mind itself, we must look for a fixed and certain starting point for philosophy. Fichte finds such a starting point in the proposition or axiom ( $A=A$ .) This proposition is at once recognised by every one as absolutely and uncon-

ditionally true. But in affirming this proposition we also affirm our own existence, for the affirmation itself is our own mental act. The proposition may therefore be changed into (Ego=Ego.) But this affirmation itself postulates the existence of something not included in its subject, or in other words, out of the *affirmative* axiom ( $A=A$ ) there arises the *negative* proposition ( $-A \text{ not}=A$ ), or as before, (Non-Ego *not*=Ego.) In this act of negation the mind assumes the existence of a Non-Ego opposed to itself, and forming a limitation to its own existence. This opposition occurs in every act of consciousness; and in the voluntary and spontaneous limits which the mind thus sets to its own activity, it creates for itself an objective world.

The fundamental character of finite being is thus the supposition of itself (*thesis*), and of something opposed to itself (*anti-thesis*); which two conceptions are reciprocal, mutually imply each other, and are hence identical (*synthesis*.) The Ego affirms the Non-Ego, and is affirmed in it; the two conceptions are indissoluble, nay they are but one conception modified by different attitudes of the mind. But as these attitudes are in every case voluntarily assumed by the Ego, it is itself the only real existence, and the Non-Ego, as well as the varied aspects attributed to it, are but different forms of the activity of the Ego. Here, then, Realism and Idealism coincide in the identity of the subject and object of thought, and the absolute principle of knowledge is discovered in the mind itself.

But in thus establishing the Non-Ego as a limit to its own free activity, the Ego does not perform a mere arbitrary act. It constantly sets before it, as its aim or purpose, the realization of its own nature; and this effort after self-development is the root of our practical existence. This effort is limited by the Non-Ego,—the creation of the Ego itself for the purposes of its own moral life. Hence the practical Ego must regard itself as acted upon by influences from without, as restrained by something

other than itself,—in one word, as *finite*. But this limitation, or in other words the Non-Ego, is a mere creation of the Ego, without true life or existence in itself, and only assumed as a field for the self-development of the Ego. Let us suppose this assumed obstacle removed or laid aside, and the original activity of the Ego left without limitation or restraint. In this case the *finite* individuality of the Ego disappears with the limitations which produce it, and we ascend to the first principle of a spiritual organization in which the multiform phenomena of individual life are embraced in an Infinite all-comprehending Unity,—“an Absolute Ego, in whose self-determination all the Non-Ego is determined.”

Fichte has been accused of teaching a system of mere Egoism, of elevating the subjective personality of man into the place of God. No one who is acquainted with any of his later writings can fail to see the falsity of this charge; but as it has been alleged that in these works he abandoned the principles which he advocated in earlier life, it may not be unimportant to show that the charge is utterly groundless, and inapplicable even to the first outlines of his philosophical theory. The following passages occur in a letter to Jacobi, dated 30th August 1795, accompanying a copy of the *first edition* of the *Wissenschaftslehre*, and seem to be quite conclusive as to the fact that the Absolute Ego of his earlier teaching may be scientifically, as well as morally, identified with the highest results of his later doctrines.

### Fichte to Jacobi.

“I have read your writings again this summer during the leisure of a charming country residence,—read them again and again, and I am everywhere, but especially in “*Allwill*,” astonished at the striking similarity of our philosophical convictions. The public will scarcely believe in this similarity, and perhaps you yourself may not

readily do so, for in that case it would be required of you to deduce the details of a whole system from the uncertain outlines of an introduction. You are indeed well known to be a Realist, and I to be a transcendental Idealist more severe than even Kant himself;—for with him there is still recognised a multiform object of experience, whilst I maintain, in plain language, that this object is itself produced by us through our own creative power. Permit me to come to an understanding with you on this point.

“ My absolute Ego is obviously not the Individual;—although this has been maintained by offended courtiers and chagrined philosophers in order to impute to me the scandalous doctrine of practical Egoism. *But the Individual must be deduced from the Absolute Ego.* Thus the Wissenschaftslehre enters at once into the domain of natural right. A finite being—as may be shown by deduction—can only conceive of itself as a sensuous existence in a sphere of sensuous existences, over one portion of which—(a portion which can have no beginning)—it exercises causality, and with another portion of which—(a portion to which we ascribe the notion of causality),—it stands in relations of reciprocal influence;—and in so far it is called an Individual: (*the conditions of Individuality are Rights.*) So surely as it affirms itself as an Individual, so surely does it affirm such a sphere; for both are reciprocal notions. When we regard ourselves as Individuals—in which case we always look upon ourselves as living, and not as philosophizing or poetizing,—we take our stand upon that point of view which I call *practical*;—that of the Absolute Ego being *speculative*. Henceforward, from this *practical* point of view there is a world for us, independent of ourselves, which we can only modify; and thus too the Pure Ego, which does not disappear from this region, is necessarily placed without us, objectified, and called God. How could we otherwise have arrived at the qualities which we ascribe to God, and deny to ourselves, had we not first

discovered them in ourselves, and only denied them to ourselves in one particular respect—i. e., as individuals? This practical point of view is the domain of Realism; by the deduction and recognition of this point from the side of speculation itself arises that complete reconciliation of philosophy with the Common Sense of man which is promised in the Wissenschaftslehre.

"To what end, then, is the *speculative* point of view, and with it all philosophy, if it belong not to life? Had humanity never tasted of this forbidden fruit, it might indeed have done without philosophy. But there is implanted within us a desire to gaze upon this region which transcends all individuality, not by a mere reflected light, but in direct and immediate vision; and the first man who raised a question concerning the existence of God, broke through the restrictive limits, shook humanity to its deepest foundations, and set it in a controversy with itself which is not yet adjusted, and which can be adjusted only by a bold advance to that highest region of thought from which the speculative and practical points of view are seen to be united. We begin to philosophize from presumption, and thus become bankrupt of our innocence; we see our nakedness, and then philosophize from necessity for our redemption.

"But do I not philosophize as confidently with you, and write as openly, as if I were already assured of your interest in my philosophy? Indeed my heart tells me that I do not deceive myself in assuming the existence of this interest.

"*Allwill* gives the transcendental Idealists the hope of an enduring peace and even of a kind of alliance, if they will but content themselves with finding their own limits, and making these secure. I believe that I have now fulfilled this condition. If I have moreover, from this supposed hostile land, guaranteed and secured to Realism itself its own proper domain, then I may lay claim not

merely to a kind of alliance, but to an alliance of the completest kind."

Still more decisive on this point is the following passage from a review of Schulz's "*Ænesidemus*," in the *Literatur Zeitung* for 1794:—

"In the Pure Ego, Reason is not practical, neither is it so in the Ego as Intelligence: it becomes so only by the effort of these to unite. That this principle must lie at the root of Kant's doctrine itself, although he has nowhere distinctly declared it;—further, how a *practical* philosophy arises through the representation by the intelligent Ego to itself of this hyper-physical effort in its progressive ascent through the various steps which man must traverse in *theoretical* philosophy,—this is not the place to show. Such an union,—an Ego in whose self-determination all the Non-Ego is determined (*the Idea of God*)—is the highest object of this effort. Such an effort, when the intelligent Ego conceives this object as something external to itself, is faith;—(*Faith in God*.) This effort can never cease, until after the attainment of its object; that is, Intelligence cannot regard as the last any moment of its existence in which this object has not yet been attained,—(*Faith in an Eternal Existence*.) In these ideas, however, there is nothing possible for us but Faith;—*i. e.* Intelligence has here no empirical perception for its object, but only the necessary effort of the Ego; and throughout all eternity nothing more than this can become possible. But this *faith* is by no means a mere probable *opinion*; on the contrary, it possesses, at least according to the testimony of our inmost convictions, the same degree of certainty with the immediately certain postulate '*I am*,'—a certainty infinitely superior to all objective certainty, which can only become possible *mediately*, through the existence of the intelligent Ego. *Ænesidemus* indeed demands an objective proof for the existence of God and



the Immortality of the soul. What can he mean by this? Or does objective certainty appear to him superior to subjective certainty? The axiom—'*I am myself*'—possesses only subjective certainty; and so far as we can conceive of the self-consciousness of God, even God is subjective so far as regards himself. And then, as to an objective existence of Immortality! (these are *Ænesidemus*' own words),—should any being whatever, contemplating its existence in time, declare at any moment of that existence—'*Now, I am eternal!*'—then, on that very account, it could not be eternal."

We have seen that the attitude of the finite Ego towards the Non-Ego is *practical*; towards the Infinite Ego, *speculative*. In the first relation we find ourselves surrounded by existences, over one part of which we exercise causality, and with the other (in whom we suppose an independent causality) we are in a state of reciprocal influence. In these relations the active and moral powers of man find their sphere. The moral law imparts to its objects—to all things whose existence is implied in its fulfilment—the same certainty which belongs to itself. The outward world assumes a new reality, for we have imperative duties to perform which demand its existence. Life ceases to be an empty show without truth or significance;—it is our field of duty, the theatre on which our moral destiny is to be wrought out. The voice of conscience, of highest reason, bids us know, love, and honour beings like ourselves;—and those beings crowd around us. The ends of their and our existence demand the powers and appliances of physical life for their attainment;—that life, and the means of sustaining and using it, stand before us. The world is nothing more than the *sphere* and *object* of human activity; it exists because the purposes of our moral life require its existence. Of the law of duty we are immediately certain;—the world becomes a

reality to us by means of that previous certainty. Our life begins with an action, not a thought; we do not act because we know, but we know because we are called upon to act.

But not only does the law of human activity require our faith in its immediate objects and implements; it also points to a purpose, an aim, in our actions, lying beyond themselves, to which they stand related as means to an end. Not that the moral law is dependent on the perception of this end—the moral law is absolute and imperative in itself;—but we necessarily connect with our actions some future result as a consequence to which they inevitably tend, as the final accomplishment of the purpose which gave them birth. The moral sense cannot find such a fulfilment in the present life;—the forces of nature, the desires and passions of men, constantly oppose its dictates. It revolts against the permanence of things as they now are, and unceasingly strives to make them better. Nor can the individual look for such an accomplishment of the moral law of his nature in the progressive improvement of his species. Were the highest grade of earthly perfection conceived and attained in the physical and moral world—(as it is conceivable and attainable)—Reason would still propose a higher grade beyond it—conceivable only after the attainment of the grade previously conceived of as the highest. And even this measure of perfection could not be appropriated by humanity as its own,—as the result of its own exertions,—but must be considered as the creation of an unknown power, by whose unseen agency the basest passions of men, and even their vices and crimes, have been made the instruments of this consummation; while too often their good resolutions appear altogether lost to the world, or even to retard the purposes which they were apparently designed to promote. The chain of material causes and effects is not affected by the motives and feelings which prompt an action, but

solely by the action itself; and the purposes of mere physical existence would be as well (if not better) promoted by an unerring mechanism as by the agency of free beings. Nevertheless, if moral obedience be a reasonable service, it must have its result; if the Reason which commands it be not an utterly vain delusion, its law must be fulfilled. That law is the first principle of our nature, and it gives us the assurance, our faith in which no difficulty can shake, that no moral act can be fruitless, no work of Reason utterly lost. Thus a chain of causes and effects, in which Freedom is superfluous and without aim, cannot be the limit of our existence: the law of our being cannot be fulfilled in the world of sense;—there must then be a super-sensual world, in which it may be accomplished. In this purely spiritual world, *will* alone is the first link of a chain of consequences which pervades the whole invisible realm of being; as *action*, in the sensual world, is the first link of a material chain which runs through the whole system of nature. Will is the active living principle of the super-sensual world; it may break forth in a material act, which belongs to the sensual world, and do there that which pertains to a material act to do;—but, independently of all physical manifestation, it flows forth in endless spiritual activity. Here human Freedom is untrammelled by earthly obstructions, and the moral law of our being may find that accomplishment which it sought in vain in the world of sense.

But although we are immediately conscious that our Will, our moral activity, must lead to consequences beyond itself, we yet cannot know *what* those consequences may be, nor *how* they are possible. In respect of the nature of these results, the present life is, in relation to the future, *a life in faith*. In the future life we shall possess these results, for we shall then make them the groundwork of new activity, and thus the future life will be, in relation to the present, *a life in sight*. But the

spiritual world is even now with us, for we are already in possession of the principle from which it springs. Our Will, our free activity, is the only attribute which is solely and exclusively our own; and by it we are already citizens of the eternal world; the kingdom of heaven is here, or nowhere—it cannot become more immediately present at any point of finite existence. This life is the beginning of our being; the outward world is freely given to us as a firm ground on which we may commence our course; the future life is its continuation, for which we must ourselves create a starting-period in the present; and should the aim of this second life prove as unattainable to finite power as the end of the first is to us now, then the fresh strength, the firmer purpose, the clearer sight which shall be its immediate growth, will open to us another and a higher sphere of activity. But the world of duty is an infinite world;—every finite exertion has but a definite aim;—and beyond the highest point toward which we now strive, a higher still appears; and to such progression we can conceive no end. By free determination—in the effort after moral perfection,—we have laid hold on Eternal Life.

In the physical world we see certain phenomena following each other with undeviating regularity. We cannot see that what we name *cause* has in itself any power over what we call *effect*, that there is any relation between them except that of invariable sequence. But we suppose a law under which both subsist, which regulates the mode of their existence, and by the efficiency of which the order of their succession is determined. So likewise, in the spiritual world, we entertain the firmest conviction that our moral Will is connected with certain consequences, though we cannot understand how mere Will can of itself produce such consequences. We here again conceive of a law under which our Will, and the Will of all finite beings, exists, in virtue of which it is followed by certain

results, and out of which all our relations with other beings arise. So far as our Will is simply an internal act, complete in itself, it lies wholly within our own power;—so far as it is a fact in the super-sensual world—the first of a train of spiritual consequences, it is not dependent on ourselves, but on the law which governs the super-sensual world. But the super-sensual world is a world of Freedom, of living activity; hence its principle cannot be a mechanical force, but must itself possess this Freedom—this living activity. It can be nothing else than self-determining Reason. But self-determining Reason is Will. The law of the super-sensual world must thus be a *Will*;—a will operating without material implement or manifestation, which is in itself both act and product, which is eternal and unchangeable,—so that on it finite beings may securely rely, as the physical man does on the laws of his world, that through it, all their moral acts of Will, and these only, shall lead to certain and unfailing results. *In* this Living Will, as the principle of the spiritual world, has our moral Will its first consequence; and *through* Him its energy is propagated throughout the series of finite beings who are the products of the Infinite Will. He is the spiritual bond which unites all free beings together:—not immediately can they know or influence each other, for they are separated from each other by an impassable barrier;—their mutual knowledge comes through Him alone, to whom all are equally related. Our faith in duty, and in the objects of duty, is only faith in Him, in His wisdom, in His truth. He is thus the creator and sustainer of all things; for in Him alone all the thronging forms which people our dream of life “live and move and have their being.” All partake His essence:—material nature disappears, but its images are invested with a new reality. All our life is His life; and we are eternal, for He is eternal. Birth and the grave are no more; but, in their stead, undying energy and im-

mortal youth. Of Him—the Infinite One,—of the mode of His being, we know nothing, nor need we to know; we cannot pierce the inaccessible light in which He dwells, but through the shadows which veil His presence from us, an endless stream of life, power, and action flows around and about us, bearing us and all finite things onward to new life, love, and beauty.

“The ONE remains, the many change and pass;  
 Heaven’s light for ever shines, Earth’s shadows fly;  
 Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,  
 Stains the white radiance of Eternity,  
 Until Death tramples it to fragments.”

All Death in nature is Birth,—the assumption of a new garment, to replace the old vesture which humanity has laid aside in its progress to higher being. And serene above all change, the unattainable object of all finite effort—fountain of our life—home of our spirits—Thou art—the One Being,—the I AM,—for whom Reason has no idea, and Language no name.

“Sublime and living Will, named by no name, compassed by no thought, I may well raise my soul to Thee, for Thou and I are not divided. Thy voice sounds within me, mine resounds in Thee; and all my thoughts, if they are but good and true, live in Thee also. In Thee, the Incomprehensible, I myself, and the world in which I live, become clearly comprehensible to me, all the secrets of my existence are laid open, and perfect harmony arises in my soul.

“Thou art best known to the childlike, devoted, simple mind. To it Thou art the searcher of hearts, who seest its inmost depths; the ever-present true witness of its thoughts, who knowest its truth, who knowest it though all the world know it not. Thou art the Father who ever desirest its good, who rulest all things for the best. To Thy will it unhesitatingly resigns itself: ‘Do with me,’ it says, ‘what thou wilt; I know that it is good, for it is Thou who dost it.’ The inquisitive understanding, which

has heard of Thee, but seen Thee not, would teach us Thy nature; and, as Thy image, shows us a monstrous and incongruous shape, which the sagacious laugh at, and the wise and good abhor.

"I hide my face before Thee, and lay my hand upon my mouth. *How* Thou art, and seemest to Thine own being, I can never know, any more than I can assume Thy nature. After thousands upon thousands of spirit-lives, I shall comprehend Thee as little as I do now in this earthly house. That which I conceive, becomes finite through my very conception of it; and this can never, even by endless exaltation, rise into the Infinite. Thou differest from men, not in degree but in nature. In every stage of their advancement they think of Thee as a greater *man*, and still a greater; but never as God—the Infinite,—whom no measure can mete. I have only this discursive, progressive thought, and I can conceive of no other:—how can I venture to ascribe it to Thee? In the idea of *person* there are imperfections, limitations:—how can I clothe Thee with it without these?

"I will not attempt that which the imperfection of my finite nature forbids, and which would be useless to me:—*how* Thou art, I may not know. But Thy relations to me—the mortal—and to all mortals—lie open before my eyes, were I but what I ought to be,—and surround me more clearly than the consciousness of my own existence. *Thou workest* in me the knowledge of my duty, of my vocation in the world of reasonable beings:—*how*, I know not, nor need I to know. *Thou knowest* what I think and what I will:—*how* Thou canst know, through what act Thou bringest about that consciousness, I cannot understand,—nay, I know that the idea of an act, of a particular act of consciousness, belongs to me alone, and not to Thee,—the Infinite One. *Thou wilt* that my free obedience shall bring with it eternal consequences:—the act of thy will I cannot comprehend,—I know only that

it is not like mine. *Thou doest*, and Thy will itself is the deed: but the way of thy working is not as my ways,—I cannot trace it. *Thou livest and art*, for Thou knowest and willest and workest, omnipresent to finite Reason; but Thou *art not* as *I* now and always must conceive of being.”\*

Such is a broken and imperfect outline of the most complete system of Transcendental Idealism ever offered to the world. To those few among British students, who, amid the prevailing degradation of sentiment and frivolity of thought, have pondered the deep mysteries of being until the common logic which would grasp its secret seems a vain and presumptuous trifling with questions which lie far beyond its reach, and who find in the theological solution but a hard and formal husk which conceals the kernel of truth it was only meant to preserve,—to such it may be no unacceptable service to have pointed the way to a modern Academe, where the moral dignity of the Athenian sage is united with the poetic sublimity and intellectual keenness of his two most distinguished pupils. If by such humble guidance any should be induced to turn aside towards that retreat, let them not be deterred if at first the path should seem to lack something of the smoothness of the well-trodden highway on which they have hitherto travelled;—let them proceed courageously;—it will lead them into calm sunshine, and beside clear and refreshing streams;—nor will they return thence without nobler thoughts and higher aspirations.

Fichte lived in close retirement in Zurich. The manners of the inhabitants did not please him, and he seldom came out into society. His wife, his father-in-law, Lavater, and a few others, composed his circle. Rahn enjoyed in no ordinary degree the society of his distinguished son-

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\* “*Bestimmung des Menschen*,” Book III.



in-law; and it is pleasing to know that the celebrated and venerable preacher preserved, even in advanced age, a keen relish for new truth, a perfect openness of mind not frequently met with in his profession. At his request Fichte prepared a short course of lectures, by which his friends might be introduced to an acquaintance with the Critical Philosophy, the fame of which had now reached Switzerland. At the conclusion of the lectures Lavater addressed a letter of thanks to his young instructor, full of the strongest expressions of gratitude and esteem, in which he styles himself his "pupil, friend, and fellow-man." Up to the period of his death, this excellent man retained the warmest feelings of friendship towards the philosopher;—and the following lines, written some years after Fichte's departure from Zurich, whatever may be their value in other respects, serve at least to show the respect, almost approaching to reverence, with which Fichte was regarded by one who was himself no ordinary man :—

"Denkzeile nach meinem Code, an Herrn Professor Fichte, 1800.

"Unreichbarer Denker, Dein Daseyn beweist mir das Daseyn,  
Eines ewigen Geistes, dem hohe Geister einstrahlen!

Könntest je Du zweifeln: ich stellte Dich selbst vor Dich selbst nur;  
Zeigte Dir in Dir selbst den Straß des ewigen Geistes."

Although Fichte had as yet published nothing to which his name was attached, he had nevertheless acquired an extensive philosophical reputation. In several powerful and searching criticisms which appeared in the "Allgemeine Literatur Zeitung," the hand of the author of the "Critique of Revelation" was discovered. He was now generally looked upon as the man who was destined to carry forward and complete the critical philosophy of Kant, and was thus led into literary correspondence with some of the most distinguished men of the day. At the head of these must be placed Reinhold, the professor of philosophy at Jena, who had hitherto stood foremost among the disciples of Kant. The relation between these

two celebrated men (Fichte and Reinhold) was a most remarkable one. Although their characters were very different, although they never saw each other, they lived on terms of the most intimate and trustful confidence, such as is commonly attained by long-trying friendship alone. In their extensive correspondence, Fichte's powerful and commanding intellect evidently possesses great ascendancy over the more diffident and pliable nature of Reinhold; but his influence never interferes with the mental freedom of his friend. On the other hand, Reinhold's open enthusiastic character, and his pure love of truth, engaged the warm affection and sympathy of his more daring correspondent;—while the frequent misunderstandings which lend an almost dramatic interest to their letters, afford room for the exhibition of manly and generous kindness in both. In 1797 Reinhold abandoned his own system and accepted the "Wissenschaftslehre," announcing the change to Fichte in the following terms:—

"I have at length come to understand your "Wissenschaftslehre," or, what is the same thing to me—philosophy without nickname. It now stands before me as a perfect whole, founded on itself—the pure conception of self-conscious Reason,—the mirror of our better selves. Individual parts are still obscure to me, but they cannot now deprive me of my comprehension of the whole; and their number is diminishing every day. Beside it lie the ruins of the edifice which cost me so much time and labour, in which I thought to dwell so securely and commodiously, to entertain so many guests,—in which I laughed, not without self-gratulation, over so many Kantists who mistook the scaffolding for the house itself. This catastrophe would have caused me much pain for a time, if it had happened by the hand of scepticism." . . . . .

"Adieu! I salute you with the deepest gratitude. Is personal intercourse absolutely necessary to the growth of friendship? I doubt it. For indeed it is not mere

gratitude, not mere reverence,—it is heartfelt love that I feel for you, since I now, through your philosophy, understand yourself."

In Fichte's literary correspondence while at Zurich we find the first intimations of his departure from the system of Kant, and his plan of a complete and comprehensive philosophy. He could not rest satisfied with results, unless he could also perceive the grounds on which they rested. His reason imperatively demanded absolute unity of conception, without separation, without division,—above all without opposition. Writing to Niethammer in October 1793 he says—"My conviction is that Kant has only *indicated* the truth, but neither unfolded nor proved it. This singular man either has a power of divining truth, without being himself conscious of the grounds on which it rests; or he has not esteemed his age worthy of the communication of those grounds; or he has shrunk from attracting that superhuman reverence during his life, which sooner or later must be his in some degree." And as the fundamental idea of his own system dawned upon his mind, he says to Stephani,—“I have discovered a new principle from which all philosophy can easily be deduced. . . . In a couple of years we shall have a philosophy with all the clearness of geometrical demonstration.” —To the development of this scheme he devoted all the energies of his powerful intellect during the leisure of his retirement. He refused an invitation to become tutor to the Prince of Mecklenburg-Strelitz:—"I desire," he says, "nothing but leisure to work out my plan,—then fortune may do with me what it will."

But his studies were soon broken in upon by a call of another and more important nature. This was his appointment as Professor *Supernumerarius* of Philosophy at the University of Jena, in room of Reinhold who removed to Kiel. The distinguished honour of this invitation, un-

asked and unexpected, and the extensive field of usefulness which it opened up to him, determined Fichte at once to accept it. Unable, however, to satisfy himself that his views were as yet so fully matured and settled as to justify him in entering at once upon the important duties of a teacher, invested as these were to his mind with a peculiar sacredness and solemnity, he endeavoured to obtain a postponement of his inauguration which had been fixed for Easter 1794, in order that, by the more complete elaboration of the principle which he had discovered, he might be able to elevate his philosophy at once to the rank of positive science. For this purpose he requested a year's delay. But as it was considered that the interests of the University might suffer by the chair remaining so long vacant, his request was refused,—with permission, however, to devote the greater part of his time, during the first year, to study. He therefore sent an unconditional acceptance, and plunged at once into the most arduous preparation for his new duties.

Weimar and the neighbouring University of Jena was at this time the focus of German literature and learning. The Grand Duke Charles Augustus had gathered around him the most distinguished men of his age, and Wieland, Herder, Goethe, Schiller and Humboldt shed a more than Medicean lustre upon the little Saxon Court. Probably at no other period was so much high genius, engaged in every department of mental exertion, gathered together in one spot. The University, too, was the most numerous frequented of any in Germany, not by the youth of Germany alone, but by students from almost every part of Europe: Switzerland, Denmark, Poland, Hungary, the Free Cities, and even France, sent their sons to Jena for education. The brilliant intellectual circle at Weimar presented to the cultivated mind attractions which could be found nowhere else; whilst at Jena the academic teacher

found a most extensive and honourable field for the exercise of his powers. It was to this busy scene of mental activity that Fichte was called from his Swiss retreat,—to the society of the greatest living men,—to the instruction of this thronging crowd from all surrounding nations. Previous to his own appearance he published an introductory programme of the philosophy to be set forth in his lectures, under the title of “*Begriff der Wissenschaftslehre oder der sogenannten Philosophie.*” The high reputation he had already acquired, and the bold originality of his system, drew universal attention. Expectation was strained to the utmost; so that those who had marked the rapid growth of his fame had apparent reason to fear that it might prove short-lived. But notwithstanding the shortness of the time allowed him for preparation, he entered upon his course with a clear perception of the task that lay before him, and confident reliance on his own power to fulfil the important duties to which he was called.

He arrived at Jena on the 18th of May 1794, and was received with great kindness by his colleagues at the University. On the 23d he delivered his first lecture. The largest hall in Jena, although crowded to the roof, proved insufficient to contain the audience. His singular and commanding address, his fervid, fiery eloquence, the rich profusion of his thoughts, following each other in the most convincing sequence and modelled with the sharpest precision, astonished and delighted his hearers. His triumph was complete;—he left the Hall the most popular Professor of the greatest University in Germany. The following acute and graphic remarks on this subject, from Forberg’s “*Fragmenten aus meinen Papieren,*” afford us some glimpse of the opinions entertained of him by his contemporaries at Jena :—

“*Jena, 12th May 1794.*”

“I look with great confidence to Fichte, who is daily expected here. But I would have had still greater con-

fidence in him if he had written the "Kritik der Offenbarung" twenty years later. A young man who ventures to write a masterpiece must commonly suffer for it. He is what he is, but he will not be what he might have been. He has spent his strength too soon, and his later fruits will at least want ripeness. A great mind has no merit if it does not possess sufficient self-denial not to appear great for a time, that thereby it may become greater. If a man cannot sacrifice a dozen years' fame as an offering to truth, what else can he lay upon her altar? I believe that Reinhold's theory has done much injury to the study of the Kantian Philosophy, but that is nothing to the injury it has done to the author himself. His philosophy is finished for this world,—nothing more is to be expected from him but polemics and reminiscences. Fichte is not here yet,—but I am eager to know whether he has anything still to learn. It would be almost a wonder if he had, considering the incense that they burn before him. Oh! there is nothing so easily unlearned as the power of learning."

"7th December 1794.

"Since Reinhold has left us, his philosophy (with us at least) has expired. Every trace of the "Philosophy without nickname" has vanished from among the students. Fichte is believed in, as Reinhold never was believed in. They understand him indeed even less than they did his predecessor; but they believe all the more obstinately on that account. *Ego* and *Non-Ego* are now the symbols of the philosophers of yesterday, as *substance* and *form* were formerly.

"Fichte's philosophy is, so to speak, more philosophical than Reinhold's. You *hear* him going digging and seeking after truth. In rough masses he brings it forth from the deep, and throws it from him. He does not *say* what he will do; he *does* it. Reinhold's doctrine was rather an announcement of a philosophy, than a philosophy itself. He has never fulfilled his promises. Not unfrequently

did he give forth the promise for the fulfilment. He never will fulfil them,—for he is now past away. Fichte seems really determined to work upon the world through his philosophy. The tendency to restless activity which dwells in the breast of every noble youth he would carefully nourish and cultivate, that it may in due season bring forth fruit. He seizes every opportunity of teaching that action—action—is the vocation of man; whereby it is only to be feared that the majority of young men who lay the maxim to heart may look upon this summons to action as only a summons to demolition. And, strictly speaking, the principle is false. Man is not called upon to act, but to act justly; if he cannot act without acting unjustly, he had better remain inactive.

“Every reader of Kant or Fichte is seized by a deep feeling of the superiority of these mighty minds; who wrestle with their subjects, as it were, to grind them to powder; who seem to say all that they do say to us, only that we may conjecture how much more they could say.

“All the truth that J—— has written is not worth a tenth part of the false which Fichte may have written. The one gives me a small number of known truths; the other gives me perhaps one truth, but in doing so, opens before me the prospect of an infinity of unknown truths.

“It is certain that in Fichte’s philosophy there is quite a different spirit from that which pervades the philosophy of his predecessor. The spirit of the latter is a weak, fearful spirit, which timidly includes wide, narrow, and narrowest shades of meaning between the hedges and fences of a “to some extent” and “in so far;”—a weak worn-out spirit, which conceals (and ill-conceals) its poverty of thought behind the mantle of scholastic phraseology, and whose philosophy is form without substance, a skeleton without flesh and blood, body without life, promise without fulfilment. But the spirit of Fichte’s philosophy is a proud and bold spirit, for which the domain of human

knowledge, even in its widest extent, is too narrow ; which opens up new paths at every step it takes ; which struggles with language in order to wrest from it words enough for its wealth of thought ; which does not lead us, but seizes and hurries us along, and whose finger cannot touch an object without bruising it to dust. But that which especially gives Fichte's philosophy quite another interest from that of Reinhold, is this,—that in all his inquiries there is a motion, a struggle, an effort, thoroughly to solve the hardest problems of Reason. His predecessor never appeared to suspect the existence of these problems—to say nothing of their solution. Fichte's philosophemes are inquiries in which we see the truth before our eyes, and thus they produce knowledge and conviction. Reinhold's philosophemes are exhibitions of results, the production of which goes on behind the scenes. We may believe, but we cannot know ! . . .

“The fundamental element of Fichte's character is the highest honesty. Such a character commonly knows little of delicacy and refinement. In his writings we do not meet with much that is particularly beautiful ; his best passages are always distinguished by greatness and strength. He does not say fine things, but all his words have force and weight. He wants the amiable, kind, attractive, accommodating spirit of Reinhold. His principles are severe, and not much softened by humanity. Nevertheless he suffers—what Reinhold could not suffer—contradiction ; and understands—what Reinhold could not understand—a joke. His superiority is not felt to be so humiliating as that of Reinhold ; but when he is called forth he is terrible. His is a restless spirit, thirsting for opportunity to do great things in the world.

“Fichte's public delivery does not flow on smoothly, sweetly and softly, as Reinhold's did ; it rushes along like a tempest, discharging its fire in separate masses. He does not move the soul as Reinhold did ; he rouses it.



The one seemed as if he would make men good ; the other would make them great. Reinhold's face was mildness, and his form was majesty ; Fichte's eye is threatening, and his step daring and defiant. Reinhold's philosophy was an endless polemic against Kantists and Anti-Kantists ; Fichte, with his, desires to lead the spirit of the age,—he knows its weak side, and therefore he addresses it on the side of politics. He possesses more readiness, more acuteness, more penetration, more genius,—in short, more spiritual power than Reinhold. His fancy is not flowing, but it is energetic and mighty ;—his pictures are not charming, but they are bold and massive. He penetrates to the innermost depths of his subject, and moves about in the ideal world with an ease and confidence which proclaim that he not only dwells in that invisible land, but rules there.” \*

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\* The following graphic sketch of Fichte's personal appearance and manner of delivery is taken from the Autobiography of Henry Stephens. Although it refers to a later period of his life, it is thought most appropriate to introduce it here :—

“ Fichte appeared, to deliver his introductory lecture on the Vocation of Man. This short, strong-built man, with sharp commanding features, made, I must confess, a most imposing appearance, as I then saw him for the first time. Even his language had a cutting sharpness. Well acquainted with the metaphysical incapacity of his hearers, he took the greatest possible pains fully to demonstrate his propositions ; but there was an air of authoritativeness in his discourse, as if he would remove all doubts by mere word of command. ‘Gentlemen,’ said he, ‘collect yourselves—go into yourselves—for we have here nothing to do with things without, but simply with the inner self.’ Thus summoned, the auditors appeared really to go into themselves. Some, to facilitate the operation, changed their position and stood up ; some drew themselves together and cast their eyes upon the floor ; all were evidently waiting under high excitement for what was to follow this preparatory summons. ‘Gentlemen,’ continued Fichte, ‘think the wall,’—(Denken Sie die Wand.) This was a task to which the hearers were evidently all equal ; they thought the wall. ‘Have you thought the wall ?’ asked Fichte. ‘Well then, gentlemen, think him who thought the wall.’ It was curious to see the evident confusion and embarrassment that now arose. Many of his audience seemed to be utterly unable anywhere to find him who had thought the wall.—Fichte's delivery was excellent, being marked throughout by clearness and precision.”

It might naturally be supposed that a teacher possessed of so many qualities fitted to command the respect and admiration of his students could not fail to acquire a powerful influence, not only on the nature and direction of their studies, but also on their outward relations. Accordingly we find Fichte, soon after his settlement at Jena, occupying a most influential position towards the youth, not of his own department merely, but of the whole University. Doubts had been entertained, even before his arrival, that his ardent and active spirit might lead him to use the influence he should acquire over the students for the furtherance of political projects. His supposed democratic opinions were even made a ground of objection to his appointment; and it cannot be affirmed that such anticipations were improbable, for certainly the tendency of his own character, and the peculiar circumstances of the age, presented strong temptations to convert the chair of the professor into the pulpit of the practical philanthropist. He himself says that he was assailed by not a few such temptations, and even invitations, at the beginning of his residence at Jena, but that he resolutely cast them from him. He was not one of those utilitarian philosophers who willingly sacrifice high and enduring good to the attainment of some partial and temporary purpose. His idea of the vocation of an academical teacher opened to him another field of duty, superior to that of direct political activity. In all his intercourse with his pupils, public or private, his sole object was the development and cultivation of their moral and intellectual powers. No trace can be found of any attempt to lead his hearers upon the stage of actual life while the opposition between the speculative and practical sides of their nature still existed. To reconcile this opposition was the great object of his philosophy. In his hands philosophy was no longer speculation, but knowledge—(it was soon divested even of its scholastic terminology, and the *Ego*, *Non-Ego*, &c. entirely

laid aside),—the expression of the profoundest thoughts of man, on himself, the world, and God;—while, on the other hand, morality was no arbitrary legislation, but the natural development of the active principle of our own being, indissolubly bound up with, and indeed the essential root of, its intellectual aspect. Binding together into a common unity every mode and manifestation of our nature, his philosophy is capable of the widest application, and of an almost infinite variety of expression; while in the ceaseless elevation of our whole being to higher grades of nobility and greatness is found at once its intellectual supremacy and its moral power.

So far indeed was Fichte from lending his countenance to political combination among the students, or inculcating any sentiments subversive of the existing arrangements of society,—that no one suffered more than he did, from the clergy on the one hand and the students on the other, in the attempt to maintain good order in the University. The unions known by the name of *Landmannschaften* existed at that time in the German schools of learning as they do now, but their proceedings were then marked by much greater turbulence and license than they are at the present day. Riots of the most violent description were of common occurrence; houses were broken into and robbed of their contents to supply the marauders with the means of sensual indulgence. The arm of the law was impotent to restrain these excesses; and so bold had the unionists become, that upon one occasion, when the house of a professor at Jena had been ransacked, five hundred students openly demanded from the Duke an amnesty for the offence. Efforts had been made at various times by the academical authorities to suppress these societies, but the students only broke out into more frightful excesses when any attempt was made to restrain their “Burschen-Rights,” or “Academical freedom.” In the hope of effecting some reformation of manners in the University, Fichte commenced,

soon after his arrival at Jena, a course of public lectures on academical morality. Five of these addresses were afterwards published under the title of "*Die Bestimmung des Gelehrten*," (*The Vocation of the Scholar*) a translation of which forms part of this volume. They are distinguished by fervid and impressive eloquence, and set forth the dignity and duties of the Scholar, as deduced from the idea of his vocation, with clear, but sublime and spirit-stirring earnestness. He leaves no place for low motives or degrading propensities, but fills up his picture of the Scholar-life with the purest and most disinterested virtues of our nature. These lectures, and his own personal influence among the students, were attended with the happiest effects. The three *orders* which then existed at Jena expressed their willingness to dissolve their union, on condition of the past being forgotten. They delivered over to Fichte the books and papers of their society, for the purpose of being destroyed as soon as he could make their peace with the Court at Weimar, and receive a commission to administer to them the oath of renunciation, which they would receive from no one but himself. After some delay, caused in part by the authorities of the University, who seem to have been jealous of the success with which an individual professor had accomplished without assistance what they had in vain endeavoured to effect by threatenings and punishment, the desired arrangements were effected and the commission arrived. But in consequence of some doubts to which this delay had given rise, one of the three orders drew back from the engagement, and turned with great virulence against Fichte, whom they suspected of deceiving them.

Encouraged, however, by the success which had attended his efforts with the other two orders, Fichte determined to pursue the same course during the winter session of 1794, and to deliver another series of public lectures, calculated to rouse and sustain a spirit of honour and

morality among the students. Thoroughly to accomplish his purpose, it was necessary that these lectures should take place at an hour not devoted to any other course, so that he might assemble an audience from among all the different classes of the University. But he found that every hour from 8 A. M. till 7 P. M. was already occupied by lectures on important branches of knowledge. No way seemed open to him but to deliver his moral discourses on Sundays. Before adopting this plan, however, he made diligent inquiries whether any law, either of the State or of the University, forbade such a proceeding. Discovering no such prohibition, he examined into the practice of other Universities, and found many precedents to justify Sunday lectures, particularly a course of a similar nature delivered by Gellert at Berlin. He finally asked the opinion of some of the oldest professors, none of whom could see any objection to his proposal, provided he did not encroach upon the time devoted to divine service;—Schütz remarking, “If plays are allowed on Sunday, why not moral lectures?” The hour of divine service in the University was 11 A. M. Fichte therefore fixed upon nine in the morning as his hour of lecture, and commenced his course with most favourable prospects. A large concourse of students from all the different classes thronged his hall, and several professors, who took their places among the audience, willingly acknowledged the benefit which they derived from his discourses. But he soon discovered that the best intentions, and the most prudent conduct, are no protection against calumny. A political print, which had attained an unenviable notoriety for anonymous slander, and had distinguished itself by crawling sycophancy towards those in power, now exhibited its far-seeing sagacity by tracing an intimate connexion between the Sunday lectures and the French Revolution, and proclaimed the former to be a “formal attempt to overturn the public religious services of Christianity, and to erect the worship of Reason in

their stead"! Strange to tell, the Consistory of Jena saw it to be their duty to forward a complaint on this subject to the High-Consistory at Weimar; and finally, an assembly in which, strange to say, Herder sat, lodged an accusation before the Duke and Privy-council against Professor Fichte for "a deliberate attempt against the public religious services of the country." Fichte was directed to suspend his lectures in the meantime, until inquiry could be made. He immediately met the accusation with a powerful defence, in which he indignantly threw back the charge, completely demolishing, by a simple narrative of the real facts, every shadow of argument by which it could be supported; and took occasion to make the Government acquainted with his projects for the moral improvement of the students. The judgment of the Duke is dated 25th January 1795, and by it, Fichte "is freely acquitted of the utterly groundless suspicion which had been attached to him," and confidence is expressed, "that in his future proceedings he will exhibit such wisdom and prudence as shall entitle him to the continued good opinion" of the Prince. Permission was given him to resume his Sunday lectures, avoiding the hours of divine service.

But in the meantime the outrageous proceedings of that party of the students which was opposed to him rendered it impossible for him to entertain any hope of conciliating them, and soon made his residence at Jena uncomfortable and even dangerous. His wife was insulted upon the public street, and both his person and property subjected to repeated outrages. He applied to the Senate of the University for protection, but was informed that the treatment he had received was the result of his interference in the affairs of the Orders upon the authority of the State and without the coöperation of the Senate; that they could do nothing more than *authorize* self-defence in case of necessity; and that if he desired more protection than the Academy could give him, he might apply to his friends at

Court. At last, when at the termination of the winter session an attack was made upon his house in the middle of the night, his venerable father-in-law narrowly escaping with life, Fichte applied to the Duke for permission to leave Jena. This was granted, and he took up his residence during the summer at the village of Osmanstadt, about two miles from Weimar.

In delightful contrast to the stormy character of his public life at this time, stands the peaceful simplicity of his domestic relations. In consequence of the suddenness of his removal from Zurich his wife did not accompany him at the time, but joined him a few months afterwards. Her venerable father, too, was persuaded by his love for his children to leave his native land, and take up his residence with them at Jena. This excellent old man was the object of Fichte's deepest respect and attachment, and his declining years were watched with all the anxiety of filial tenderness. He died on 29th September 1795, at the age of 76. His remains were accompanied to the grave by Fichte's pupils as a mark of respect for their teacher's grief; and a simple monument records the affectionate reverence of those he left behind him. It bears the following characteristic inscription from the pen of Fichte :—

#### HARTMANN RAHN,

BORN AT ZURICH, DIED AT JENA 29th SEPTEMBER 1795, AGED 76 YEARS.

He lived amid the most eminent men of his time ; was beloved by the good ; sometimes troubled by others ; hated by none.

Intelligence, kindliness, faith in God and man, gave new life to his age, and guided him peacefully to the grave.

None knew his worth better than we, whom the old man followed from his father-land, whom he loved even to the end, and of whose grief this memorial bears record.

JOHANNA FICHTE, his DAUGHTER.

JOH. GOTT. FICHTE, his SON.

Farewell! thou dear Father!

Be not ashamed, O Stranger ! if a gentle emotion stir within thee :  
were he alive, he would clasp thy hand in friendship !

After the death of their venerable parent, Fichte and his wife were left alone to enjoy, in pure and unbroken attachment, the calm sunshine of domestic felicity ; and at a later period the smile of childhood added a new charm to their home. A son who was born at Jena was their only child.\*

Fichte's intercourse with the eminent men who adorned this brilliant period of German literary history was extensive and important. Preëminent among these stands Goethe, in many respects a remarkable contrast to the philosopher. The one, calm, sarcastic, and oracular ; the other, restless, enthusiastic, impetuously eloquent ;—the one, looking on men only to scan and comprehend them ; the other, waging ceaseless war with their vices, their ignorance, their unworthiness ;—the one, seating himself on a chilling elevation above human sympathy, and even exerting all the energies of his intellect to veil the traces of every feeling which bound him to his fellow-men ; the other, from an eminence no less exalted, pouring around him a rushing tide of moral power over his friends, his country, and the world. To the one, men looked up with a painful and hopeless sense of inferiority ; they crowded around the other to participate in his wisdom, and to grow strong in gazing on his Titanic might. And even now, when a common destiny has long since laid the proud gray column in the dust and stayed the giant's arm from working, we look upon the majesty of the one with astonishment rather than reverence, while at the memory of the other the pulse of hope beats higher than before, and the patriot's heart glows with a nobler inspiration.

Goethe welcomed the 'Wissenschaftslehre' with his usual avidity for new acquisitions. The bold attempt to infuse a living spirit into philosophical formulas, and give reality to speculative abstractions, roused his attention. He re-

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\* Now Professor of Philosophy in the University of Tübingen.



quested that it might be sent to him, sheet by sheet, as it went through the press. This was accordingly done, and the following passage from a letter to Fichte will show that he was not disappointed in the expectations he had formed of it :—

“What you have sent me contains nothing which I do not understand, or at least believe that I understand,—nothing that does not readily harmonize with my accustomed way of thinking ; and I see the hopes which I had derived from the introduction already fulfilled.

“In my opinion you will confer a priceless benefit on the human race, and make every thinking man your debtor, by giving a scientific foundation to that upon which Nature seems long ago to have quietly agreed with herself. For myself, I shall owe you my best thanks if you reconcile me to the philosophers, whom I cannot do without, and with whom, notwithstanding, I never could unite.

“I look with anxiety for the continuation of your work to adjust and confirm many things for me ; and I hope, when you are free from urgent engagements, to speak with you about several matters, the prosecution of which I defer until I clearly understand how that which I hope to accomplish may harmonize with what we have to expect from you.”

The personal intercourse of these two great men seems to have been characterized by mutual respect and esteem, without any approach to intimacy. Of one interview Fichte says,—“He was politeness, friendship itself ; he showed me unusual attention.” But no correspondence was maintained between them after Fichte left Jena, in consequence of the proceedings which led to his departure.

Of a more enduring nature was his intimacy with Jacobi. It commenced in a literary correspondence soon after his arrival at Jena, from which some extracts have already

been given. Entertaining a deep respect for this distinguished man, derived solely from the study of his works, Fichte sent him a copy of the 'Wissenschaftslehre,' with a request that he would communicate his opinion of the system it contained. In a long and interesting correspondence, extending over many years, the points of opposition between them were canvassed; and although a radical difference in mental constitution prevented them from ever thinking altogether alike, yet it did not prevent them from cultivating a warm and steadfast friendship, which continued unbroken amid vicissitudes by which other attachments were sorely tried.

Fichte had formed an acquaintance with Schiller at Tübingen when on his journey to Jena. Schiller's enthusiastic nature assimilated more closely to that of Fichte than did the dispositions of the other great poet of Germany, and a cordial intimacy sprang up between them. Fichte was a contributor to the "*Horen*" from its commencement—a journal which Schiller began to publish soon after Fichte's arrival at Jena. This gave rise to a singular but short-lived misunderstanding between them. A paper entitled "*Briefe über Geist und Buchstaben in der Philosophie*" had been sent by Fichte for insertion in the *Horen*. Judging from the commencement alone, Schiller conceived it to be an imitation, or still worse, a parody, of his "*Briefe über die Ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen*," and, easily excited as he was, demanded with some bitterness that it should be re-written. Fichte did not justify himself by producing the continuation of the article, but referred the accusation of parody to the arbitration of Goethe and Humboldt. Schiller was soon convinced of his error, and apologized for it; but Fichte did not return the essay, and it appeared afterwards in the *Philosophical Journal*. After this slight misunderstanding they continued upon terms of confidence and

friendship, and, towards the close of his life, Schiller became a zealous student of the *Wissenschaftslehre*.

Fichte likewise carried on an extensive correspondence with Reinhold (who has been already mentioned), Schelling, W. von Humboldt, Schaumann, Paulus, Schmidt, the Schlegels, Novalis, Tieck, Woltmann, besides a host of minor writers, so that his influence extended throughout the whole literary world of Germany at that period.

Fichte has been accused of asperity and superciliousness towards his literary opponents; but much that might seem to be arrogance was but the result, perhaps somewhat bluntly expressed, of sincere and earnest conviction. It may easily be conceived that, occupying a point of view altogether different from theirs, his philosophy should appear to him entirely untouched by objections to which they attached great weight. Nor is it surprising that he should choose rather to proceed with the development of his own system from his own principles, than to place himself in the mental position of other men and combat their arguments upon their own grounds. That diversity of ground was the essential cause of their difference. Those who could take their stand beside him would see the matter as he saw it: those who could not do this must remain where they were. Claiming for his system the certainty of mathematical demonstration,—asserting that with him philosophy was no longer mere *speculation*, but had now become *knowledge*,—he could not bend or accommodate himself or his doctrines to the prejudices of others;—they must come to him, not he to them. “My philosophy,” he says, “is nothing to Herr Schmidt, from incapacity; his is nothing to me, from insight. From this time forth I look upon all that Herr Schmidt may say, either directly or indirectly, about my philosophy, as something which, so far as I am concerned, has no meaning; and upon Herr

Schmidt himself as a philosopher who, in relation to me, is nobody." Such language, although necessarily irritating in the highest degree to its objects, and easily susceptible of being regarded as the expression of a haughty and vain-glorious spirit, was in reality the natural utterance of a powerful and earnest intellect, unused to courtly phrase, or to the gilded insincerities of fashion. He spoke strongly, because he thought and felt deeply. He was the servant of truth, and it was not for him to mince his language towards her opponents. But it is worthy of remark that on these occasions he was never the assailant. In answer to some of Reinhold's expostulations he writes thus:—"You say that my tone touches and wounds persons who do not deserve it. That I sincerely regret. But they must deserve it in some degree, if they will not permit one to tell them honestly of the errors into which they wander, and are not willing to suffer a slight shame for the sake of a great instruction. With him to whom truth is not above all other things,—above his own petty personality,—the 'Wissenschaftslehre' can have nothing to do. The *internal* reason of the tone which I adopt is this: It fills me with scorn which I cannot describe, when I look on the present want of any truthfulness of vision; on the deep darkness, entanglement, and perversion which now prevail. The *external* reason is this: How have these men (the Kantists) treated me?—how do they continue to treat me?—There is nothing that I have less pleasure in than controversy. Why then can they not be at peace?—For example, friend Schmidt? I have indeed not handled him tenderly;—but every just person who knew much that is not before the public, would give me credit for the mildness of an angel." \*

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\* The following amusing passage, from the commencement of an anonymous publication on this controversy, may serve to show the kind of reputation which Fichte had acquired among his opponents:—

"After the anathemas which the dreadful Fichte has hurled from the

The true nature of Fichte's controversialism is well exhibited in a short correspondence with Jakob, the Professor of Philosophy at Halle. Jakob was editor of the "Annalen der Philosophie," the chief organ of the Kantists—a journal which had distinguished itself by the most uncompromising attacks upon the 'Wissenschaftslehre.' Fichte had replied in the Philosophical Journal in his usual style. Some time afterwards Jakob, who was personally unknown to Fichte, addressed a letter to him, full of friendly and generous sentiments, desiring that, although opposed to each other in principle, all animosity between them might cease. The following passages are extracted from Fichte's reply:—

### Fichte to Jakob.

"I have never hated you nor believed that you hated me. It may sound presumptuous, but it is true that I do not know properly what hate is, for I have never hated any one. And I am by no means so passionate as I am commonly said to be. . . . That my 'Wissenschaftslehre' was not understood,—that it is even now not understood (for it is supposed that I now teach *other* doctrines), I freely believe;—that it was not understood on account of my mode of propounding it in a book which was not designed for the public but for my own students, that no trust was reposed in me, but that I was looked

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height of his philosophic throne upon the ant-hills of the Kantists; looking at the stigma for ever branded on the foreheads of these unhappy creatures, which must compel them to hide their existence from the eye of an astonished public; amid the general fear and trembling which, spreading over all philosophic sects, casts them to the earth before the thunder-tread of this destroying god,—*who dare now avow himself a Kantist?* I dare!—one of the most insignificant creatures ever dropped from the hand of fate. Safe in the deep darkness which surrounds me, and which hides me from every eye in Germany,—even from the eagle-glance of a Fichte; from this quiet retreat, every attempt to break in upon the security of which is ridiculous in the extreme,—from hence I may venture to raise my voice, and cry, *I am a Kantist!*—and to Fichte—*Thou canst err, and hast erred,*" &c.

upon as a babbler whose interference in the affairs of philosophy might do hurt to science, that it was *therefore* concluded that the system, which men *knew* well enough that they did not understand, was a worthless system,—all this I know and can comprehend. But it is surely to be expected from every scholar, not that he should understand everything, but that he should at least know whether he understand a subject or not; and of every honest man that he should not pass judgment on anything before he is conscious of understanding it. . . . Dear Jakob! I have unlimited reverence for openness and uprightness of character. I had heard a high character of you, and I would never have suffered myself to pronounce such a judgment on your literary merit, had I not been afterwards led to entertain an opposite impression. Now, however, by the impartiality of your judgment upon me,—by the warm interest you take in me as a member of the republic of letters,—by your open testimony in my behalf,\* you have completely won my personal esteem. It shall not be my fault—(allow me to say this without offence)—if you do not also possess my entire esteem as an author, publicly expressed. I have shown B—— and E—— that I can do justice even to an antagonist.”

Jakob's reply is that of a generous opponent:—

“Your answer, much-esteemed Professor, has been most acceptable to me. In it I have found the man whom I wished to find. The differences between us shall be erased from my memory. Not a word of satisfaction to me. If anything that I do or write shall have the good fortune to meet your free and unpurchased approbation, and you find it good to communicate your opinion to the public, it will be gratifying to me;—for what joy have people of our kind in public life, that is not connected

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\* Jakob had espoused his cause in an important dispute, of which we shall soon have to treat.

with the approbation of estimable men? But I shall accept your candid refutation as an equally sure mark of your esteem, and joyfully profit by it. Confutation without bitterness is never unacceptable to me."

Gradually disengaging himself from outward causes of disturbance, Fichte now sought to devote himself more exclusively to literary exertion, in order to embody his philosophy in a more enduring form than that of oral discourses. As already mentioned, the first formal statement of his philosophical system appeared in 1794 under the title of "Ueber den Begriff der Wissenschaftslehre oder der sogenannten Philosophie." It was followed in the same year, by the "Grundlage der Gesammten Wissenschaftslehre," a text-book in which he set forth the whole scheme of his philosophy in its scientific aspect, as expounded to his students during the first session of his Professorial work at Jena. A more practical application of the doctrine appeared in 1795 under the title of "Grundriss des eigenthümlichen Wissenschaftslehre in Rücksicht auf den theoretischen Vermögen." In 1795 also he became joint-editor of the "Philosophical Journal," which had for some years been conducted by his friend and colleague Niethammer. His contributions to it, including a first and second "Einleitung in die Wissenschaftslehre," form a most important part of his works, and are devoted to the scientific development of his system. In 1796 he published the first portion of his "Rechtslehre (*Doctrine of Right*) nach Principien der Wissenschaftslehre," (afterwards completed at Berlin in 1804,) and in 1798 his "Sittenlehre" (*Doctrine of Morals*),—separate parts of the application he purposed to make of the fundamental principles of the 'Wissenschaftslehre' to the complete circle of knowledge. But this period of literary tranquillity was destined to be of short duration, for a storm soon burst upon him more violent than any he had hitherto

encountered, which once more drove him for a time from the path of peaceful inquiry into the field of angry polemical discussion.

Atheism is a charge which the common understanding has repeatedly brought against the finer speculations of philosophy, when, in endeavouring to solve the riddle of existence, they have approached, albeit with reverence and humility, the Ineffable Source from which all existence proceeds. Shrouded from human comprehension in an obscurity from which chastened imagination is awed back, and thought retreats in conscious weakness, the Divine Nature is surely a theme on which man is little entitled to dogmatize. Accordingly, it is here that the philosophic intellect becomes most painfully aware of its own insufficiency. It feels that silence is the most fitting attitude of the finite being towards its Infinite and Incomprehensible original, and that when it is needful that thought should shape itself into words, they should be those of diffidence and modest self-distrust. But the common understanding has no such humility ;—its God is an incarnate divinity ; imperfection imposes its own limitations on the Illimitable, and clothes the inconceivable Spirit of the Universe in sensuous and intelligible forms derived from finite nature. In the world's childhood,—when the monstrous forms of earth were looked upon as the visible manifestations of Deity, or the unseen essences of nature were imagined to contain His presence ;—in the world's youth,—when stream and forest, hill and valley, earth, air, and ocean, were peopled with divinities, graceful or grotesque, kind or malevolent, pure or polluted ;—in the world's ages of toil,—when the crushed soul of the slave looked to his God for human sympathy, and sometimes fancied that he encountered worse than human oppression ;—in all ages, men have coloured the brightness of Infinity with hues derived from their own hopes and



fears, joys and sorrows, virtues and crimes.\* And he who felt that the Eidolon of the age was an inadequate representative of his own deeper thoughts of God, had need to place his hopes of justice in futurity, and make up his mind to be despised and rejected by the men of his own day. Socrates drank the poisoned cup because his conception of divine things surpassed the common mythology of Greece; Christ endured the cross at the hands of the Jews for having told them the truth which he had heard from the Father; Paul suffered persecution, indignity, and death, for he was a setter forth of strange Gods. Modern times have not been without their martyrs. Descartes died in a foreign land for his bold thought and open speech; Spinoza—the brave, kind-hearted, incorruptible Spinoza—was the object of both Jewish and Christian anathema. In our own land popular fanaticism drove Priestley from his home to seek refuge in a distant clime;—and in our own days legalized bigotry tore asunder the sacred bonds which united one of the purest and most sensitive of living beings to his offspring,—the gentle, imaginative, deeply-religious Shelley was “an atheist!”

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\* The inherent desire of mankind to clothe their conceptions of Divinity in sensuous forms is finely illustrated in the following well-known lines from Mr Coleridge's translation of Schiller's ‘Wallenstein’ :—

“The intelligible forms of ancient poets,  
 “The fair humanities of old religion,  
 “The Power, the Beauty, and the Majesty,  
 “That had their haunts in dale, or piny mountain,  
 “Or forest by slow stream, or pebbly spring,  
 “Or chasms and wat'ry depths; all these have vanish'd;  
 “They live no longer in the faith of reason!  
 “But still the heart doth need a language, still  
 “Doth the old instinct bring back the old names,  
 “And to yon starry world they now are gone,  
 “Spirits or gods, that used to share this earth  
 “With man as with their friend;” . . .

Although the idea here so beautifully expressed is Schiller's, this fine passage is much more than a translation,—it is a splendid paraphrase,—of the original.

And so, too, Fichte—whose ardent love of freedom made him an object of distrust and fear to timorous statesmen, and whose daring speculations struck dismay into the souls of creed-bound theologians—found himself assailed at once by religious and political persecution.

Fichte's doctrine concerning God has already been spoken of in a general way. It was the necessary result of his speculative position. The consciousness of the individual reveals *itself* alone ; his knowledge cannot pass beyond the limits of his own being. His conceptions of other things and other beings are only *his* conceptions,—they are not those things or beings themselves. Consciousness is here alone with itself, and the world is nothing but the necessary limits which are set to its activity by the absolute law of its own being. From this point of view the common logical arguments for the existence of God, and in particular what is called the "argument from design" supposed to exist in the material world, entirely disappear. We invest the outward universe with attributes, qualities, and relations, which are the growth and product of our own minds, and then build up our faith in the Divine on an argument founded upon phenomena we have ourselves called into existence. However plausible and attractive such an argument may appear to those who do not look below the mere surface of things, it will not bear the light of strict scientific investigation. Only from our idea of duty, and our faith in the inevitable consequences of moral action, arises the belief in a principle of moral order in the world ;—and this principle is God. But this living principle of a living universe must be Infinite ; while all our ideas and conceptions are finite, and applicable only to finite beings—not to the Infinite. Thus we cannot, without inconsistency, apply to the Divinity the common predicates borrowed from finite existence. Consciousness, personality, and even substance, carry with them the idea of necessary limitation, and are the attri-

butes of relative and limited beings; to affirm these of God is to bring Him down to the rank of relative and limited being. The Divinity can thus only be thought of by us as pure Intelligence, spiritual life and energy;—but to comprehend this Intelligence in a conception, or to describe it in words, is manifestly impossible. *All attempts to embrace the Infinite in the conceptions of the Finite are, and must be, only accommodations to the frailties of man.* God is not an object of Knowledge but of Faith,—not to be approached by the understanding, but by the moral sense. Our intuition of a Moral Law, absolutely imperative in its authority and universal in its obligation, is the most certain and incontrovertible fact of our consciousness. This law, addressed to free beings, must have a free and rational foundation:—in other words, there must be a living source of the moral order of the universe,—and this source is God. Our faith in God is thus the necessary consequence of our faith in the Moral Law; the former possesses the same absolute certainty which all men admit to belong to the latter.—In his later writings Fichte advanced to a more profound conception of the Infinite Being than even that founded on the argument by which the existence of a Lawgiver is inferred from our intuition of the Moral Law. Of this later view, however, we shall have to speak more fully afterwards.

The Philosophical Journal for 1798 contained an essay by Forberg “On the Definition of the Idea of Religion.” Fichte found the principles of this essay not so much opposed to his own as only imperfect in themselves, and deemed it necessary to prefix to it a paper “On the grounds of our faith in a Divine Government of the world,” in which, after pointing out the imperfections and merely human qualities which are attributed to the Deity in the common conceptions of His being, and which necessarily flow from the “cause and effect” argument in its ordinary applications, he proceeds to state the true

grounds of our faith in a moral government, or moral order, in the universe,—not for the purpose of inducing faith by proof, but to discover and exhibit the springs of a faith already indestructibly rooted in our nature. The business of philosophy is not to create but to explain; our faith in the Divine exists without the aid of philosophy,—it is hers only to investigate its origin, not for the conversion of the infidel, but to explain the conviction of the believer. The general results of the essay may be gathered from the concluding paragraph:—

“Hence it is an error to say that it is doubtful whether or not there is a God. It is not doubtful, but the most certain of all certainties,—nay, the foundation of all other certainties,—the one absolutely valid objective truth,—that there is a moral order in the world; that to every rational being is assigned his particular place in that order, and the work he has to do; that his destiny, in so far as it is not occasioned by his own conduct, is the result of this plan; that in no other way can even a hair fall from his head, nor a sparrow fall to the ground around him; that every true and good action prospers, and every bad action fails; and that all things must work together for good to those who truly love goodness. On the other hand, no one who reflects for a moment, and honestly avows the result of his reflection, can remain in doubt that the conception of God as a *particular substance* is impossible and contradictory: and it is right candidly to say this, and to silence the babbling of the schools, in order that the true religion of cheerful virtue may be established in its room.

“Two great poets have expressed this faith of good and thinking men with inimitable beauty. Such an one may adopt their language:—

“Who dares to say,

“I believe in God”?

Who dares to name Him—[*seek ideas and words for him.*]

And to profess,

“I believe in Him”?

Who can feel,  
 And yet affirm,  
 "I believe Him not"?  
 The All-Embracer,—[*when He is approached through the moral sense,—not through theoretical speculation,—and the world is looked upon as the scene of living moral activity.*]  
 The All-Sustainer,  
 Doth He not embrace, support,  
 Thee, me, Himself?  
 Doth not the vault of heaven arch o'er us there?  
 Doth not the earth lie firmly here below?  
 And do not the eternal stars  
 Rise on us with their friendly beams?  
 Do not I see mine image in thine eyes?  
 And doth not the All  
 Press on thy head and heart,  
 And weave itself around thee, visibly and invisibly,  
 In eternal mystery?  
 Fill thy heart with it till it overflow;  
 And in the feeling when thou'rt wholly blest,  
 Then call it what thou wilt,—  
 Happiness! Heart! Love! God!  
 I have no name for it:  
 Feeling is all; name is but sound and smoke,  
 Veiling the glow of heaven."\*

"And the second sings:—

"And God is!—a holy Will that abides,  
 Though the human will may falter;  
 High over both Space and Time it rides,  
 The high Thought that will never alter:  
 And while all things in change eternal roll,  
 It endures, through change, a motionless soul."†

The publication of this essay furnished a welcome opportunity to those States to which Fichte was obnoxious on account of his democratic opinions to institute public proceedings against him. The note was sounded by the publication of an anonymous pamphlet entitled "Letters of a Father to his Son on the Atheism of Fichte and

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\* Goethe's "Faust."

† The above stanza of Schiller's "Worte des Glaubens" is taken from Mr Merivale's excellent translation.

Forberg," which was industriously and even *gratuitously* circulated throughout Germany. The first official proceeding was a decree of the Electoral Government prohibiting the sale of the Philosophical Journal, and confiscating all copies of it found in the electorate. This was followed up by a requisition addressed to the Duke of Saxe-Weimar, as the Conservator of the University of Jena, in which Fichte and Forberg were accused of "the coarsest atheism, openly opposed not only to the Christian, but even to natural, religion;"—and their severe punishment was demanded; failing which, it was threatened that the subjects of the Elector should be prohibited from resorting to the University. These proceedings were imitated by the other Protestant Courts of Germany, that of Prussia excepted.

In answer to the official condemnation of his essay, Fichte sent forth his "Appeal to the Public against the accusation of Atheism," Jena, 1799;—in which, with his accustomed boldness, he does not confine himself to the strict limits of self-defence, but exposes with no lenient hand the true cause which rendered him obnoxious to the Electoral Government,—not the atheism of which he was so absurdly accused, but the spirit of freedom and independence which his philosophy inculcated. He did not desire, he would not accept of any compromise;—he demanded a free acquittal, or a public condemnation. He adopted the same high tone in his defence before his own Government. The Court of Saxe-Weimar had no desire to restrain the liberty of thought, or to erect any barrier against free speculation. It was too wise not to perceive that a Protestant University in which secular power should dare to invade the precincts of philosophy, or profane the highest sanctuaries of thought, however great its reputation for the moment, must infallibly decline from being a temple of knowledge into a mere warehouse for literary, medical, or theological merchandize,—a school-room for artizans,—a drill-yard for hirelings. But, on the other

hand, it was no part of the policy of the Ducal Court to give offence to its more powerful neighbours, or to enter upon a crusade in defence of opinions obnoxious, because unintelligible, to the masses. It was therefore intended to pass over this matter as smoothly as possible, and to satisfy the complaining governments by administering to Fichte a general rebuke for *imprudence* in promulgating his views in language liable to popular misconstruction. The appearance of his "Appeal to the Public," however, rendered this arrangement less easy of accomplishment. The opinion of the Government with respect to this publication was communicated to Fichte in a letter from Schiller,—"*that there was no doubt that he had cleared himself of the accusation before every thinking mind* ; but that it was surprising that he had not consulted with higher authorities before he sent forth his appeal : why appeal to the public at all, when he had to do only with a favourable and enlightened Government ?" The obvious answer to which was, that the "Appeal to the Public" was a reply to the *public* confiscation of his work, while the *private* accusation before his Prince was answered by a *private* defence. In that defence the Court found that the accused was determined to push the investigation as far as his accusers could desire ;—that he demanded either an honourable and unreserved acquittal, or deposition from his office as a false teacher. A further breach between the Court and Fichte was caused by a letter which, in the course of these proceedings, he addressed to a member of the Council,—his private friend,—in which he announced that a resignation of his professorship would be the result of any reproof on the part of the Government. This letter, addressed to an individual in his private capacity, was unfortunately placed among the official documents connected with the proceedings. Its tone, excusable perhaps in a private communication, seemed presumptuous and arrogant when addressed to the supreme authority ;—it was

the haughty defiance of an equal, rather than the remonstrance of a subject. On the 2d of April 1799, Fichte received the decision of the Ducal Court. It contained a reproof for imprudence in promulgating doctrines so unusual and so offensive to the common understanding, and accepted Fichte's resignation as a recognised consequence of that reproof. It is much to be regretted that the timid policy of the government, and the faults of individuals, prevented in this instance the formal recognition of the great principle involved in the contest, *i. e. that civil governments have no right to restrain the expression of any theoretical opinion whatever, when propounded in a scientific form and addressed to the scientific world.* This error was eventually productive of serious injury to Jena, and led to the removal of many of its most eminent teachers to other Universities.

During these trying occurrences, the most enthusiastic attachment was evinced towards Fichte by the students. Two numerous signed petitions were presented to the Duke, praying for his recall. These having proved unavailing, they caused a medallion of their beloved teacher to be struck, in testimony of their admiration and esteem.

Fichte's position was now one of the most difficult which can well be imagined. A prolonged residence at Jena was out of the question,—he could no longer remain there. But where to turn?—where to seek an asylum? No neighbouring state would afford him shelter; even the privilege of a private residence was refused. At length a friend appeared in the person of Dohm, Minister to the King of Prussia. Through him Fichte applied to Frederick-William for permission to reside in his dominions, with the view of earning a livelihood by literary exertion and private teaching. The answer of the Prussian monarch was worthy of his high character:—"If," said he, "Fichte is so peaceful a citizen, and so free from all



dangerous associations as he is said to be, I willingly accord him a residence in my dominions. As to his religious principles, it is not for the State to decide upon them.” \*

Fichte arrived in Prussia in July 1799, and devoted the summer and autumn to the completion of a work in which his philosophy is set forth in its most popular form but with admirable lucidity and comprehensiveness,—we allude to his “Bestimmung des Menschen” (*the Vocation of Man*), published at Berlin in 1800, in which all the great phases of metaphysical speculation are condensed into an almost dramatic picture of the successive stages in the development of an individual mind. A translation of the “Bestimmung des Menschen,” originally published in 1848, is now reprinted in this edition. Towards the end of the year he returned to Jena for the purpose of removing his family to Berlin, where, henceforward, he fixed his place of residence. The following extracts are from letters written to his wife during their temporary separation :—

“You probably wish to know how I live. For many reasons, the weightiest of which lie in myself and in my cough, I cannot keep up the early rising. Six o’clock is generally my earliest. I go then to my writing desk, so that I am not altogether idle, although I do not get on as I could wish. I am now working at the “Bestimmung des Menschen.” At half-past twelve I hold my toilet (yes ! —get powdered, dressed, &c.), and at one I call on M. Veit where I meet Schlegel and a reformed preacher, Schlegel’s friend.† At three I return, and read a French novel, or write as I do now to you. If the piece be at all tolerable, which is not always the case, I go to the theatre at five. If it be not, I walk with Schlegel in the suburbs,

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\* The original phraseology of this last passage is peculiarly characteristic :— ‘*Ist es wahr, daß er mit dem lieben Gotte in Feindseligkeiten begriffen ist ; so mag dieß der liebe Gott mit ihm abmachen ; mir thut das nichts.*’

† Schleiermacher.

in the zoological gardens, or under the linden trees before the house. Sometimes I make small country parties with Schlegel and his friends. So we did, for example, the day before yesterday, with the most lively remembrance of thee and the little one. . . . In the evening I sup on a roll of bread and a quart of Medoc wine, which are the only tolerable things in the house ; and go to bed between ten and eleven, to sleep without dreaming. Only once,—it was after thy first alarming letter,—I had my Hermann in my arms, full of joy that he was well again, when suddenly he stretched himself out, turned pale, and all those appearances followed which are indelibly fixed on my memory.

“I charge thee, dearest, with thy own health and the health of the little one.—Farewell.”

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“I am perfectly secure here. Yesterday I visited the Cabinet Councillor Beyme, who is daily engaged with the King, and spoke to him about my position. I told him honestly that I had come here in order to take up my abode, and that I sought for safety because it was my intention that my family should follow me. He assured me that far from there being any desire to hinder me in this purpose, it would be esteemed an honour and advantage if I made my residence here,—that the King was immovable upon certain principles affecting these questions, &c.”

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“I work with industry and pleasure. The ‘Vocation of Man’ will, I think, be ready at Michaelmas,—written, not printed,—and it seems to me likely to succeed. You know that I am never satisfied with my works when they are first written, and therefore my own opinion on this point is worth something. . . . By my residence in Berlin I have gained this much, *that I shall thenceforth be allowed to live in peace elsewhere* ;—and this is much. I dare say that I should have been teased and

perhaps hunted out of any other place. But it is quite another thing now that I have lived in Berlin under the eye of the King. By and by, I think, even the Weimar Court will learn to be ashamed of its conduct, especially if I make no advances to it. In the meantime something advantageous may happen. So be thou calm and of good courage, dear one, and trust in thy Fichte's judgment, talent, and good fortune. Thou laughst at the last word. Well, well!—I assure you that good fortune will soon come back again."

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"I have written to Reinhold a cold, somewhat upbraiding letter. The good weak soul is full of lamentation. I shall immediately comfort him again, and take care that he be not alienated from me in future. If I were beside thee, thou wouldst say—'Dost thou hear, Fichte? thou art proud—I must tell it thee, if no one else will.' Very well, be thou glad that I am proud. Since I have no humility, I must be proud, so that I may have something to carry me through the world."

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"Of all that thou writest to me, I am most dissatisfied with this, that thou callest our Hermann an ill-bred boy. No greater misfortune could befall me on earth than that this child should be spoiled; and I would lament my absence from Jena only if it should be the cause of that. I adjure thee by thy maternal duties, by thy love to me, by all that is sacred to thee, let this child be thy first and only care. Put aside everything else for him. Thou art deficient in firmness and coolness; hence all thy errors in the education of the little one. Teach him that when thou hast once denied him anything it is determined and irrevocable, and that neither petulance nor the most urgent entreaties will be of any avail:—once fail in this, and you have an ill-taught obstinate boy, particularly with the natural tendency to strength of character which

our little one possesses; and it costs a hundred times more labour to set him right again. For indeed it should be our first care not to let his character be spoiled; and believe me, there is in him the capacity of being a wild knave, as well as that of being an honest, true, virtuous man. In particular, do not suppose that he will be led by persuasion and reasoning. The most intelligent men err in this, and thou also in the same way. He cannot as yet think for himself, nor will he be able to do so for a long time; at present, the first thing is that he should learn obedience and subjection to a foreign mind. Thou mayest indeed sometimes gain thy immediate purpose by persuasion, not because he understands thy reasons and is moved by them, but because thou in a manner submittest thyself to him and makest him the judge. Thus his pride is flattered; thy talk employs his vacant time and dispels his caprices. But this is all;—while for the future thou renderest his guidance more difficult for thee, and confirmest thyself in a pernicious prejudice.”

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“Cheerfulness and good courage are to me the highest proof that thou lovest me as I should be loved. Dejection and sorrow are distrust in me, and make me unhappy because they make thee unhappy. It is no proof of love that thou shouldst feel deeply the injustice done to me:—to me it is a light matter, and so must it be to thee, for thou and I are one.

“Do not speak of dying; indulge in no such thoughts; for they weaken thee, and thus might become true. No! we shall yet live with each other many joyful and happy days; and our child shall close our eyes when he is a mature and perfect man: till then he has need of us.

“In the progress of my present work, I have taken a deeper glance into religion than ever I did before. In me the emotions of the heart proceed only from perfect intellectual clearness:—it cannot be but that the clear-

ness I have now attained on this subject shall also take possession of my heart.

"Believe me, that to this disposition is to be ascribed, in a great measure, my constant cheerfulness and the complacency with which I look upon the injustice of my opponents. I do not believe that, without this dispute and its evil consequences, I should ever have come to this clear insight and the disposition of heart which I now enjoy; and so the ill-treatment we have experienced has had a result which neither you nor I can regret.

"Comfort the poor boy, and dry thy tears as he bids thee. Think that it is his father's advice, who indeed would say the same thing. And do with our dear Hermann as I wrote thee before. The child is our riches, and we must use him well."

If the spectacle of the scholar contending against the hindrances of fortune and the imperfections of his own nature,—struggling with the common passions of mankind and the weakness of his own will,—soaring aloft amid the highest speculations of genius, and dragged down again to earth by its meanest wants;—if this be one of the most painful spectacles which the theatre of life presents, surely it is one of the noblest when we see such a man pursuing some lofty theme with a constancy which neither difficulty nor discouragement can subdue. Such was now Fichte's position. The first years of his residence at Berlin were among the most peaceful in his life of vicissitude and storm. Withdrawn from public duties, and uninterrupted by the outward annoyances to which he had lately been exposed, he now enjoyed a period of tranquil retirement, surrounded by a small circle of congenial friends. Friedrich and Wilhelm Schlegel, Tieck, Woltmann, Reichardt, and Jean Paul Friedrich Richter,\* were among his

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\* Jean Paul wrote an elaborate satire of the 'Wissenschaftslehre' under the title of "Clavis Fichtiana," in which he travesties the technicalities of the system in his usual style of amusing extravagance.

chosen associates ; Bernhardi, with his clear and acute yet discursive thought, his social graces and warm affections, was his almost daily companion. Hufeland, the king's physician, whom he had known at Jena, now became bound to him by the closest ties, and rendered him many kind offices, over which the delicacy of friendship has thrown a veil.

Amid the amenities of such society, and withdrawn from the anxieties and disturbances of public life, Fichte now devoted himself to the farther development and ultimate completion of his philosophical theory. The period of danger and difficulty through which he had lately passed, the loss of many valued and trusted friends, and the isolation of his own mental position, naturally favoured the fuller development of that profound religious feeling which lay at the root of his character. It was accordingly during this season of repose that the great leading idea of his system revealed itself to his mind in perfect clearness, and impressed upon his subsequent writings that deeply religious character to which we have already adverted. The passage from subjective reflection to objective and absolute being, had hitherto, as we have seen, been made by Fichte on the ground of moral feeling only. Our Faith in the Divine is the inevitable result of our sense of duty ; it is the imperative demand of our moral nature. We are immediately conscious of a Moral Law within us, whose behests are announced to us with an absolute authority which we cannot gainsay ; the source of that authority is not in us, but in the Eternal Fountain of all moral order, —shrouded from our intellectual vision by the impenetrable glories of the Infinite. But this inference of a Moral Lawgiver from our intuition of a Moral Law is, after all, but the "cause and effect" argument applied to moral phenomena ; and it is not, strictly speaking, more satisfactory than the common application of the same course of reasoning to the phenomena of the physical

world. Besides, it does not wholly meet the facts of the case, for there can be no doubt that in all men, and more especially among savages and half-civilized people, the recognition of a Divinity precedes any definite conception of a Moral Law. And therefore we do not reach the true and ultimate ground of this Faith until we penetrate to that innate feeling of dependence, underlying both our emotional and intellectual nature, which, in its relation to the one, gives birth to the Religious Sentiments, and, when recognised and elaborated by the other, becomes the *basis* of a scientific belief in the Absolute or God,—the *materials* of the edifice being furnished by our intuitions of the Good, the Beautiful, and the True. Fichte's thoughts being now directed more steadily to the strictly religious aspect of his theory, he sought to add such an intellectual validity to our moral convictions, to raise our Faith in the Divine from the rank of a mere inference from the Moral Sense, to that of a direct intuition of Reason. This he accomplished by a deeper analysis of the fact of consciousness. What is the essential character of our knowledge—that which it preserves amid all the diversities of the individual mind? It is this:—that it announces itself as a representation of something else, a picture of something superior to, and independent of, itself. It is thus composed of a double conception:—a Higher Being which it imperfectly represents; and itself, inferior to, derived from, and dependent upon the first. Hence it must renounce the thought of itself as the only being whose existence it reveals, and regard itself rather as the image or reflection of a truly Highest and Ultimate Being revealed in human thought, and indeed its essential foundation. And this idea cannot be got rid of on the ground that it is a merely subjective conception; for we have here reached the primitive essence of thought itself,—and to deny this would be to deny the very nature and conditions of knowledge, and to maintain an obvious contradiction;

this namely,—that there can be a conception without an object conceived, a manifestation without substance, and that the ultimate foundation of all things is *nothing*. By this reconciliation, and indeed essential union of the subjective with the objective, Reason finally bridges over the chasm by which analysis had formerly separated it from the simple Faith of common humanity. Consciousness becomes the manifestation,—the self-revelation of the Absolute;—and the Absolute itself is the ground and substance of the phenomena of Consciousness,—the different forms of which are but the various points wherein God is recognised, with greater or less degrees of clearness and perfection, in this manifestation of himself;—while the world itself, as an infinite assemblage of concrete existences, conscious and unconscious, is another phase of the same Infinite and Absolute Being. Thus Consciousness, far from being a purely subjective and empty train of fancies, contains nothing which does not rest upon and image forth a Higher and Infinite Reality. Idealism itself becomes a sublime and Absolute Realism.

This change in the spirit of his philosophy has been ascribed to the influence of a distinguished contemporary, who afterwards succeeded to the chair at Berlin of which Fichte was the first occupant. It seems to us that it was the natural and inevitable outcome of his own principles and mode of thought; and that it was even theoretically contained in the very first exposition of his doctrine, although it had not then attained in his own mind that vivid reality with which it shines, as a prophet-like inspiration, throughout his later writings. In this view we are fully borne out by the letter to Jacobi in 1795, and the article from the *Literatur Zeitung*, already quoted.\* In the development of the system, whether in the mind of its author or in that of a learner, the starting-point is neces-

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\* See pages 65 and 68.



sarily the individual consciousness,—the finite Ego. But when the logical processes of the understanding have performed their office, and led us from this, the nearest of our spiritual experiences, to that higher point in which all finite individuality disappears in the great thought of an all-embracing consciousness,—an Infinite Ego,—the theoretical stage of the investigation is superseded by the loftier conception of a Divine Presence. From this higher point of view Fichte now looked forth on the universe and human life, and saw there no longer the subjective phenomena of a limited and finite nature, but the harmonious, although diversified, manifestation of the One Universal Being,—the self-revelation of the Absolute,—the infinitely varied forms under which God becomes “manifest in the flesh.” \*

The first traces of this rise to a higher speculative position are observable in his “Bestimmung des Menschen,” published in 1800, in which, as we have already said, may be found the most systematic exposition of his philosophy which has been attempted in a popular form. In 1801 appeared his “Antwortschreiben an Reinhold” (*Answer to Reinhold*), and his “Sonnenklarer Bericht an das grössere Publicum über das eigentliche Wesen der neuesten Philosophie” (*Sun-clear Intelligence to the general public on the essential nature of the New Philosophy.*) These he intended to follow up in 1802 with a more strictly scientific and complete account of the ‘Wissenschaftslehre,’ designed for the philosophical reader only. But he was induced to postpone the execution of this purpose, partly on account of the recent modification of his own philosophical point of view, and partly because the attention of the literary world was now engrossed by the brilliant and poetic Natur-

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\* For an excellent consecutive account of the gradual development of the ‘Wissenschaftslehre,’ both in its earlier and later forms, the reader may consult with advantage the volume on Fichte in the *Philosophical Classics* (1881) by Professor Adamson of the Owen’s College, Manchester.

Philosophie of Schelling. Before communicating to the world the work which should be handed down to posterity as the finished institute of his theory, it appeared to him necessary, first of all to prepare the public mind for its reception by a series of introductory applications of his system to subjects of general interest. But this purpose was also laid aside for a time,—principally, it would seem, from dissatisfaction with the reception which his works had hitherto received, from the harassing misconceptions and misrepresentations which he had encountered, and from a doubt, amounting almost to hopelessness, of making his views intelligible to the general public. These feelings occasioned a silence of four years on his part, and are characteristically expressed in the prefaces to several of his subsequent works.

In the meantime, although Fichte retired for a season from the prominent public position he had hitherto occupied, it was impossible for him to remain inactive. Shut out from communication with the "*reading* public," he sought to gather around him fit *hearers* to whom he might impart the high message with which he was charged. This was indeed his favourite mode of communication: in the lecture-room his fiery eloquence found a freer scope than the form of a literary work would afford. A circle of pupils soon gathered around him at Berlin. His private lectures were attended by the most distinguished scholars and statesmen: W. Schlegel, Kotzebue, the Minister Schrotter, the High Chancellor Beyme, and the Minister von Altenstein, were found among his auditory.

In 1804 an opportunity presented itself of resuming his favourite vocation of an academic teacher. This was an invitation from Russia to assume the chair of Philosophy in the University of Charkow. The existing state of literary culture in that country, however, did not seem to offer a promising field for his exertions; and another proposal, which appeared to open the way to a more useful applica-

tion of his powers, occurring at the same time, he declined the invitation to Charkow. The second invitation was likewise a foreign one,—from Bavaria, namely, to the Philosophic chair at Landshut. It was accompanied by pecuniary proposals of a most advantageous nature. But experience had taught Fichte to set a much higher value upon the internal conditions of such an office, than upon its outward advantages. In desiring an academic chair, he sought only an opportunity of carrying out his plan of a strictly philosophical education, with a view to the future reception of the ‘*Wissenschaftslehre*’ in its most perfect form. To this purpose he had devoted his life, and no pecuniary considerations could induce him to lay it aside. But its thorough fulfilment demanded absolute freedom of teaching and writing as a primary condition, and therefore this was the first point to which Fichte looked in any appointment which might be offered to him. He frankly laid his views on this subject before the Bavarian Government. “The plan,” he says, “might perhaps be carried forward without the support of any government, although this has its difficulties. But if any enlightened government should resolve to support it, it would, in my opinion, acquire thereby a deathless fame, and become the benefactor of humanity.” Whether the Bavarian Government was dissatisfied with the conditions required does not appear, — but the negotiations on this subject were shortly afterwards broken off.

At last, however, an opportunity occurred of carrying out his views in Prussia itself. Through the influence of his friends, Beyme and Altenstein, with the Minister Hardenberg, he was appointed Professor of Philosophy at the University of Erlangen, with the liberty of returning to Berlin during the winter to continue his philosophical lectures there. In May 1805 he entered upon his new duties with a brilliant success which seemed to promise a repetition of the epoch of Jena. Besides the course of lectures

to his own students, in which he took a comprehensive survey of the conditions and method of scientific knowledge in general, he delivered a series of private lectures to his fellow professors and others, in which he laid down his views in a more abstract form. In addition to these labours, he delivered to the whole students of the University his celebrated lectures on the "Nature of the Scholar." These remarkable discourses must have had a powerful effect on the young and ardent minds to which they were addressed. Never, perhaps, were the moral dignity and sacredness of the literary calling set forth with more impressive earnestness.

Encouraged by the brilliant success which had attended his prelections at Erlangen, Fichte now resolved to give forth to the world the results of his later studies, and especially to embody in some practical and generally intelligible form, his great conception of the eternal revelation of God in consciousness. Accordingly, on his return to Berlin in the winter of 1805-6, he published the course of lectures to which we have just alluded, "*Ueber das Wesen des Gelehrten*" (*On the Nature of the Scholar*), a translation of which forms a part of the present volume. The Scholar is here represented as he who, possessed and actuated by the Divine Idea, labours to obtain for that Idea an outward manifestation in the world, either by cultivating in his fellow-men the capacity for its reception (as Teacher); or by directly embodying it in visible forms (as Artist, Ruler, Lawgiver, &c.) This publication was immediately followed by another course, which had been delivered at Berlin during the previous year under the title of "*Grundzüge des gegenwärtigen Zeitalters*" (*Characteristics of the Present Age*), an English translation of which will also be found in our Second Volume. It is an attempt to apply the principles of transcendentalism to General History, and abounds in searching and comprehensive views of the progress, prospects, and destiny of man.

This series of popular works was completed by the publication, in the spring of 1806, of the "Anweisung zum Seligen Leben, oder die Religionslehre" (*The Doctrine of Religion*),—the most important of them all. Here the final results of his philosophy are presented in their most exalted application to life, thought, and religion. A translation of the 'Religionslehre' concludes the second volume of our present publication. These Lectures of 1804-5-6, in which the 'Divine Idea' appears as the spring of all that is true and noble in human life, taken along with the "Bestimmung des Menschen," 1800, may be regarded as Fichte's most valuable and enduring contributions to the world. They have powerfully influenced the thought of our own time through more than one channel.

Fichte's long-cherished hopes of founding an academical institution in accordance with his philosophical views, seemed now about to be realized. During the winter vacation, Hardenberg communicated with him regarding a new organization of the University of Erlangen. Fichte drew up a plan for this purpose, which was submitted to the Minister in 1806. But fortune again interposed: the outbreak of the war with France prevented his resuming the duties which had been so well begun.

The campaign of 1805 had subjected the greater part of Germany to the power of Napoleon. Prussia, almost alone, maintained her independence, surrounded on every side by the armies or vassals of France. Her struggle with the giant-power of the continent was of short duration. On the 9th October 1806 war was declared,—on the 14th the double battle of Auerstadt and Jena was fought,—and on the 25th Napoleon entered Berlin. In rapid succession, all the fortresses of Prussia fell into the hands of the invader.

Fichte eagerly desired permission to accompany the army which his country sent forth against her invaders. The hopes of Germany hung upon its progress; its success

would bring freedom and peace,—its failure, military despotism with all its attendant horrors. Opposed to the well-trained troops of France, which were elated with victory and eager for new conquests, the defenders of Germany needed all the aid which high principle and ardent patriotism could bring to their cause. To maintain such a spirit in the army by such addresses as afterwards appeared under the celebrated title of “*Reden an die Deutschen*,” Fichte conceived to be his appropriate part in the general resistance to the enemy ;—and for that purpose he desired to be near the troops. “If the orator,” he said, “must content himself with speech—if he may not fight in your ranks to prove the truth of his principles by his actions, by his contempt of danger and of death, by his presence in the most perilous places of the combat,—this is but the fault of his age, which has separated the calling of the scholar from that of the warrior. But he feels that if he had been taught to carry arms, he would have been behind none in courage ; he laments that his age has denied him the privilege accorded to *Æschylus* and *Cervantes*, to make good his words by manly deeds. He would restore that time if he could ; and in the present circumstances, which he looks upon as bringing with them a new phase of his existence, he would proceed rather to deeds than to words. But since he may only speak, he would speak fire and sword. Nor would he do this securely and away from danger. In his discourses he would give utterance to truths belonging to this subject with all the clearness with which he himself sees them, with all the earnestness of which he is capable,—utter them avowedly and with his own name,—truths which should cause him to be held worthy of death before the tribunal of the enemy. And on that account he would not faintheartedly conceal himself, but speak boldly before your face, that he might either live free in his fatherland, or perish in its overthrow.”

The rapid progress of the war prevented compliance with his wish, but the spirit which gave it birth was well appreciated by Frederick-William. "Your idea, dear Fichte," says the reply to his proposal, "does you honour. The King thanks you for your offer ;—perhaps we may make use of it afterwards. But the King must first speak to his army by deeds : your eloquence may turn to account the advantages of victory."

The defeat of Jena on the 14th October, and the rapid march of Napoleon upon Berlin, which remained defenceless, rendered it necessary for all who had identified themselves with the cause of their country to seek refuge in instant flight. Fichte's resolution was soon taken :—he would share the dangers of his fatherland, rather than purchase safety by submission. He left Berlin on the 18th October, in company with his friend and physician Hufeland, a few days before the occupation of the city by the French army. Fichte's wife remained in Berlin to take charge of their own and of Hufeland's households while the two friends fled beyond the Oder.

Fichte took up his residence at Königsberg to await the result of the war. The uncertainty of his future prospects, and the dangerous situation in which he had left his family, did not prevent him from pursuing his vocation as a public teacher, even in the face of many hindrances. During the winter he delivered a course of philosophical lectures in the University, having been appointed provisional Professor of Philosophy during his residence. He steadfastly resisted the earnest desire of his wife to return to Berlin during its occupancy by the French, conceiving it to be his duty to submit to every privation and discomfort rather than give an indirect sanction to the presence of the enemy by sitting down quietly under their rule, although he could now do so with perfect safety to himself. "Such a return," he says, "would stand in direct

contradiction to the declarations made in my address to the King, of which address my present circumstances are the result. And if no other keep me to my word, it is so much more my duty to hold myself to it. It is precisely when other scholars of note in our country are wavering, that he who has hitherto been true should stand the firmer in his uprightness."

During his residence in Königsberg, he renewed many of the friendships which he had formed there in early life, and he now sought to add to his comfort by the removal of his wife and child from Berlin. This plan was frustrated by a dangerous illness by which his wife was overtaken, and which is referred to in the following extracts from letters written at this time :—

"Yesterday I received the intelligence of thy illness. Thy few lines have drawn from me tears,—I know not whether of grief, joy, or love. How blind we are ! I have dreaded everything but this. *Naturally* thou canst not have fallen into serious illness ; something extraordinary must have befallen thee. I hoped that thou wouldst have borne our short separation well, especially on account of the duties laid upon thee. I recommended these thoughts to thee at parting, and I have, since then, enforced them by letters. Strong souls,—and thou art no weak one,—make themselves stronger thus :—*and yet !*

"Yet think not, dearest, that I would chide about thy illness. Rather, in faith and trust, do I already receive thee into my arms, as if thou wert really present, a new gift given unto me, with even added value. Thou wert recovering, although thy lines are feeble ; at least I trust to thy own assurance rather than to that of friends who would reach me the cup of despondency in measured doses. Thou knowest me ;—thou knowest that untruth does not suit me ;—thou wilt continue truthful towards me. *This letter will find thee living and in health.*"

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“ One passage of Bernhardi’s letter has deeply touched me ;—that where he speaks of our Hermann. Let the boy be pure and noble,—(and why should he not, since he has certainly not one drop of false blood from thee, and I know that there is no such thing in me which he could inherit ?)—and let him learn what he can. If I but had you both,—you who are my riches,—in my arms again, that I might try whether I could improve the treasure ! Live thou to love me and thy boy ;—I and he, if he has a drop of my blood in his veins, will try to recompense thee for it.”

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“ Again, thou dear one, had I to struggle against the anguish which secretly assailed me because I had no tidings of thee yesterday, when I received your letter of the 15th, delayed probably in its transmission. God be praised that your recovery goes on well ! You receive now regular and good news from me ; our friend also must now have been with thee for a long time ; and when you receive this letter you will probably find yourself enabled to prepare for your journey to me. You will, indeed, certainly not receive it before the close of this so sorrowful year. God grant to thee, and to all brave hearts who deserve it, a better new one ! ”

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“ *Do not come here, but stay where thou art*, for I am very dissatisfied here, and with good grounds ; and if, as seems probable, a favourable change of affairs should take place, I shall endeavour to return to my old quarters, and so be with you again. This was the meaning of what I wrote to you in my last letter,—but I had not then come to a settled resolution about it.

“ Live in health and peace, and in hope of better times, as I do. I bless thee from my inmost heart, am with thee in spirit, and rejoice in the happy anticipation of seeing thee again. Ever thine.”—

The hopes which were founded on the result of the battle of Eylau (8th February 1807), and which seem to be referred to in the preceding letter, were speedily dispelled; and the subsequent progress of the war rendered Fichte's residence at Königsberg no longer safe or desirable. His communications with his family had also become very irregular and uncertain. He consequently determined on a removal to Copenhagen, there to await the termination of the war. He left Königsberg in the beginning of June, and, after a short stay at Memel, arrived at the Danish capital about the middle of the following month. The impossibility of engaging in any continuous occupation during this period of uncertainty and hazard seems to have exposed him, as well as his family, to considerable pecuniary difficulties and privations. On the other hand, his unswerving devotion to his country, and the sacrifices he had cheerfully made for her sake, had gained for him the sincere esteem of the Prussian Government, and no inconsiderable influence in its counsels. At the end of August 1807 peace was concluded, and Fichte returned to his family after a separation of nearly a year.

With the return of peace, the Prussian Government determined to repair the loss of political importance by fostering among its citizens the desire of intellectual distinction and the love of free speculation. It seemed to the eminent men who then stood around the throne of Frederick-William, that the temple of German independence had now to be rebuilt from its foundations; that the old stock of liberty having withered, or been swept away in the tornado which had just passed over their heads, a new growth must take its place, springing from a deeper root and quickened by a fresher stream. One of the first means which suggested itself for the attainment of this purpose, was the establishment at Berlin of a new

school of higher education, free from the imperfections of the old Universities, from which, as from the spiritual heart of the community, a current of life and energy might be poured forth through all its members. Fichte was chosen by the Minister as the man before all others fitted for this task, and unlimited power was given him to frame for the new University a constitution which should ensure its efficiency and success. No employment could have been more congenial to Fichte's inclinations:—it presented him at last with the long-wished-for opportunity of developing a systematic plan of human instruction, founded on the spiritual nature of man. He entered with ardour upon the undertaking, and towards the end of 1807 his plan was completed and laid before the Minister. Its chief feature was perfect unity of purpose, complete subordination of every branch of instruction to the one great object of all teaching,—not the inculcation of opinion, but the spiritual culture and elevation of the student. The institution was to be an organic whole;—an assemblage, not of mere teachers holding various and perhaps opposite views, and living only to disseminate these, but of men animated by a common purpose, and steadily pursuing one recognised object. The office of the Professor was not to repeat verbally what already stood printed in books, and might be found there; but to exercise a diligent supervision over the studies of the pupil, and to see that he fully acquired by his own effort, as a personal and independent possession, the branch of knowledge which was the object of his studies. It was thus *a school for the scientific use of the understanding*, in which positive or historical knowledge was to be looked upon only as a vehicle of instruction, not as an ultimate end:—spiritual independence, intellectual strength, moral dignity,—these were the great ends to the attainment of which everything else was but the instrument. The plan met with distinguished approbation from the Minister to whom it was presented;

and if, when the University was actually established some time afterwards, the ordinary and more easily fulfilled constitution of such schools was followed, it is to be attributed to the management of the undertaking having passed into other hands, and to the difficulty of finding teachers who would coöperate in the accomplishment of the scheme.

But the misfortunes of his country induced Fichte to make a yet more direct attempt to rouse the fallen spirit of liberty, and once more to awaken in the hearts of his countrymen the love of independence which now lay crushed beneath a foreign yoke. Prussia was the last forlorn hope of German freedom, and it now seemed to lie wholly at the mercy of the conqueror. The native government could be little else than a mockery while the capital of the country was still occupied by the French troops. The invaders were under the command of Marshal Davoust, a man especially noted for harshness and even cruelty; and Fichte was well aware of the dangers attending any open attempt to excite opposition to the enemy. But he was not accustomed to weigh danger against duty; with him there was but short pause between conviction and action. "The sole question," said he to himself, "is this:—canst thou hope that the good to be attained is greater than the danger? The good is the re-awakening and elevation of the people; against which my personal danger is not to be reckoned, but for which it may rather be most advantageously incurred. My family and my son shall not want the support of the nation,—the least of the advantages of having a martyr for their parent. This is the best choice. I could not devote my life to a better end."

Thus heroically resolved that he, at least, should not be wanting in his duty to his fatherland, he delivered his celebrated "Reden an die Deutschen"—(*Addresses to the*

*German People*)—in the academical buildings in Berlin during the winter 1807-8. His voice was often drowned by the trumpets of the French troops, and well-known spies frequently made their appearance among his auditory; but he continued, undismayed, to direct all the fervour of his eloquence against the despotism of Napoleon, and the system of spoiling and oppression under which his country groaned. It is somewhat singular that, while Davoust threatened the chief literary men of Berlin with vengeance if they should either speak or write upon the political state of Germany, Fichte should have remained unmolested—the only one who did speak out, openly and fearlessly, against the foreign yoke.

The “Reden an die Deutschen” belong to the history of Germany, and in its literary annals they are well entitled to a distinguished and honourable place. Among the many striking phenomena of that eventful period there is none that exceeds in real interest and instructiveness this one of a literary man, single-handed and surrounded by foreign troops, setting before him, as a duty which he of all others was called upon to fulfil, the task of a people’s regeneration. Uniting the patriot’s enthusiasm with the prophet’s inspiration, Fichte raised a voice whose echoes rang through every corner of Germany, and summoned to the rescue of his country all that remained of nobleness and devotion among her sons. It was to no mere display of military glory that he roused and directed their efforts:—he sought to erect the structure of his country’s future welfare and fame on a far deeper and surer foundation. In strains of the most fervid and impassioned eloquence he pointed out the true remedies for the national degradation,—the culture of moral dignity, spiritual freedom, and independence. In these Addresses he first announced the plan and delineated all the chief features of that celebrated system of Public Education which has since conferred such inestimable benefits on

Prussia, and raised her, in this respect, to a proud pre-eminence among the nations of Europe.\* Never were a

\* "Fichte may thus be regarded as the originator of the well-known Prussian system of education. Baron von Stein, the great Minister of Prussia at this time, no doubt took the first steps towards its practical realization; but it is not the less true that to Fichte belongs the honour of having been the first to give utterance to the great idea of a common Education as the basis of a common Nationality among the German People. This noble scheme of national regeneration, which has since borne such wonderful fruit, is comprehensively set forth in the "Reden an die Deutschen." In later times, Germany has not been forgetful of those who thus, in evil days, laid the foundations of her future unity and greatness. On the Centenary of Fichte's birth, 19th May 1862, a Festival was celebrated at Berlin, under the auspices of the *National Verein*, in honour of his memory. The *Times'* correspondent, writing the following day, says:— "Yesterday morning, very early, a great number of Fichte's admirers assembled at his grave in the old Dorotheenstadt churchyard outside the Oranienburg gate. The place had been put in order, the monument repaired, the grave decked with flowers and garlands. They sang there the first verse of the fine old chorale *Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott*, and a clergyman delivered an appropriate discourse. The house on the New Promenade, in which Fichte lived for many years, was decorated by the care of the committee for the celebration of the anniversary, with wreaths and laurels, and with draperies of black, red, and gold, and of black and white, the German and Prussian colours. A memorial slab was also set up against it—a temporary one to be presently replaced by one of marble. At the University, Professor Trendelenburg made an excellent speech. Fichte was the first rector of this University. From him, his eulogist said, it had inherited the obligation to defend independence of thought and opinion. The Crown Prince was present at the speech, and afterwards complimented Trendelenburg upon it. The students, the workmen, and various other corporations celebrated the day; but its most remarkable feature was unquestionably the grand ceremony at the Victoria Theatre, got up by the *National Verein*. The spacious stage, common to both the summer and the winter theatre, was completely cleared. In the centre of this platform, was a truncated column supporting a colossal bust of Fichte. Behind and on either side of this was a numerous band of chorus singers, and, behind them, some instrumentalists. At its foot was a slightly-raised standing-place for the speakers. Dr. Veit, president of the committee, opened the proceedings in a short speech. M. Berthold Auerbach, better known as a literary man than as a politician, read a well-composed sketch of Fichte's life. Deputy Franz Duncker read some very interesting personal sketches and incidents, furnished by one of Fichte's oldest friends and disciples. Dr. Loewe made a long speech, referring to the tendency of his writings, and chiefly of a political character. With a few more remarks from the President, and another chorus by the singers,

people called upon to arouse themselves to a nobler enterprize, and never was such a summons pealed forth in tones of more manly and spirit-stirring energy. The last Address is a noble appeal to all ranks and conditions of society in Germany to unite, heart and hand, in forwarding the great work of national regeneration. We quote the peroration :—

“ In these addresses the memory of your forefathers pleads with you. Think that with my voice there are mingled the voices of your ancestors from the far-off ages of gray antiquity, of those who stemmed with their own bodies the tide of Roman domination over the world, who vindicated with their own blood the independence of those mountains, plains, and streams, which ye have suffered to fall a prey to the stranger. They call to you,—‘Take ye our place!—hand down our memory to future ages, ‘honourable and spotless as it has come down to you, ‘as you have gloried in it and in your descent from us. ‘Hitherto our struggle has been deemed noble, great, and ‘wise;—we have been looked upon as the consecrated and ‘inspired ones of a Divine World-Plan. Should our work ‘perish with you, then will our honour be changed into ‘dishonour, our wisdom into folly. For if our race were ‘ever to be swallowed up by the Empire, then it had ‘been better to have fallen before the elder Romans than ‘before these modern usurpers. We withstood those and ‘triumphed; these have scattered you like chaff before ‘them. But, as it is now with you, seek not to conquer

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an evening terminated which was remarkable for the excellence of its arrangements, and for the gratification it apparently afforded to all present.”

—On the same day a granite column erected in honour of Fichte, at his native village of Rammenau, and bearing four marble slabs with appropriate inscriptions, was inaugurated by a public ceremony.—Ten years later, a memorial to Baron Stein, erected at Nassau, his birth-place, in acknowledgment of the debt which Prussia owes to him, was unveiled on 9th July 1872, in presence of the Emperor, Empress, and Prince Imperial of Germany.

‘with bodily weapons, but stand firm and erect before them in spiritual dignity. Yours is the greater destiny, —to found an empire of Mind and Reason,—to destroy the dominion of rude physical power as the ruler of the world. Do this, and ye shall be worthy of your descent from us!’

“With these voices mingle the spirits of your later forefathers,—of those who fell in the sacred struggle for freedom of Religion and of Faith :—‘Save our honour too!’ they call. ‘To us it had not become wholly clear what it was we fought for ;—besides our just determination to suffer no outward power to rule over us in matters of conscience, we were also led onward by a higher spirit which never wholly unveiled itself to our view. To you this spirit is no longer veiled ; if your power of vision transcend the things of sense it now regards you with high, clear aspect. The motley and confused intermixture of sensuous and spiritual impulses shall no longer rule the world : mind alone, freed from sensuous impulse, shall assume the guidance of human affairs. That this spirit might have liberty to develope itself, and rise to independent existence, our blood was shed. It lies with you to give a meaning and a justification to the sacrifice by establishing this spirit in its destined supremacy. Should this result not be achieved as the outcome of all the previous development of our nation, then were our struggle but a vain and empty farce, and the freedom of mind and conscience for which we fought an idle word, since neither mind nor conscience should any longer have a place among us.’

“The races yet unborn plead with you :—‘You were proud of your forefathers,’ they cry,—‘and gloried in your descent from a noble line of men. See that with you the chain is not broken ;—act so that we also may be proud of you, and through you, as through a spotless medium, claim our descent from the same glorious source.



' Be not ye the cause of our being ashamed of our ancestry  
' as mean, barbarous, and slavish ;—of making us hide our  
' origin, or assume a foreign name and a foreign parentage,  
' in order that we may not, without a trial, be cast aside  
' and trodden underfoot. According as the generations  
' which proceed from you shall be, so shall be your future  
' fame : honourable if these shall bear honourable witness  
' to you ; deservedly ignominious if ye have no audible  
' posterity to succeed you, but leave it to the conqueror  
' to write your history. Never has a victor been known  
' to have either the wish, or even the means, of passing a  
' just judgment on the subdued. The more he degrades  
' them, the better does he justify his own position. Who  
' can know what great deeds, what excellent institutions,  
' what noble manners, of many nations of antiquity may  
' have passed away into oblivion, because their succeeding  
' generations have been enslaved, and have left the con-  
' queror, in his own way, and without contradiction, to tell  
' their story ?'

" Even the stranger in foreign lands pleads with you,  
in so far as he understands himself and knows aright his  
own true interest. Yes ! there are in every nation minds  
who can never believe that the great promises to the  
human race of a reign of Law, of Reason, and of Truth, are  
idle and vain delusions, and who consequently cherish the  
conviction that the present iron-handed time is but a stage  
of progress towards a better state. These, and with them  
the whole later races of humanity, place their trust in you.  
Part of these trace their lineage from us ; others have re-  
ceived from us religion and all other culture. Those plead  
with us, by the common soil of our Fatherland, the cradle  
of their infancy, which they have left to us free,—these  
by the culture which they have accepted from us as the  
pledge of a higher good,—to maintain, for their sakes,  
the proud position which has hitherto been ours, to guard  
with jealous watchfulness against even the possible disap-

pearance, from the confederation of a newly-arisen humanity, of that member which is to them more important than all others; so that when they shall need our counsel, our example, our coöperation in the pursuit and attainment of the true end of this Earthly Life, they shall not look around for us in vain.

“ All Ages,—all the Wise and Good who have ever breathed the air of this world of ours,—all their thoughts and aspirations towards a Higher Good,—mingle with these voices, and encompass you about, and raise supplicating hands towards you;—Providence itself, if we may venture so to speak, and the Divine Plan in the creation of a Human race,—which indeed exists only that it may be understood of men, and by men be wrought out into reality,—plead with you to save their honour and their existence. Whether those who have believed that Humanity must ever advance in a course of ceaseless improvement, and that the great ideas of its order and dignity were not empty dreams, but the prophetic announcement and pledge of their own future realization;—whether those have been right—or they who have slumbered on in the sluggish indolence of a mere vegetable or animal existence, and mocked every aspiration towards a higher world,—this is the question to which it has fallen to your lot to furnish a last and decisive answer. The ancient world, with all its nobility and greatness, as well as all its shortcomings, has fallen,—through its own unworthiness and the might of your forefathers. If there has been truth in what I have spoken to you in these Addresses, then it is you to whom, out of all other modern nations, the germs of human perfection are especially committed, and to whom the foremost place in the onward advance towards their development is assigned. If you fail in this your especial office, then with you all the hopes of Humanity for salvation out of the abyss of evil are likewise overthrown. Hope not, console not yourselves with the vain delusion,

that a second time, after the fall of an ancient civilization, a new culture will arise upon the ruins of the old, from a half-barbaric people. In ancient times, such a people existed fully provided with all the requisites for this mission; that people was well known to the cultivated nation and is described in its literature; and that nation itself, had it been able to suppose the case of its own downfall, might have foreseen and recognised the instrument of renovation. To us also the whole surface of the earth is well known, and all the nations who dwell upon it. Do we know one, like the ancestral tribe of modern Europe, of whom like hopes may be entertained? I think that every man who does not give himself up to visionary hopes and fancies, but desires only honest and searching inquiry, must answer this question—No! There is, then, no way of escape:—if you sink, Humanity sinks with you, without hope of future restoration!”

This spirit-stirring course of public activity was interrupted by a severe illness, which attacked the eager worker in the spring of 1808. It was his first illness, and it took so determined a hold of his powerful constitution, that he never thoroughly got rid of its effects. Deep-seated nervous disease, and particularly an affection of the liver, reduced him to great weakness, and for a time it seemed doubtful whether his life could be saved. It was only after some months of suffering that the disease settled down upon a particular limb, and left him with a rheumatic lameness of the left arm and right foot, which, with an accompanying inflammation in the eyes, hindered him for a long time from resuming his habits of active life. He was removed several times to the baths of Tep-litz with beneficial effect. The tedium of convalescence was relieved by study of the great authors of Italy, Spain, and Portugal. At an earlier period of his life he had made himself acquainted with the languages of these

countries, and had produced many translations from their poets, particularly an entire version of the first canto of Dante's *Divina Commedia*,\* and one of the most beautiful episodes in the *Lusiad* of Camoens. And now, in the season of debility and pain, the noble thoughts handed down by the great poets of the south as an everlasting possession to the world, became to him the springs of new strength and dignity. Nor did he cease altogether from literary work. During his confinement he undertook a thorough revision of his philosophical lectures, and made extensive preparation for his future academical labours. Much of his time, too, was occupied in the education of his only son, who speaks with deep reverence and thankfulness of the instructions thus imparted to him. Amongst his letters written during his sickness, we find a touching correspondence with Ernst Wagner, a true and warm-hearted friend of his country and of all good men, but whose spirit was crushed almost to hopelessness by the pressure of disease and penury. To him Fichte found means of affording such relief and encouragement as prolonged, for some short period at least, a valuable and upright life.

Of his domestic life during this period, and the manner in which it too bore the impress of his high soul-elevating philosophy, we obtain from his son the following interesting and instructive glimpse:—"We had a family meeting for worship every evening, which closed the day worthily and solemnly; in this the domestics also were accustomed to take a part. When some verses of a chorale had been sung to the accompaniment of the piano, my father began, and discoursed upon a passage or chapter of the New Testament, especially from his favourite Evangelist John; or, when particular household circumstances gave occasion for it, he spoke also a word of reproof or of comfort. But, as far as I remember, he never made use of ordinary prac-

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\* Printed in the "*Vesta*" for 1807.

tical applications of his subject, or laid down preceptive regulations for conduct; the tendency of his teaching appeared rather to be to purify the spirit from the distractions and vanities of common life, and to elevate it to the Imperishable and Eternal."—So truly was his life, in all its relations, the faithful counterpart of the noble doctrine which he taught.

On Fichte's return to active life he found himself placed, almost at once, in a position from which he could influence in no slight degree the destinies of his fatherland. Doubts had arisen as to the propriety of placing the new University in a large city like Berlin. It was urged that the metropolis presented too many temptations to idleness and dissipation to render it an eligible situation for a seminary devoted to the education of young men. This was the view entertained by the Minister Stein, but warmly combated by Wolff, Fichte, and others. Stein was at length won over, and the University was opened in 1810. The King gave one of the finest palaces in Berlin for the purpose, and all the appliances of mental culture were provided on the most liberal scale. Learned men of the greatest eminence in their respective departments were invited from all quarters,—Wolff, Fichte, Müller, Humboldt, Eichhorn, De Wette, Schleiermacher, Neander, Klaproth, and Savigny,—higher names than these cannot easily be found in their peculiar walks of literature and science. By the suffrages of his fellow-teachers, Fichte was unanimously elected Rector.

Thus placed at the head of an institution from which so much was expected, Fichte laboured unceasingly to establish a high tone of morality in the new University, convinced that thereby he should best promote the dignity as well as the welfare of his country. His dearest wish was to see Germany *free*,—free alike from foreign oppression and from internal reproach. He longed to see the stern

sublimity of old Greek citizenship reappear among a people whom the conquerors of Greece had failed to subdue. And therefore it was before all things necessary that they who were to go forth as the apostles of truth and virtue, who were to be the future representatives among the people of all that is dignified and sacred, should themselves be deeply impressed with the high nature of their calling, and keep unsullied the honour which must guide and guard them in the discharge of its duties. He therefore applied himself to the reformation of such features in the student-life as seemed irreconcilable with its nobleness,—to the suppression of the *Landsmannschaften*, and of the practice of duelling. Courts of honour, composed of the students themselves, decided upon all such quarrels as had usually led to personal encounters. During his two years' rectorship, Fichte laboured with unremitting perseverance to render the University in every respect worthy of the great purposes which had called it into existence, and laid the foundation of the character which it still maintains, of being the best-regulated, as well as one of the most efficient, schools in Germany.

The year 1812 was an important one for Europe, and particularly for Germany. The gigantic power of Napoleon had now reached its culminating point. Joseph Bonaparte reigned at Madrid, and Murat at Naples;—Austria was subdued, and the fair daughter of the House of Hapsburg had united her fate to that of the conqueror of her race;—Prussia lay at his mercy;—Holland and the Free Towns were annexed to the territory of France, which now extended from Sicily to Denmark. One thing alone was wanting to make him sole master of the continent of Europe, and that was the conquest of Russia. His passion for universal dominion led him into the great military error of his life,—the attempt to conquer a country defended by its climate against foreign invasion, and

which, even if subdued, could never have been retained. Followed by a retributive nemesis, he rushed on to the fate which sooner or later awaits unbridled ambition. The immense armies of France were poured through Germany upon the North, to find a grave amid the snows of Smolensk and in the waters of the Berezina.

And now Prussia resolved to make a decisive effort to throw off a yoke which had always been hateful to her. The charm was now broken which made men look on the might of Napoleon as invincible ;—the unconquerable battalions had been routed ; fortune had turned against her former favourite. The King entered into an alliance with the Russian Emperor, and in January 1813, having retired from Berlin to Breslau, he sent forth a proclamation calling upon the youth of the country to arm themselves in defence of its liberty. The appeal was nobly responded to. The nation rose as one man ; all distinctions of rank or station were forgotten in the high enthusiasm of the time ; prince and peasant, teacher and scholar, artizan and merchant, poet and philosopher, swelled the ranks of the army of liberation.

Fichte now renewed his former application to be permitted to accompany the troops in the capacity of preacher or orator, that he might share their dangers and animate their courage. Difficulties, however, arose in the way of this arrangement, and he resolved to remain at his post in Berlin, and to continue his lectures until he and his scholars should be called personally to the defence of their country. The other professors united with him in a common agreement that the widows and children of such of their number as fell in the war should be provided for by the cares of the survivors. It is worthy of remark, that amid this eager enthusiasm Fichte resolutely opposed the adoption of any proceedings against the enemy which might cast dishonour on the sacred cause of Freedom. While a French garrison still held Berlin, one of his

students revealed to him a plan, in which the informant was himself engaged, for firing the French magazine during the night. Doubts had arisen in his mind as to the lawfulness of such a mode of aiding his country's cause, and he had resolved to lay the scheme before the teacher for whose opinion he entertained an almost unbounded reverence. Fichte immediately disclosed the plot to the superintendent of police, by whose timely interference it was defeated. The same young man, who had acted so honourably on this occasion, afterwards entered the army as a volunteer in one of the grenadier battalions. At the battle of Dennewitz his life was preserved in a very remarkable manner. A musket ball, which struck him during the fight, was arrested in its fatal progress by encountering a copy of Fichte's "Religionslehre," his constant companion and moral safeguard, which on this occasion served him likewise as a physical Ægidus. On examining the book, he found that the ball had been stopped at these words (Lecture VIII)—"denn alles was da kommt ist der Wille Gottes mit ihm, und drum das Allerbeste was da kommen konnte."—(*for everything that comes to pass is the Will of God with him, and therefore the best that can possibly come to pass.*)

During the summer of 1813, Fichte delivered from the Academical chair in Berlin a course of lectures "Ueber das Verhältniss des Urstaates zum Vernunftreiche" (*On the relation of the Primitive to the Ideal State*), which afterwards appeared as a posthumous publication in 1820 under the title of "Die Staatslehre." In these lectures he set forth those views of the existing circumstances of his country, and of the war in which it was engaged, which he was prevented from communicating to the army directly. One of them bore the title of "Ueber den Begriff des wahren Kriegs"—(*On the Idea of a true War.*) With a clearness and energy of thought which seemed to increase with



the difficulties and dangers of his country, he roused an irresistible opposition to the proposals for peace which, through the mediation of Austria, were offered during the armistice in June and July. The demands of Napoleon left Germany only a nominal independence; a brave and earnest people sought for true freedom. "A stout heart and no peace," was Fichte's motto, and, fortunately for Germany and for the world, his countrymen agreed with him. Hostilities were recommenced in August 1813.

In the beginning of the winter half-year, Fichte resumed his philosophical prelections at the University. His subject was an introduction to philosophy upon an entirely new plan, which should render a knowledge of his whole system much more easily attainable. It is said that this, his last course of academical lectures, was distinguished by unusual freshness and brilliancy of thought, as if he were animated once more by the energy of youthful enthusiasm, even while he stood, unconsciously, on the threshold of another world.\* He had now accomplished the great object of his life,—the completion, in his own mind, of that scheme of knowledge by which his name was to be known to posterity. Existing in his own thought as one clear and comprehensive whole, he believed that he could now communicate it to others in a simpler and more intelligible form than it had yet assumed. It was his intention to devote the following summer to this purpose, and, in the solitude of some country retreat, to prepare a finished record of his philosophy in its maturity and completeness. But fate had ordered otherwise.

The vicinity of Berlin to the seat of the great struggle on which the liberties of Germany were depending rendered it the most eligible place for the reception of the

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\* The substance of the Lectures of 1812 and 1813 was afterwards embraced in the collections of posthumous writings published at Berlin in 1820 and at Bonn in 1824.

wounded and diseased. The hospitals of the city were crowded, and the ordinary attendants of these establishments were found insufficient in number to supply the wants of the patients. The authorities therefore called upon the inhabitants for their assistance, and Fichte's wife was one of the first who responded to the call. The noble and generous disposition which had rendered her the worthy companion of the philosopher, now led her forth, regardless of danger, to give all her powers to woman's holiest ministry. Not only did she labour with unwearied assiduity to assuage the bodily sufferings of the wounded, and to surround them with every comfort which their situation required and which she had the power to supply; she likewise poured words of consolation into many a breaking heart, and awakened new strength and faithfulness in those who were "ready to perish."

For five months she pursued with uninterrupted devotion her attendance at the hospitals, and although not naturally of a strong constitution, she escaped the contagion which surrounded her. But on the 3d of January 1814 she was seized with a nervous fever, which speedily rose to an alarming height, so that almost every hope of her recovery was lost. Fichte's affection never suffered him to leave her side, except during the time of his lectures. It is an astonishing proof of his self-command that, after a day of anxious watching at the deathbed, as it seemed, of her he held dearest on earth, he should be able to address his class in the evening, for two consecutive hours, on the most profound and abstract subjects of human speculation, uncertain whether, on his return, he might find that loved one still alive. At length the crisis of the fever was past, and Fichte received again the faithful partner of his cares rescued from the grave.

But even in this season of joy, in the embrace of gratulation he received the seeds of death. Scarcely was his wife pronounced out of danger when he himself caught

the infection and was attacked by the insidious disease. Its first symptom was nervous sleeplessness, which resisted the effects of baths and the other usual remedies. Soon, however, the true nature of the malady was no longer doubtful, and during the rapid progress of his illness, his lucid moments became shorter and less frequent. In one of these he was told of Blucher's passage of the Rhine, and the final expulsion of the French from Germany. That spirit-stirring information touched a chord which roused him from his unconsciousness, and he awoke to a bright and glorious vision of a better future for his fatherland. The triumphant excitement mingled itself with his fevered fancies:—he imagined himself in the midst of the victorious struggle, striking for the liberties of Germany; and then again it was against his own disease that he fought, and power of will and firm determination were the arms by which he was to conquer it. Shortly before his death, when his son approached him with medicine, he said, with his usual look of deep affection—"Leave it alone; I need no more medicine: I feel that I am well." On the eleventh day of his illness, on the night of the 27th January 1814, he died. The last hours of his life were passed in deep and unbroken sleep.

Fichte died in his fifty-second year, with his bodily and mental faculties unimpaired by age; scarcely a grey hair shaded the deep black upon his bold and erect head. In stature he was low, but powerful and muscular. His step was firm, and his whole appearance and address bespoke the rectitude, firmness, and earnestness of his character.

His widow survived him for five years. By the kindness of the monarch she was enabled to pass the remainder of her life in ease and competence, devoting herself to the superintendence of her son's education. She died on the 29th January 1819, after an illness of seven days.

Fichte died as he had lived,—the priest of knowledge, the apostle of freedom, the martyr of humanity. He belongs to those Great Men whose lives are an everlasting possession to mankind, and whose words the world does not willingly let die. His character stands written in his life, a massive but severely simple whole. It has no parts;—the depth and earnestness on which it rests, speak forth alike in his thoughts, words, and actions. No man of his time—few perhaps of any time—exercised a more powerful, spirit-stirring influence over the minds of his fellow-countrymen. The impulse which he communicated to the national thought extended far beyond the sphere of his personal influence;—it has awakened,—it will still awaken,—high emotion and manly resolution in thousands who never heard his voice. The ceaseless effort of his life was to rouse men to a sense of the divinity of their own nature;—to fix their thoughts upon a spiritual life as the only true and real life;—to teach them to look upon all else as mere show and unreality; and thus to lead them to constant effort after the highest Ideal of purity, virtue, independence, and self-denial. To this ennobling enterprise he consecrated his being;—to it he devoted his gigantic powers of thought, his iron will, his resistless eloquence. But he taught it also in deeds more eloquent than words. In the strong reality of his life,—in his intense love for all things beautiful and true,—in his incorruptible integrity and heroic devotion to the right, we see a living manifestation of his principles. His life is the true counterpart of his philosophy;—it is that of a strong, free, incorruptible man. And with all the sternness of his morality, he is full of gentle and generous sentiments; of deep, overflowing sympathies. No tone of love, no soft breathing of tenderness, fall unheeded on that high royal soul, but in its calm sublimity find a welcome and a home. Even his hatred is the offspring of a higher love. Truly indeed has he been described by one

of our own country's brightest ornaments as a "colossal, adamantine spirit, standing erect and clear, like a Cato Major among degenerate men; fit to have been the teacher of the Stoa, and to have discoursed of beauty and virtue in the groves of Academe." But the sublimity of his intellect casts no shade on the soft current of his affections, which flows, pure and unbroken, through the whole course of his life, to enrich, fertilize, and adorn it. In no other man of modern times do we find the stern grandeur of ancient virtue so blended with the kindlier humanities of our nature which flourish best under a gentler civilization. We prize his philosophy deeply,—it is to us an invaluable possession, for it seems the noblest exposition to which we have yet listened of human nature and divine truth,—but with reverent thankfulness we acknowledge a still higher debt, for he has left behind him the best gift which man can bequeath to man,—a brave, heroic human life.

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In the first churchyard outside the Oranienburg gate of Berlin, stands a tall obelisk with this inscription :—

THE TEACHERS SHALL SHINE  
AS THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE FIRMAMENT ;  
AND THEY THAT TURN MANY TO RIGHTEOUSNESS  
AS THE STARS FOR EVER AND EVER.

It marks the grave of FICHTE. The faithful partner of his life sleeps at his feet.

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THE  
VOCATION OF THE SCHOLAR

LECTURES  
DELIVERED AT JENA

1794.

LECTURE I  
THE ABSOLUTE VOCATION OF MAN

LECTURE II  
THE VOCATION OF MAN IN SOCIETY

LECTURE III  
THE DISTINCTION OF CLASSES IN SOCIETY

LECTURE IV  
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LECTURE V  
EXAMINATION OF ROUSSEAU'S DOCTRINE CONCERNING  
THE INFLUENCE OF ART AND SCIENCE  
ON THE WELL-BEING OF MAN



## LECTURE I.

## THE ABSOLUTE VOCATION OF MAN.

THE purpose of the Lectures which I commence to-day is in part known to you. I would answer, or rather I would prompt you to answer for yourselves, the following questions :—What is the vocation of the Scholar?—what is his relation to Humanity as a whole, as well as to particular classes of men?—by what means can he most surely fulfil his high vocation?

The Scholar is invested with a special character only in so far as he is distinguished from other men; the idea of his calling arises from comparison, from his relation to Society at large,—by which we understand not the State merely, but generally that aggregate of reasonable men who exist near each other in space, and are thus placed in mutual relations with each other.

Hence the vocation of the Scholar, considered as such, is only conceivable in society; and thus the answer to the question, “What is the vocation of the Scholar?” presupposes the answer to another question, “What is the vocation of man in Society?”

Again: the answer to this question presupposes the answer to another still higher; namely this,—“What is the absolute vocation of Man?”—*i. e.* of Man considered simply as man,—according to the mere abstract idea of

Humanity ; isolated and without any relation which is not necessarily included in the idea of himself ?

I may be permitted to say to you at present without proof, what is doubtless already known to many among you, and what is obscurely, but not the less strongly, felt by others,—that all philosophy, all human thought and teaching, all your studies, especially all that I shall address to you, can tend to nothing else than to the answering of these questions, and particularly of the last and highest of them,—What is the absolute vocation of Man ? and what are the means by which he may most surely fulfil it ?

Philosophy is not essentially necessary to the mere *feeling* of this vocation ; but the whole of philosophy, and indeed a fundamental and all-embracing philosophy, is implied in a distinct, clear, and complete *insight* into it. Yet this absolute vocation of Man is the subject of to-day's lecture. You will consequently perceive that what I have to say on this subject on the present occasion cannot be traced down from its first principles unless I were now to treat of all philosophy. But I can appeal to your own inward sense of truth, and establish it thereon. You perceive likewise, that as the question which I shall answer in my public lectures,—What is the vocation of the Scholar ? or what is the same thing, as will appear in due time, the vocation of the highest, truest man ?—is the ultimate object of all philosophical inquiries ;—so this question,—What is the absolute vocation of Man ?—the answer to which I intend to investigate fundamentally in my private lectures, but only to point out very briefly to-day,—is the *primary* object of such investigations. I now proceed to the answer to this question.

What the properly Spiritual in man—the pure Ego, considered absolutely in itself,—isolated and apart from all relation to anything out of itself,—would be ?—this question is unanswerable, and strictly taken is self-contradictory. It is not indeed true that the pure Ego is

a product of the Non-Ego—(so I denominate everything which is conceived of as existing external to the Ego, distinguished from, and opposed to it :)—it is not true, I say, that the pure Ego is a product of the Non-Ego ;—such a doctrine would indicate a transcendental materialism which is entirely opposed to reason ;—but it is certainly true, and will be fully proved in its proper place, that the Ego is not, and can never become, conscious of itself except under its empirical determinations ; and that these empirical determinations necessarily imply something external to the Ego. Even the body of man,—that which he calls *his* body,—is something external to the Ego. Without this relation he would be no longer a man, but something absolutely inconceivable by us, if we can call that *something* which is to us inconceivable. Thus to consider man absolutely and by himself, does not mean, either here or elsewhere in these lectures, to consider him as a pure Ego, without relation to anything external to the Ego ; but only to think of him apart from all relation to reasonable beings like himself.

And, so considered,—What is his vocation ?—what belongs to him as Man, that does not belong to those known existences which are not men ?—in what respects does he differ from all we do *not* call man amongst the beings with which we are acquainted ?

Since I must set out from something positive, and as I cannot here proceed from the absolute postulate—the axiom “I am,”—I must lay down, hypothetically in the meantime, a principle which exists indestructibly in the feelings of all men,—which is the result of all philosophy,—which may be clearly proved, as I will prove it in my private lectures ;—the principle, that as surely as man is a rational being, he is the end of his own existence ;—*i. e.* he does not exist to the end that *something else* may be, but he exists absolutely because *he himself* is to be—his being is its own ultimate object ;—or, what is the same thing,

man cannot, without contradiction to himself, demand an object of his existence. He is, because he is. This character of absolute being—of existence for his own sake alone,—is his characteristic or vocation, in so far as he is considered solely as a *rational* being.

But there belongs to man not only absolute being,—being for itself,—but also particular determinations of this being :—he not only is, but he is something definite ;—he does not merely say—"I am," but he adds—"I am this or that." So far as his absolute existence is concerned, he is a reasonable being ;—in so far as he is something beyond this, What is he ? This question we must answer.

That which he is in this respect, he is, not primarily because he himself exists, but because something other than himself exists. The empirical self-consciousness,—that is, the consciousness of a determinate vocation,—is not possible except on the supposition of a Non-Ego, as we have already said, and in the proper place will prove. This Non-Ego must approach and influence him through his passive capacity, which we call *sense*. Thus in so far as man possesses a determinate existence, he is a *sensuous* being. But still, as we have already said, he is also a reasonable being ;—and his Reason must not be superseded by Sense, but both must exist in harmony with each other. In this connexion the principle propounded above,—*Man is because he is*,—is changed into the following,—*Whatever Man is, that he should be solely because he is* ;—i. e. all that he is should proceed from his pure Ego,—from his own simple personality ;—he should be all that he is, absolutely because he is an Ego,—and whatever he cannot be solely upon that ground, he should absolutely not be. This as yet obscure formula we shall proceed to illustrate.

The pure Ego can only be conceived of negatively,—as the opposite of the Non-Ego, the character of which is multiplicity,—consequently as perfect and absolute unity ;—

it is thus always one and the same,—always identical with itself. Hence the above formula may also be expressed thus;—*Man should always be at one with himself;—he should never contradict his own being.* The pure Ego can never stand in opposition to itself, for there is in it no possible diversity, it constantly remains one and the same; but the empirical Ego, determined and determinable by outward things, may contradict itself; and as often as it does so, the contradiction is a sure sign that it is not determined according to the form of the pure Ego,—not by itself, but by something external to itself. It should not be so;—for man is his own end,—he should determine himself, and never allow himself to be determined by anything foreign to himself;—he should be what he is, because he wills it, and ought to will it. The determination of the empirical Ego should be such as may endure for ever. I may here, in passing, and for the sake of illustration merely, express the fundamental principle of morality in the following formula:—“*So act that thou mayest look upon the dictate of thy will as an eternal law to thyself.*”

The ultimate vocation of every finite, rational being is thus absolute unity, constant identity, perfect harmony with himself. This absolute identity is the form of the pure Ego, and the one true form of it;—or rather, by the possibility to conceive of this identity is the expression of that form recognised. Whatever determination can be conceived of as enduring eternally, is in conformity with the pure form of the Ego. Let not this be understood partially or from one side. Not the Will alone should be always at one with itself,—this belongs to morality only;—but all the powers of man, which are essentially but one power, and only become distinguished in their application to different objects, should all accord in perfect unity and harmony with each other.

The empirical determinations of our Ego depend, however, for the most part, not upon ourselves but upon some-

thing external to us. The Will is, indeed, within its own circle—*i. e.* in the compass of the objects to which it can be applied after they have become known to man—perfectly free ;—as will be strictly proved at the proper time. But sense, and the conceptions in which it is presupposed, are not free ; they depend upon things external to the Ego, the character of which is multiplicity, not identity. If the Ego is to be constantly at one with itself in this respect also, it must strive to operate directly upon the things themselves on which the sensations and perceptions of man depend ;—man must endeavour to modify these, and to bring them into harmony with the pure form of his Ego, so that his conceptions of them likewise, so far as these (his conceptions) depend upon the nature of their objects, may harmonize with that form. This modification of things according to our necessary ideas of what they *should* be, is not however possible by mere Will, but requires also a certain skill which is acquired and improved by practice.

Further, what is still more important, our empirical determinable Ego receives, from that unrestricted influence of external things upon it to which we subject ourselves without reservation so long as our Reason is still undeveloped, certain tendencies which cannot possibly harmonize with the form of our pure Ego, since they proceed from things external to us. In order to eradicate these tendencies, and restore the pure original form, Will is not sufficient of itself, but we need, besides, that skill which is acquired and improved by practice.

The acquisition of this skill,—partly to subdue and eradicate the improper tendencies which have arisen within us prior to the awakening of Reason and the consciousness of our own independence, — partly to modify external things, and alter them in accordance with our ideas,—the acquisition of this skill, I say, is called Culture ; and any particular degree of it, when acquired, is likewise so

denominated. Culture differs only in degree, but it is capable of infinite gradations. It is the last and highest *means* to the attainment of the great end of man, when he is considered as of a composite nature, rational and sensuous ;—complete harmony with himself :—it is in itself his ultimate *end* when he is considered only as a sensuous being. Sense should be cultivated :—that is the highest and ultimate purpose which can be entertained with respect to it.

The final result of all we have said is as follows :—The perfect harmony of man with himself,—and that this may be practicable, the harmony of all external things with his necessary practical ideas of them,—the ideas which determine what these things *should be* ;—this is the ultimate and highest purpose of human existence. This harmony is, to use the language of the critical philosophy, the Highest Good ; which Highest Good, *considered absolutely*, as follows from what we have already said, has no parts, but is perfectly simple and indivisible,—it is the complete harmony of a rational being with himself. But in reference to a rational being who is dependent on external things, it may be considered two-fold ;—as the harmony of the Will with the idea of an Eternal Will, or, *moral goodness* ; and as the harmony of external things with our Will (our rational will, of course), or *happiness*. It is thus, let it be remembered in passing, so far from being true that man is determined to moral goodness by the desire for happiness, that the idea of happiness itself and the desire for it, rather arise in the first place out of the moral nature of man. Not, *That which produces happiness is good* ;—but, *That only which is good produces happiness*. Without morality happiness is impossible. Agreeable sensations may indeed exist without it, or even in opposition to it,—and in the proper place we shall see why this is the case ;—but these are not happiness : frequently they are much opposed to it.

To subject all irrational nature to himself, to rule over it unreservedly and according to his own laws, is the *ultimate end* of man ; which ultimate end is perfectly unattainable, and must continue to be so, unless he were to cease to be man, and become God. It is a part of the idea of man that his ultimate end must be unattainable ; —the way to it endless. Hence it is not the *vocation* of man to attain this end. But he may and should constantly approach nearer to it ;—and thus *the unceasing approximation to this end* is his true *vocation* as man ; *i. e.* as a rational but finite, as a sensuous but free being. If, as we are surely entitled to do, we call this complete harmony with one's self *perfection*, in the highest meaning of the word ; then *perfection* is the highest unattainable *end* of man, whilst *eternal perfecting* is his *vocation*. He exists, that he may become ever morally better himself, and make all around him physically, and, if he be considered as a member of society, morally better also,—and thus augment his own happiness without limit.

This is the vocation of man considered as isolated, *i. e.* apart from all relation to reasonable beings like himself. We however are not thus isolated, and although I cannot now direct your attention to the general inter-union of all rational beings with each other, yet must I cast a glance upon the relation with you, into which I enter to-day. It is this noble vocation which I have now briefly pointed out, that I would elevate into perfect clearness in the minds of many aspiring young men—that I desire to make the preëminent object, and constant guide of your lives ;—young men who are destined on their part again to operate most powerfully on humanity,—in narrower or wider circles, by teaching or action, or both, to extend one day to others the culture they have themselves received, and everywhere to raise our common brotherhood to a higher stage of culture ;—young men, in teaching whom I in all probability teach yet unborn millions of our race.



If some among you have kindly believed that I feel the dignity of this my peculiar vocation,—that in all my thought and teaching I shall make it my highest aim to contribute to the culture and elevation of humanity in you, and in all with whom you may ever have a common point of contact,—that I hold all philosophy and all knowledge which does not tend towards this object, as vain and worthless ;—if you have so thought of me, I may perhaps venture to say that you have judged rightly of my desire. How far my ability may correspond to this wish, rests not altogether on me ;—it depends in part upon circumstances which are beyond our control. It depends in part also on you ;—on your attention, which I solicit ; on your private diligence, on which I reckon with trustful assurance ; on your confidence, to which I commend myself, and which I shall strive to justify by deeds.

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## LECTURE II.

## THE VOCATION OF MAN IN SOCIETY.

THERE are many questions which philosophy must answer before she can assume the character of knowledge and science :—questions which are shunned by the dogmatist, and which the sceptic only ventures to point out at the risk of being charged with irrationality or wickedness, or both.

If I would not treat in a shallow and superficial manner a subject respecting which I believe that I possess some fundamental knowledge,—if I would not conceal, and pass over in silence, difficulties which I see right well,—it will be my fate in these public Lectures to touch upon many of those hitherto almost undisturbed questions without, however, being able to exhaust them completely ; and, at the risk of being misunderstood or misinterpreted, to give mere hints towards more extended thought, mere directions towards more perfect knowledge, where I would rather have probed the subject to the bottom. If I supposed that there were among you many of those popular philosophers, who easily solve all difficulties without labour or reflection, by the aid of what they call sound Common Sense, I would not often occupy this chair without anxiety.

Among these questions may be classed the two following, which must be answered, with others, before any

natural right is so much as possible ;—*first*, By what authority does man call a particular portion of the physical world *his body*? how does he come to consider this body as belonging to his Ego, whereas it is altogether opposed to it?—and *second*, On what grounds does man assume and admit the existence around him of rational beings like himself, whereas such beings are by no means directly revealed to him in his own consciousness?

I have to-day to establish the Vocation of Man in Society ; and the accomplishment of this task presupposes the solution of the latter question. By Society I mean the relation of reasonable beings to each other. The idea of Society is not possible without the supposition that rational beings do really exist around us, and without some characteristic marks whereby we may distinguish them from all other beings that are not rational, and consequently do not belong to Society. How do we arrive at this supposition?—what are these distinctive marks? This is the question which I must answer in the first place.

“We have acquired both from experience: we know “from experience that rational beings like ourselves exist “around us, and also the marks by which they are distinguishable from irrational creatures.” This might be the answer of those who are unaccustomed to strict philosophical inquiry. But such an answer would be superficial and unsatisfactory ; it would indeed be no answer to *our* question, but to an entirely different one. The experience which is here appealed to is also felt by the Egoists, who nevertheless are not thoroughly refuted by it. Experience only teaches us that *the conception* of reasonable beings around us is a part of our empirical consciousness ; and about that there is no dispute,—no Egoist has ever denied it. The question is, whether there is anything beyond this conception which corresponds to the conception itself ; whether reasonable beings exist

around us independently of our conceptions of them, and even if we had no such conceptions ;—and on this matter experience has nothing whatever to teach us so surely as it is only experience ; that is to say,—the body of our own conceptions.

Experience can at most teach us that there are phenomena which appear to be the results of rational causes ; but it can never teach us that these causes actually exist as rational beings in themselves, for being in itself is no object of experience.

We ourselves first introduce such a being into experience ;—it is only we ourselves who explain our own experience by assuming the existence of rational beings around us. But by what right do we furnish this explanation ? This right must be strictly proved before it is made use of, for its validity can only be grounded on its evidence, and not upon its actual use :—and thus we have not advanced a single step, but return again to the question with which we set out :—How do we come to assume and admit the existence of rational beings around us ?

The theoretical domain of philosophy is unquestionably exhausted by the fundamental researches of the Critical School : all questions which still remain unanswered, must be answered upon practical principles. We must try whether the proposed question can be answered on such principles.

The highest impulse in man is, according to our last lecture, the impulse towards Identity,—towards perfect harmony with himself ;—and, in order that he may be in constant harmony with himself, towards the harmony of all external things with his necessary ideas of them. There must not merely be *nothing contradictory* to his ideas, so that the existence or non-existence of an external representative of these ideas might be a matter of indifference to him, but there must actually be *something corresponding* to his ideas. Every idea which exists in

the Ego must have a representative, an antitype, in the Non-Ego :—so is his impulse determined.

There is in man the idea not only of Reason, but also of reasonable acts and thoughts, and his nature demands the realization of this idea not only within himself but also without himself. It is thus one of his wants that there should be around him reasonable beings like himself.

He cannot create such beings ; but he lays the idea of them at the foundation of his observation of the Non-Ego, and expects to find something there corresponding to it. The first mark of rationality which presents itself is of a merely negative character,—efficiency founded on ideas,—activity towards an end. Whatever bears the marks of design may have a reasonable author ; that to which the notion of design cannot be applied has certainly no reasonable author. But this characteristic is ambiguous ;—the agreement of many things in one end is the mark of design, but there are many kinds of agreement which may be explained by mere natural laws,—if not by mechanical, then by organic laws ;—hence we still require a distinctive mark whereby we may confidently infer from a particular phenomenon the existence of a reasonable cause. Nature proceeds, even in the fulfilment of her designs, *by necessary laws* ; —Reason always proceeds *with freedom*. Hence the agreement of many things in one end, *freely fulfilled*, is the sure and infallible characteristic of rationality as manifested in its results. We now inquire,—How can we distinguish a phenomenon in our experience produced by necessity, from a phenomenon produced by freedom ?

I can by no means be immediately conscious of a freedom which exists out of myself,—I cannot even be conscious of a freedom which exists within myself, that is, of my own freedom ; for essential freedom is the first condition of consciousness, and hence cannot lie within its sphere of observation. But I may be conscious of this,

—that I am not conscious of any other cause for a particular determination of my empirical Ego through my will, than this will itself;—and this non-consciousness of constraining cause may be called a consciousness of freedom, if this be clearly understood beforehand; and we shall call it so here. In this sense then, man may be conscious of his own free activity.

If through our own free activity, of which we are conscious in the sense above indicated, the character of the activity apparent in the phenomena which experience presents to us is so changed that this activity is no longer to be explained according to the law by which we formerly judged it, but according to that on which we have based our own free action, and which is quite opposed to the former;—then we cannot explain this altered view of the activity apparent in experience otherwise than by the supposition that the cause to which we refer it is likewise reasonable and free. Hence arises,—to use the Kantian terminology,—a *free reciprocal activity founded on ideas*,—a *community pervaded by design*;—and it is this which I call Society. The idea of Society is thus sufficiently defined.

It is one of the fundamental impulses of man to feel that he must assume the existence around him of reasonable beings like himself; and he can only assume their existence under the condition of entering into Society with them, according to the meaning of that word as above explained. The social impulse thus belongs to the fundamental impulses of man. It is man's vocation to live in Society—he *must* live in Society;—he is no complete man, but contradicts his own being, if he live in a state of isolation.

You see how important it is not to confound the abstract idea of Society with that particular empirically-conditioned form of Society which we call the State. Political Society is not a part of the absolute purpose of

human life (whatever a great man may have said to the contrary); but it is, under certain conditions, a possible means towards the formation of a perfect Society. Like all human institutions, which are merely means to an end, the State constantly tends towards its own extinction; the ultimate aim of all government is to make government superfluous. Of a surety that time is not now present with us,—and I know not how many myriads, or perhaps myriads of myriads, of years may elapse before it arrive,—(and it must be understood that we have not now to deal with a practical condition of life, but with the vindication of a speculative principle);—that time is not now, but it is certain that in the *a priori* fore-ordered course of the human race such a period does exist when all political combinations shall have become unnecessary. That is the time when, in place of strength or cunning, Reason alone shall be acknowledged as the supreme judge of all;—acknowledged I say; for although men may even then go astray, and by their errors do hurt to their fellow-men, yet they will then be open to conviction of their error, and, when convinced of it, will be willing to turn back and make amends for their fault. Until that time shall come, mankind, as a race, cannot be true men.

According to what we have said, *free reciprocal activity* is the positive character of Society. It is an end to itself; and hence it exists solely and absolutely for its own sake. This assertion, that Society is its own end, is however not at all incompatible with another,—that the form of this association should have a special law which shall give it a more definite aim.

The fundamental impulse of humanity was to discover reasonable beings like ourselves,—or *men*. The conception of man is an ideal conception, because the perfection of man, in so far as he is such, is unattainable. Each individual has his own particular ideal of man in general; these ideals are different in degree, though not in kind;



each tries by his own ideal every being whom he recognises as a man. By this fundamental impulse each is prompted to seek in others a likeness to his own ideal; he inquires, he observes on all sides, and when he finds men below this ideal, he strives to elevate them to it. In this struggle of mind with mind, he always triumphs who is the highest and best *man*;—and thus from the idea of Society arises that of the *perfection of the race*, and we have thus also discovered the ultimate purpose of all Society as such. Should it appear as if the higher and better man had no influence on the lower and uncultivated, we are partly deceived in our judgment,—since we often expect to find the fruit already ripe before the seed has had time to germinate and unfold,—and it may partly arise from this, that the better man perhaps stands at too high an elevation above the uncultivated, that they have too few points of contact with each other, and hence cannot sufficiently act upon each other;—a position which retards civilization to an incredible extent, and the remedy for which we shall point out at the proper time. But on the whole, the ultimate triumph of the better man is certain:—a calming and consoling thought for the friend of humanity and of truth when he looks out upon the open war of light with darkness. The light shall surely triumph at last;—we cannot indeed predict the time,—but it is already a pledge of victory, of near victory, when darkness is compelled to come forth to an open encounter. She loves concealment,—she is already lost when forced out into the open day.

Thus far, then, the result of our inquiries shows, that man is destined for Society;—among the capacities which, according to his vocation as laid down in our former lecture, he is destined to improve and perfect, there is also the social capacity.

This destination of man for Society in the abstract, although arising out of the innermost and purest elements

of human nature, is yet, as a mere impulse, subordinate to the highest law of constant internal harmony, or the moral law, and by it must be still further defined and brought under a strict rule. When we have discovered this rule, we shall have found *the vocation of man in Society*, which is the object of our present inquiry and of all the considerations we have hitherto set forth.

The social impulse is, in the first place, *negatively* defined by the law of absolute harmony;—it must not contradict itself. The impulse leads to *reciprocal* activity, to *mutual* influence, *mutual* giving and receiving, *mutual* suffering and doing,—not to mere causality—not to mere activity, of which others are but the passive objects. The impulse requires us to discover *free reasonable beings* around us, and to enter into Society with them; it does not demand *subordination* as in the material world, but *co-ordination*. If we do not allow freedom to the reasonable beings whom we seek around us, we take into account merely their theoretical use, not their free practical rationality; we do not enter into Society with them, but we *rule* them as useful animals, and so place our social impulse in opposition to itself. But what do I say?—we place our social impulse in opposition to itself? No: rather we do not possess this higher impulse at all; humanity is not yet so far cultivated within us; we ourselves still stand on the lowest grade of imperfect humanity,—or slavery. We ourselves have not yet attained to a consciousness of our freedom and self-activity, for then we should necessarily desire to see around us *similar*,—that is, *free* beings. We are slaves ourselves;—and look around us but for slaves. Rousseau says—"A man often considers himself the lord of others, who is yet more a slave than they." He might with still greater justice have said—"He who considers himself the lord of others is himself a slave." Even should he not bear the outward badge of servitude, yet he has most surely the soul of a

slave, and will basely cringe before the first stronger man who subdues him. He only is *free*, who would make all around him free likewise; and does really make them free, by a certain influence the sources of which are hitherto undiscovered. In his presence we breathe more freely; we feel that nothing has power to oppress, hinder, or confine us; we feel an unwonted desire to be and to do all things which self-respect does not forbid.

Man may use irrational things as means for the accomplishment of his purposes, but not rational beings; he may not even use these as means for attaining the end of their own being; he may not act upon them as upon dead matter or upon the beasts, so as to prosecute his designs with them without taking their freedom into account; he may not make any reasonable being either virtuous, or wise, or happy, against his own will. Laying aside the fact that such an attempt would be utterly fruitless,—that no being *can* become virtuous, or wise, or happy, but by his own labour and effort;—laying aside the fact that man cannot do this, yet even if he could, or believed he could, he must not even desire to do it; for it is unjust, and by so doing he would be placed in opposition to himself.

The social impulse is also *positively* defined by the law of perfect internal harmony, and thus we arrive at the peculiar vocation of man in Society. All the individuals who compose the human race differ from each other; there is only one thing in which they entirely agree;—that is, their ultimate end—perfection. Perfection has but one form; it is equal to itself: could all men become perfect, could they attain their highest and ultimate end, they would all be equal to each other,—they would be only one,—one single subject. But in Society each strives to make others perfect, at least according to his own standard of perfection; to raise them to the ideal of humanity which he has formed. Thus, the last, highest end of

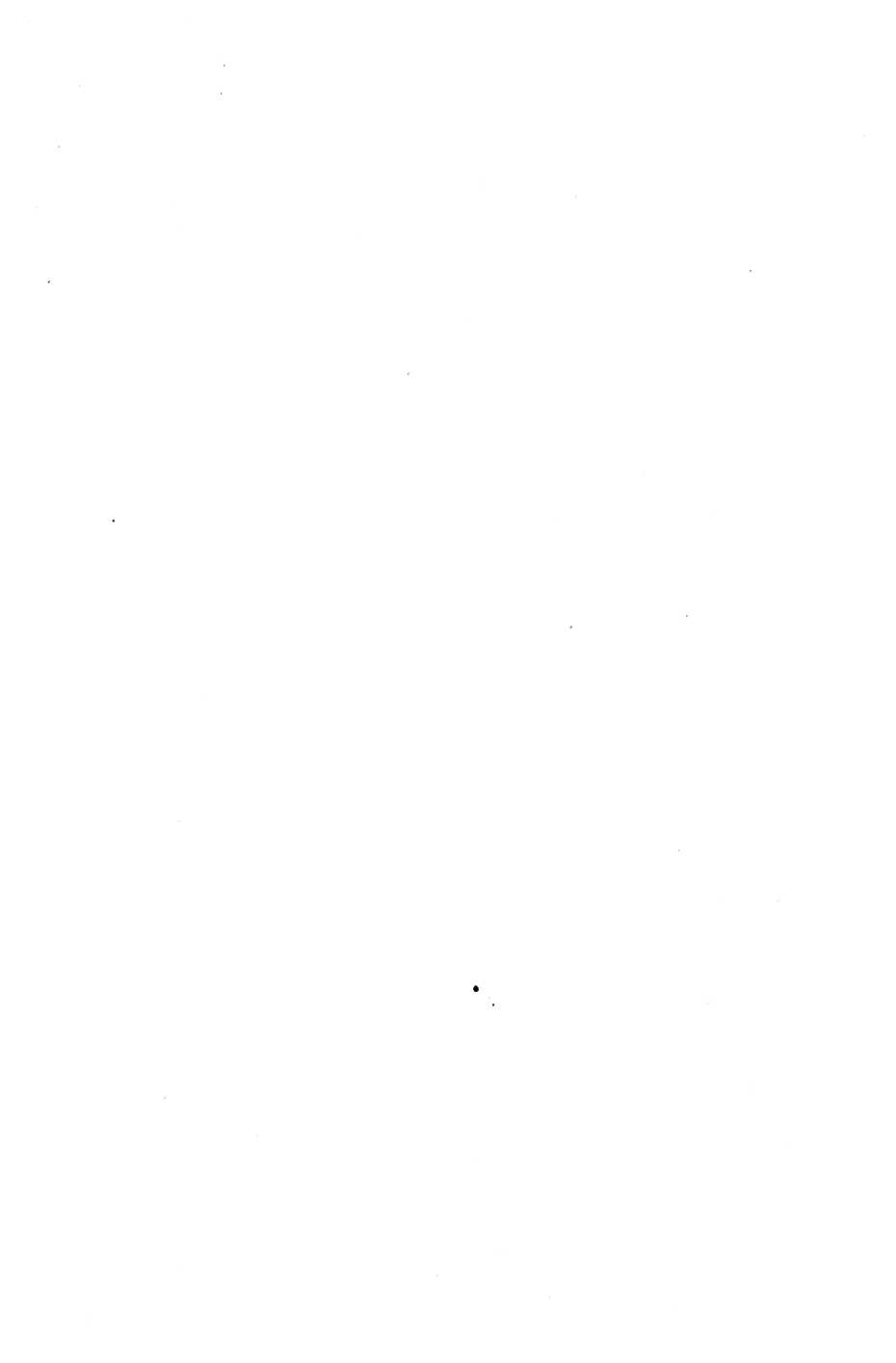
Society is perfect unity and unanimity of all its possible members. But since the attainment of this end supposes the attainment of the destination of each individual man,—the attainment of absolute perfection;—so it is quite as impossible as the latter,—it is unattainable, unless man were to lay aside his humanity and become God. Perfect unity with all the individuals of his race is thus indeed the *ultimate end*, but not the *vocation*, of man in Society.

But to approach nearer this end,—constantly to approach nearer it,—this he can and ought to do. This approximation towards perfect unity and unanimity with all men may be called *co-operation*. Thus *co-operation*, growing ever firmer at its centre and ever wider in its circumference, is the true vocation of man in Society:—but such a *co-operation* is only possible by means of progressive improvement, for it is only in relation to their ultimate destination that men are one, or can become one. We may therefore say that *mutual improvement*,—improvement of ourselves by the freely admitted action of others upon us, and improvement of others by our reaction upon them as upon free beings,—is our vocation in Society.

And in order to fulfil this vocation, and fulfil it always more and more thoroughly, we need a qualification which can only be acquired and improved by culture; and indeed a qualification of a double nature: an ability to *give*, or to act upon others as upon free beings;—and an openness to *receive*, or to derive the greatest advantage from the action of others upon us. Of both we shall speak particularly in the proper place. We must, especially strive to acquire the latter, when we possess the former in a high degree;—otherwise we cease to advance, and consequently retrograde. Seldom is any man so perfect that he may not be much improved through the agency of *any* other man, in some perhaps apparently unimportant or neglected point of culture.

I know few more sublime conceptions, than the idea of this universal inter-action of the whole human race on itself; this ceaseless life and activity; this eager emulation to give and to receive,—the noblest strife in which man can take a part; this general indentation of countless wheels into each other, whose common motive-power is freedom; and the beautiful harmony which is the result of all. “Whoever thou art,” may each of us say—“whoever thou art, if thou bear the form of man, thou too art a member of this great commonwealth;—through what countless media soever our mutual influence may be transmitted, still by that title I act upon thee, and thou on me;—no one who bears the stamp of Reason on his front, however rudely impressed, exists in vain for me. But I know thee not,—thou knowest not me!—Oh! so surely as we have a common calling to be good, ever to become better,—so surely—though millions of ages may first pass away—(what is time!)—so surely shall a period at last arrive when I may receive thee, too, into my sphere of action,—when I may do good to thee, and receive good from thee in return; when my heart may be united to thine also, by the fairest possible bond,—a free and generous interchange of mutual influence for good.

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## LECTURE III.

## ON THE DISTINCTION OF CLASSES IN SOCIETY.

THE vocation of man as an individual, as well as the vocation of man in society, is now before you. The Scholar is only invested with his distinctive character when considered as a member of society. We may therefore proceed to the inquiry,—What is the peculiar vocation of the Scholar in society? But the Scholar is not merely a member of society; he is also a member of a particular class in society: at least it is customary to speak of the Scholar-class—with what propriety or impropriety will appear in due time.

Our chief inquiry—What is the vocation of the Scholar?—thus pre-supposes the solution of a third and very important question, besides those two which we have already answered;—this, namely,—Whence arises the difference of Classes in Society?—or, What is the source of the inequality existing among men?

It will be readily understood without preliminary explanation, that this word *Class* does not mean anything which has come to pass fortuitously and without our aid, but something determined and arranged by free choice for an understood purpose. For an inequality which occurs fortuitously and without our aid, *i. e.* for physical inequality, Nature is accountable; but inequality of classes

seems to be a moral inequality, with respect to which, therefore, the question naturally arises,—By what *right* do different classes exist?

Attempts have often been made to answer this question; and enquirers, proceeding merely on the grounds of experience, have eagerly laid hold of and rhapsodically enumerated the numerous purposes which are accomplished by such a division and the many advantages which are gained by it; but by such means any other question may sooner be answered than the one we have proposed. The *advantage* of a certain disposition of things does not prove its *justice*; and we did not propose the historical question,—What purpose had man in this arrangement?—but the moral question,—Whether it was lawful for him to bring it about, whatever purpose he might have had in view by so doing. The question must be answered on the principles of Reason, pure as well as practical; and such an answer has, so far as I know, never yet been even attempted. To prepare for it, I must law down a few general scientific principles.

All the laws of Reason are founded in our spiritual nature; but it is only through an actual experience to which they are applicable that they attain empirical consciousness; and the more frequent such application the more intimately do they become interwoven with this consciousness. It is thus with all the laws of Reason; it is thus especially with the practical, which do not, like the theoretical, terminate in a mere act of judgment, but proceed to an activity without us, and announce themselves to consciousness under the form of *impulses*. The foundation of all impulses lies in our own being:—but not more than the foundation. Every impulse must be *awakened* by experience if it is to arrive at consciousness, and must be *developed* by numerous experiences of the same kind if it is to become a *desire*, and its appropriate gratification a *want*, of man. Experience, however, does



not depend upon ourselves, and therefore neither does the awakening nor the development of our impulses.

The independent Non-Ego as the foundation of experience or *Nature*,—is manifold; no one part of it is perfectly the same as another;—this principle is maintained and even strictly proved in the Kantian philosophy. It follows from this, that its action on the human mind is of a very varied character, and nowhere calls forth the capacities and talents of men in the same manner. By these different ways in which Nature acts upon man, are individuals, and what we call their peculiar, empirical, individual character, determined;—and in this respect we may say that no individual is perfectly like another in his awakened and developed capacities. Hence arises a physical inequality to which we not only have not contributed, but which we even cannot remove by our freedom; for before we can, through freedom, resist the influence of Nature upon us, we must first have arrived at the consciousness and use of this freedom; and we cannot arrive thereat except by that awakening and unfolding of our impulses which does not depend upon ourselves.

But the highest law of man and of all reasonable beings,—the law of perfect internal harmony, of absolute identity,—in so far as this law becomes positive and material by means of special individual applications, demands that all the faculties of the individual shall be uniformly developed,—all his capacities cultivated to the highest possible perfection;—a demand, the object of which cannot be realized by the mere law itself; because the fulfilment of the law, as we have said, does not depend upon the law itself, nor upon our will which is determinable by the law, but upon the free action of Nature.

If we apply this law to society,—if we assume the existence of reasonable beings around us,—then the demand that all the faculties of the individual should be uniformly cultivated includes also the demand that all reasonable

beings should be cultivated uniformly with each other. If the faculties of all are essentially the same,—as they are, since they are all founded upon pure Reason,—if they are all to be cultivated after a similar fashion, which is what the law requires,—then the result of such a cultivation must be similar capacities in every respect equal to each other :—and thus by another way we arrive at the ultimate end of all society, as declared in our former lecture,—*the perfect equality of all its members.*

We have already shown in our last lecture that the mere law cannot, of itself, realize the object of this demand, any more than it can realize that of the demand on which our present lecture is founded. But Free-Will can and ought to strive constantly to approach nearer this ultimate end.

And here the activity of the social impulse comes into play, which also proceeds upon this same purpose, and is the means of the requisite continual approximation to its attainment. The social impulse, or the impulse towards mutual coöperation with free reasonable beings as such, includes the two following impulses : *the communicative impulse*,—that is, the impulse to impart to others that form of culture which we ourselves possess most completely, to make others, as far as possible, like ourselves, like the better self within us ; and *the receptive impulse*,—that is, the impulse to receive from others that form of culture which they possess most completely, and in which we are deficient. Thus defects of Nature in us are remedied by Reason and Freedom ; the partial culture which Nature has given to the individual becomes the property of the whole race, and the race in turn bestows all its culture upon him ;—it gives him all the culture which is possible under the determining conditions of Nature, if we suppose that all the individuals who are possible under these conditions do actually exist. Nature cultivates each individual only in part ; but she bestows culture at every

point where she encounters reasonable beings. Reason unites these points, presents to Nature a firmly compacted and extended front, and compels her to cultivate *the Race* at least in all its particular capacities, since she will not bestow that culture upon *the Individual*. Reason has already, by means of the social impulse, provided for the equal distribution of the culture thus acquired among the individual members of society, and will provide for it still further; for the sway of Nature does not extend here.

Reason will take care that each individual receive indirectly from the hands of society, the whole and complete cultivation which he cannot obtain directly from Nature. Society will gather together the special gifts of every individual member into a common fund for the free use of all, and thus multiply them by the number of those who share their advantages; the deficiencies of each individual will be borne by the community, and will thus be reduced to an infinitely small quantity:—or, to express this in another form more generally applicable,—the aim of all culture of human capacity is to subject Nature (as I have defined this expression) to Reason; to bring Experience, in so far as it is not dependent on the laws of our perceptive faculties, into harmony with our necessary practical ideas of Reason. Thus Reason stands in continual strife with Nature. This warfare can never come to an end, unless we were to become gods; but the influence of Nature can and ought to be gradually weakened,—the dominion of Reason constantly made more powerful;—so that the latter shall gain victory after victory over the former. An individual may perhaps struggle successfully against Nature at his own particular point of contact with her, while at all other points he may be completely subject to her sway. But now society is combined like one man: what the individual could not accomplish by himself, all are enabled to perform by the combined powers of the community. Each indeed strives singly,

but the enfeeblement of Nature which is the result of the common struggle, and the partial triumph which each gains over her in his own department, come to the aid of all. Thus even from the physical inequality of individuals arises a new security for the bond which unites them all in one body; the pressure of individual wants, and the still sweeter impulse to supply the wants of others, bind them more closely together; and Nature has strengthened the power of Reason, even while she attempted to weaken it.

Thus far everything proceeds in its natural order: we have found different personalities, various in the kind and degree of their cultivation; but we have as yet no different *classes*, for we have not yet pointed out any special determination of the social impulse by free activity,—any voluntary selection of a particular kind of culture. I say, we have not yet been able to show any special determination by means of free activity;—but let not this be erroneously or partially understood. The social impulse, considered generally, addresses itself to freedom only; it merely instigates,—it does not compel. We may oppose, and even subdue it;—we may, through misanthropic selfishness, separate ourselves from our fellow-men, and refuse to receive anything at the hands of society, that we may not have to render back anything in return;—we may, from rude animalism, forget the freedom of society, and look upon it only as something subject to our will, because we have no higher idea of ourselves than as subjects of the power of Nature. But this is not the question here. On the supposition that man obeys the social impulse generally, it is necessary that under its guidance he should impart the advantages which he possesses to those who have need of them, and receive those of which he himself stands in need from those who possess them. And for this purpose there is no need of any particular determination or modification of the social impulse by a new act of freedom,—which is all that I meant to affirm.

The characteristic distinction is this:—*Under the conditions now laid down*, I as an individual give myself up to Nature for the one-sided cultivation of some particular capacity, because *I must do so* ; I have no choice in the matter, but blindly follow her leading. I take all that she gives me, but I cannot take that which she does not give ; I neglect no opportunity offered to me of cultivating myself on all sides as far as I can, but I do not create such opportunity, because I cannot create it. If, *on the contrary*, *I choose a class*,—a class being understood to be something chosen by free will, according to the common use of language,—if I choose a class, I must first have become subject to Nature before it was possible for me to choose ; for to that end different impulses must be awakened within me, different capacities elevated into consciousness ; but *in the choice itself* I determine henceforward to leave entirely out of consideration certain possible opportunities which Nature may perchance offer to me, in order that I may apply *all* my powers and all the gifts of Nature to the exclusive development of *one or more particular capacities* ; and by the particular capacity to the cultivation of which I thus devote myself by free choice, will my *class* or *condition* in society be determined.

The question arises,—Ought I to choose a particular class ? or, if the demand be not imperative,—Dare I devote myself to a particular class,—that is, to a one-sided culture ? If *I ought*,—if it be absolute duty, then it must be possible to educe from the highest laws of Reason an impulse directed towards the selection of a class, as we may educe from these laws the impulse towards society in general. If I only *may* do this, then it will not be possible to educe such an *impulse* from the laws of Reason, but only a *permission* ;—and for the determination of the will to the actual choice thus permitted by Reason, it must be possible to assign some empirical data by means of which, not a law, but only a rule of prudence, may be

laid down. How this matter stands will be seen upon further inquiry.

The law says,—“Cultivate all thy faculties completely and uniformly, so far as thou canst;”—but it does not determine whether I shall exercise them directly upon Nature, or indirectly through intercourse with my fellow-men. On this point the choice is thus left entirely to my own prudence. The law says,—“Subdue Nature to thy purposes;”—but it does not say that if I should find Nature already sufficiently adapted to certain of my purposes by other men, I should nevertheless myself adapt it to all the possible purposes of humanity. Hence the law does not forbid me to choose a particular class; but neither does it enjoin me to do so, for precisely the same reason which prevents the prohibition. I am now in the field of Free-Will; *I may* choose a class, and I must now look out for quite other grounds of determination than those which are derived immediately from the law itself, on which to resolve the question,—not “What class shall I choose?”—(of this we shall speak at another time)—but, “Shall I choose any class at all, or shall I not?”

As things are at present, man is born in society. He finds Nature no longer rude, but already prepared in many respects for his purposes. He finds a multitude of men employed in its different departments, cultivating it on every side for the use of rational beings. He finds much already done which otherwise he would have had to do for himself. He might perhaps enjoy a very pleasant existence without ever applying his own powers immediately to Nature; he might even attain a kind of perfection by the enjoyment of what society has already accomplished, and in particular of what it has done for its own cultivation. But this may not be;—he must at least endeavour to repay his debt to society; he must take his place among men; he must at least strive to forward in some respect the perfection of the race which has done so much for him.

And to that end two ways present themselves: *either* he may determine to cultivate Nature on all sides;—and, in this case, he would perhaps require to apply his whole life, or many lives if he had them, even to acquire a knowledge of what has been already done by others before him and of what remains to do; and thus his life would be lost to the human race,—not indeed from evil intent, but from lack of wisdom:—*or* he may take up some particular department of Nature, with the previous history of which he is perhaps best acquainted, and for the cultivation of which he is best adapted by natural capacity and social training, and devote himself exclusively to that. In the latter case, he leaves his own culture in its other departments to Society, whose culture in that department which he has chosen for himself is the sole object of his resolves, his labours, his desires;—and thus he has selected a class, and his doing so is perfectly legitimate. But still this act of freedom is, like all others, subject to the universal moral law, in so far as that law is the rule of our actions; or to the categorical imperative, which I may thus express:—“Never let the determinations of thy will be at variance with thyself;”—a law which, as expressed in this formula, may be fulfilled by every one, since the determinations of our will do not depend upon Nature but on ourselves alone.

The choice of a class is a free choice; therefore no man whatever ought to be compelled to any particular class, nor be shut out from any. Every individual action, as well as every general arrangement, which proceeds on such compulsion, is unjust. It is *unwise* to force a man into one class, or to exclude him from another; because no man can have a perfect knowledge of the peculiar capacities of another, and because a member is often lost to society altogether, in consequence of being thrust into an improper place. But laying this out of view, such a course is *unjust* in itself, for it sets our deed itself in

opposition to our practical conception of it. We wish to give society a *member*, and we make a *tool*; we wish to have a free *fellow-workman* in the great business of life, and we create an enslaved and passive *instrument*; we destroy the man within him, so far as we can do so by our arrangements, and are guilty of an injury both to him and to society.

We make choice of a particular class, we select one particular talent for more extended cultivation,—*only that we may thereby be enabled to render back to society what it has done for us*;—and thus each of us is bound to make use of our culture for the advantage of society. No one has a right to labour only for his own enjoyment, to shut himself up from his fellow-men, and make his culture useless to them; for it is only by the labour of society that he has been placed in a position wherein he could acquire that culture: it is in a certain sense a product, a property of society; and he robs society of a property which belongs to it if he does not apply his culture to its use. It is the duty of every one, not only to endeavour to make himself useful to society generally, but also to direct all his efforts, according to the best knowledge he possesses, towards the ultimate object of society,—towards the ever-increasing ennoblement of the human race;—that is, to set it more and more at liberty from the bondage of Nature, constantly to increase its independence and spontaneous activity;—and thus, from the new inequality of classes a new equality arises—a uniform progress of culture in all individual men.

I do not say that human life is at any time such as I have now depicted it; but it *ought to be* so, according to our practical ideas of society and of the different classes it contains; and we may and ought to labour that it may *become* so in reality. How powerfully the Scholar in particular may contribute to this end, and how many means for its accomplishment lie at his disposal, we shall see at the proper time.



When we contemplate the idea now unfolded, even without reference to ourselves, we see around us a community in which no one can labour for himself without at the same time labouring for his fellow-men, or can labour for others without also labouring for himself; where the success of one member is the success of all, and the loss of one a loss to all:—a picture which, by the harmony it reveals in the manifold diversity of life, satisfies our deepest aspirations, and powerfully raises the soul above the things of time.

But the interest is heightened when we turn our thoughts to ourselves, and contemplate ourselves as members of this great spiritual community. The feeling of our dignity and our power is increased when we say,—what each of us may say,—“My existence is not in vain and aimless; I am a necessary link in the great chain of being which reaches from the awakening of the first man to perfect consciousness of his existence, onward through eternity; all the great and wise and noble that have ever appeared among men,—those benefactors of the human race whose names I find recorded in the world’s history, and the many others whose benefits have outlived their names,—all have laboured for me; I have entered into their labours; I follow their footsteps on this earth where they dwelt, where they scattered blessings as they went along. I may, as soon as I will, assume the sublime task which they have resigned, of making our common brotherhood ever wiser and happier; I may continue to build where they had to cease their labours; I may bring nearer to its completion the glorious temple which they had to leave unfinished.”

“But”—some one may say—“I too, like them, must rest from my labours.” Oh! this is the sublimest thought of all! If I assume this noble task, I can never reach its end; and so surely as it is my vocation to assume it, I can never cease *to act*, and hence can never cease *to be*. That

which men call Death cannot interrupt my activity; for my work must go on to its completion, and it cannot be completed in Time;—hence my existence is not limited by Time, and I am Eternal:—with the assumption of this great task, I have also laid hold of Eternity. I raise my head boldly to the threatening rock, the raging flood, or the fiery tempest, and say—“I am Eternal, and I defy your might! Break all upon me!—and thou Earth, and thou Heaven, mingle in the wild tumult, and all ye elements, foam and fret yourselves, and crush in your conflict the last atom of the body which I call mine!—my WILL, secure in its own firm purpose, shall soar undisturbed and bold over the wreck of the universe:—for I have entered upon my vocation, and it is more enduring than ye are: it is ETERNAL, and I am ETERNAL like it.”

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## LECTURE IV.

## THE VOCATION OF THE SCHOLAR.

I HAVE to-day to speak of the Vocation of the Scholar. I stand in a peculiar relation to this subject. All, or most of you, have chosen knowledge as the business of your lives; and I have made the same choice:—all of you, I presume, apply your whole energies, to fill honourably the station to which you aspire; and I too have done and do the like. I have to speak as a Scholar, before future Scholars, of the Scholar's vocation. I must examine the subject to its foundation; exhaust it, if I can; hold back nothing in my representation of the truth. And if I discover for the Scholar a vocation most honourable, most lofty, and distinguished above that of all other classes of men, how is it possible for me to lay it before you without exceeding the limits of modest expression,—without seeming to undervalue other vocations,—without being apparently blinded by self-conceit? But I speak as a philosopher, whose duty it is strictly to define all his ideas. I cannot exclude this idea from the system of which it is a necessary part. I dare not keep back any part of the truth which I recognise. It still remains true; and modesty itself is subordinate to it:—it is a false modesty which is violated by truth. Let us then consider our subject in the first place with indifference, as if it had no

relation to ourselves:—let us treat it as an idea belonging to a world quite foreign to our own. Let us on that account look with the greater strictness to our arguments. Let us never forget, what I hope I have already impressed upon you with some success, that every station in life is necessary; that each deserves our respect; that not the station itself, but the worthy fulfilment of its duties, does honour to a man; and that we only merit esteem the nearer we approach to the perfect performance of the duties assigned to us in the order of things;—that therefore the Scholar has reason to be of all others the most modest, because an aim is set before him of which he must continually fall far short,—because he has a most elevated ideal to reach, which commonly he approaches only at the greatest distance.

There are many tendencies and powers in man, and it is the vocation of each individual to cultivate *all* his powers, so far as he is able to do so. Among others is the social impulse; which offers him a new and peculiar form of cultivation,—that for society,—and affords an unusual facility for culture in general. There is nothing prescribed to man on this subject;—whether he shall cultivate all his faculties as a whole, unaided and by nature alone,—or mediately through society. The first is difficult, and in no wise advances society;—hence in the social state each individual rightfully selects his own part of the common culture, leaves the rest to his fellows, and expects that they will allow him to share the benefits of their culture, as he permits them to participate in the advantages of his own:—and this is the origin and ground of the distinction of classes in society.

Such are the results arrived at in our previous discourses. For an arrangement of these different classes according to the ideas of Pure Reason, which is quite possible, a foundation must be sought in a complete enumeration of all the natural capacities and wants of

man;—not, however, of his merely artificial wants. A particular class in society may be devoted to the cultivation of each faculty, or, what is the same thing, to the satisfaction of each want founded on an original impulse in human nature. We reserve this inquiry for another occasion, that we may now enter upon one which lies nearer to us.

If a question should arise as to the perfection or imperfection of a state of society arranged on the principles which we have already propounded,—(and every society does so arrange itself by the natural tendencies of man, without foreign guidance, as was shown in our inquiry into the origin of society),—if, I say, such a question should arise, the answer to it would pre-suppose the solution of the following query:—"Is the development and satisfaction of *all* the wants of man, and indeed the *harmonious* development and satisfaction of them all, provided for in the given state of society?" Is this provided for,—then the society, as a society, is perfect;—that is, not that it has attained its final purpose, which as we have previously shown is impossible; but that it is so arranged that it must of necessity continually approximate thereto:—is this not provided for,—then society may indeed by some happy chance be impelled forward in the way of culture; but that cannot be calculated on with certainty, for it may with as much probability be carried by some unlucky occurrence in the opposite direction.

A provision for the harmonious development of all the faculties of man pre-supposes an acquaintance with them all,—a knowledge of all his tendencies and wants,—a complete survey of his whole being. But this perfect knowledge of human nature is itself founded on a faculty which must be developed; for there is certainly an impulse in man *to know*, and particularly to know that which affects himself. The development of this faculty, however, demands all the time and energy of a man:—if there

be any want common to mankind which urgently requires that a particular class be set aside for its satisfaction, it is this.

The mere knowledge, however, of the faculties and wants of man, without an acquaintance with the means of developing and satisfying them, would be not only a most sorrowful and discouraging, but also a vain and perfectly useless, acquirement. He acts a most unfriendly part towards me, who points out to me my defects without at the same time showing me the means supplying them; who raises me to the feeling of my wants without enabling me to satisfy them. Would that he had rather left me in brutish ignorance! In short, this would not be such knowledge as society requires, and for which a particular class of men is needed, to whom the possession of it may be committed; for this knowledge does not aim at the perfection of the species, and through that perfection at its harmonious combination, as it ought to do: hence to this knowledge of *wants* there must be added a *knowledge of the means by which they may be satisfied*;—and this knowledge properly devolves upon the same class, because the one cannot be complete, and still less can it be active and living, without the other. Knowledge of the first kind is founded on the principles of Pure Reason, and is *philosophical*;—that of the second, partly on Experience, and is in so far *philosophico-historical*;—not merely historical, for I must connect the purposes which can only be recognised philosophically, with their appropriate objects revealed in Experience, in order to be able to recognise the latter as the means to the attainment of the former.

If, however, this knowledge is to become useful to society, it is not sufficient to ascertain what faculties belong essentially to man, and through what means they may be developed;—such knowledge would still remain quite unproductive. It must proceed a step farther, in order to

secure the wished-for benefits :—we must also know on what particular grade of cultivation the society to which we belong stands at a particular point of time ;—to what particular stage it has next to ascend, and what are the means at its command for that purpose. Now on the grounds of Reason alone ;—on the supposition of Experience in the abstract, but prior to all actual Experience,—we can calculate the direction which human progress must take ; we can declare approximately the particular steps by which it must pass to the attainment of a definite stage of cultivation ;—but to declare the particular step on which it actually stands at a given point of time is impossible for Reason alone ; for this, Experience must be questioned, the events of the past must be examined, but with an eye purified by philosophy ;—we must look around us, and consider our contemporaries. This last part of the knowledge needful to society is thus purely *historical*.

The three branches of knowledge which we have pointed out, when combined together—(and without such union they will be found of but little avail)—constitute what is called *learning*, or at least what alone ought to be so called ;—and he who devotes his life to the acquisition of this knowledge is a Scholar.

But every individual must not attempt to grasp the whole extent of human learning in all these three forms of knowledge ;—that would be impossible for most men ; and therefore the striving after it would be fruitless, and the whole life of a member, who might have been of much value to society, would disappear without society reaping the slightest advantage from it. Each individual may mark out for himself a particular portion of this territory ; but each ought to cultivate his part according to all the three views,—*philosophically, philosophico-historically, and historically*. And I now declare beforehand (what I shall further illustrate at another time) that you may in the meantime at least receive it on my testimony,—that the

study of a profound philosophy does not render the acquisition of empirical knowledge a superfluous labour, if that knowledge be well grounded; but that it rather proves the necessity of such knowledge in the most convincing manner. The common purpose of these different branches of knowledge has already been pointed out; viz.—that by their means provision may be made for the uniform but constantly progressive development of all the faculties of man:—and hence arises the true vocation of the Scholar;—*the most widely extended survey of the actual advancement of the human race in general, and the steadfast promotion of that advancement.* I must impose some restraint upon myself, that I may not allow my feelings to expatiate upon the elevated idea which is now brought before you;—the path of rigid inquiry is not yet ended. Yet I must remark, in passing, what it really is which they would do who should seek to check the free progress of knowledge. I say *would* do; for how can I know whether such persons really exist or not? Upon the progress of knowledge the whole progress of the human race is immediately dependent: he who retards that, hinders this also. And he who hinders this,—what character does he assume towards his age and posterity? Louder than with a thousand voices, *by his actions* he proclaims into the deafened ear of the world present and to come—“As long as I live at least, the men around me shall not become wiser or better;—for in their progress I too, notwithstanding all my efforts to the contrary, should be dragged forward in some direction; and this I detest. I will not become more enlightened,—I will not become nobler. Darkness and perversion are my elements, and I will summon all my powers together that I may not be dislodged from them.”—Humanity may endure the loss of everything: all its possessions may be torn away without infringing its true dignity;—all but the possibility of improvement. Coldly and craftily, as the enemy of mankind pictured to us in



the Bible, these foes of man have calculated and devised their schemes, and explored the holiest depths to discover a point at which to assail humanity, so that they might crush it in the bud;—and they have found it. Humanity turns indignantly from the picture.——We return to our investigation.

Knowledge is itself a branch of human culture;—that branch must itself be further advanced if all the faculties of man are to be continuously developed; hence it is the duty of the Scholar, as of every man who has chosen a particular condition of life, to strive for the advancement of knowledge, and chiefly of his own peculiar department of knowledge;—it is his duty as it is the duty of every man in his own department;—yes, and it is much more his duty. It is for him to watch over and promote the advancement of other departments;—and shall he himself not advance? Upon his progress, the progress of all other departments of human culture is dependent: he should always be in advance to open the way for others, to explore their future path, and to lead them forward upon it;—and shall he remain behind? From that moment he would cease to be what he ought to be; and being nothing else, would then be—nothing. I do not say that every Scholar must actually extend the domain of knowledge,—that may not be within his power:—but I do say that he *must strive* to extend it;—that he must not rest, that he must not think his duty sufficiently performed, until he have extended it. So long as he lives he may yet accomplish this. Does death overtake him before he has attained his purpose?—then he is released from his duties in this world of appearances, and his earnest endeavour will be accounted to him for the deed. If the following maxim be applicable to all men, it is more especially applicable to the Scholar:—that he forget what he *has done* as soon as it is accomplished, and constantly direct his whole thoughts upon what he has yet *to do*. He has

advanced but little way indeed, whose field of exertion does not extend its boundaries at every step he takes in it.

The Scholar is destined in a peculiar manner for society: his class, more than any other, exists only through society and for society:—it is thus his peculiar duty to cultivate the social talents,—an openness to receive, and a readiness to communicate knowledge,—in the first place and in the highest degree. Receptivity must already be developed in him if he has thoroughly mastered the requisite empirical sciences. He must be thoroughly conversant with the labours of those who have gone before him in his own department, and this knowledge he cannot have acquired otherwise than by instruction, either oral or literary;—he cannot have arrived at it by mere reflection on the principles of Reason. But he should at all times maintain this receptivity by means of new acquirements, and endeavour to preserve himself from a growing insensibility to foreign opinions and modes of thought, which is so common even among the most independent thinkers;—for no one is so well informed but he may still continue to learn, and may have something very necessary yet to learn;—and it is seldom that any one is so ignorant that he cannot teach something to the most learned, which the latter did not know before. Readiness of communication is always needed by the Scholar, for he possesses his knowledge not for himself, but for society. This he must practise from his youth, and keep in constant activity,—through *what means*, we shall inquire at the proper time.

The knowledge which he has acquired for society he must now actually apply to the uses of society;—he must rouse men to the feeling of their true wants, and make them acquainted with the means of satisfying these. Not that he should enter with them into the deep inquiries which he himself has been obliged to undertake, in order to find some certain and secure foundation of truth: that

would be an attempt to make all men Scholars like himself, which is impossible, and of no advantage for the purposes of life ;—the other forms of human activity must also be prosecuted, and to that end there are other classes of men ; if they devoted their time to learned inquiries, the Scholars themselves would soon cease to be Scholars. How then *can* he spread abroad his knowledge, and how *ought* he to do so ? Society could not subsist without trust in the honesty and skill of others ;—this confidence is deeply impressed upon our hearts, and by a peculiar favour of Nature we never possess it in a higher degree than when we most need the honesty and skill of others. The Scholar may securely reckon upon this trust in his honesty and skill, as soon as he has earned it as he ought. Further,—there is in all men a feeling of truth, which indeed is not sufficient in itself, but must be developed, proved, and purified ;—and to do this is the task of the Scholar. This feeling is not sufficient in itself to lead the unlearned to all the truth of which they stand in need ; but when it has not become artificially falsified (which indeed is often the work of some who call themselves Scholars) it is always sufficient to enable them, even without deep argument, to recognise truth when another leads them to her presence. On this intuitive feeling of truth the Scholar too may rely. Thus, so far as we have yet unfolded the idea of his vocation, the Scholar is, by virtue of it, the *Teacher* of the human race.

But he has not only to make men *generally* acquainted with their wants, and with the means of satisfying these wants ; he has likewise, *in particular*, at all times and in all places, to teach them the wants arising out of the special condition in which they stand, and to lead them to the appropriate means of reaching the peculiar objects which they are there called upon to attain. He sees not merely the present,—he sees also the future : he sees not merely the point which humanity now occupies, but also that to

which it must next advance if it remain true to its final end, and do not wander or turn back from its legitimate path. He cannot desire to hurry forward humanity at once to the goal which perhaps gleams brightly before his own vision ;—the road cannot be overleaped ;—he must only take care that it do not stand still, and that it do not turn back. In this respect the Scholar is the *Guide* of the human race.

I remark here expressly, that in this as in all his other avocations, the Scholar is subject to the rule of the moral law,—of the requisite harmony of his own being. He acts upon society ;—it is founded on the idea of freedom ; it, and every member of it, is free ;—and he dares not approach it otherwise than by moral means. The Scholar will never be tempted to bring men to the adoption of his convictions by coercion or the use of physical force :—in the present age it ought to be unnecessary to throw away a single word upon this folly :—neither will he deceive them. Setting aside the fact that he would thereby offend against himself, and that the duties of the man are in every case higher than those of the Scholar :—he would also thereby offend against society. Each individual in society ought to act from his own free choice, from his own mature and settled conviction ;—he ought to be able to look upon himself as a joint object of all his actions, and be regarded as such by all his fellow-men. He who is deceived, is used only as a means by which another may attain his purpose.

The ultimate purpose of each individual man, as well as of all society, and consequently of all the labours of the Scholar in society, is the moral elevation of all men. It is the duty of the Scholar to have this final object constantly in view,—never to lose sight of it in all that he does in society. But no one can successfully labour for the moral improvement of his species who is not himself a good man. We do not teach by words alone,—we also

teach much more impressively by example; and every one who lives in society owes it a good example, because the power of example has its origin in the social relation. How much more is this due from the Scholar, who ought to be before all others in every branch of human culture? If he be behind in the first and highest of them all, that to which all the others tend,—how can he be the pattern which he ought to be, and how can he suppose that others will follow his teachings, which he himself contradicts before all men in every action of his life? The words which the founder of the Christian Religion addressed to his disciples apply with peculiar force to the Scholar,—“Ye are the salt of the earth: if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted?”—if the chosen among men be depraved, where shall we seek for moral good? Thus, in this last respect, the Scholar ought to be *morally* the *best* man of his age;—he ought to exhibit in himself the highest grade of moral culture then possible.

This is our common vocation,—this our common destiny. A happy vocation it is which calls upon you to do that, as your own peculiar occupation, which all men must do by reason of their common destiny as men; to employ all your time and powers upon that alone for which other men must hoard up time and power with wise parsimony; to have for your employment, your business, the sole everyday labour of your life, what only comes to others as sweet refreshment after toil! It is an invigorating, soul-elevating thought which each one among you, who is worthy of his calling, may entertain,—“To me also, for my part, is entrusted the culture of my own and following ages; from my labours will proceed the course of future generations, the history of nations who are yet to be. To this am I called,—to bear witness to the Truth: my life, my fortunes are of little moment; the results of my life are of infinite moment. I am a Priest of Truth; I am in her pay; I have bound myself to do all things, to venture all things,

to suffer all things for her. If I should be persecuted and hated for her sake, if I should even meet death in her service, what wonderful thing is it I shall have done?—what but that which I clearly ought to do?”

I know how much I have now said;—I know too, that an effeminate and nerveless generation will tolerate neither these feelings nor the expression of them;—that with a timorous voice which betrays its inward shame, it stigmatizes as extravagance everything which is above its reach;—that it turns away its eyes with agony from a picture in which it beholds nothing but its own enervation and disgrace;—that everything vigorous and elevating is to it as every touch to one diseased in all his limbs. I know all this;—but I know too where I speak. I speak before young men who are at present secured by their youth against this utter enervation; and along with a manly morality, and by means of it, I would deeply impress such feelings on their souls as may preserve them for the future also from such effeminacy. I avow it freely, that from the point on which Providence has placed me, I too would willingly contribute something to extend in every direction, as far as my native tongue can reach and farther if possible, a more manly tone of thought, a stronger sense of elevation and dignity, a more ardent zeal to fulfil our destiny at every hazard;—so that when you shall have left this place and are scattered abroad in all directions, I may one day know in you, wherever you may dwell, men whose chosen friend is Truth, who adhere to her in life and in death, who receive her when she is cast out by all the world, who take her openly under their protection when she is traduced and calumniated, who for her sake will joyfully bear the cunningly concealed enmity of the great, the dull sneer of the coxcomb, and the compassionating shrug of the fool. With this view I have now spoken;—and in everything which I may address to you in future, I shall have the same ultimate design.

## LECTURE V.

EXAMINATION OF ROUSSEAU'S DOCTRINES CONCERNING  
THE INFLUENCE OF ART AND SCIENCE  
ON THE WELL-BEING OF MAN.

THE combating of error is of no important advantage in the discovery of truth. If truth be once derived by just deduction from its essential principles, it follows without express refutation that everything opposed to it must necessarily be false; and if the whole path, which must be traversed in order to arrive at certain knowledge, lie clear before our view, we can at the same time easily observe the by-ways which lead from it towards erroneous opinions, and shall even be able readily to indicate to every wanderer the precise point from which he has gone astray. For every truth can be derived only from one fundamental principle. What the fundamental principle is, upon which each problem of human knowledge may be solved, it is the province of a fundamental philosophy to declare;—how each principle should be followed out to its consequences, universal logic must teach;—and thus the true as well as the false may be easily ascertained.

But the consideration of opposite opinions is of great value in imparting distinct and clear views of *discovered* truth. In comparing truth with error, we are obliged to note with greater accuracy the distinctive marks of both; and our conceptions of them acquire sharper precision

and greater clearness. I now avail myself of this method to give you a short and plain view of what has been already brought forward in these lectures.

I have placed the vocation of man in the continual advancement of culture, and in the harmonious development of all his faculties and wants; and I have assigned to that class whose duty it is to watch over the progress and harmony of this development, a most honourable place in human society.

No man has opposed this truth more decidedly, on more plausible grounds, or with more powerful eloquence, than Rousseau. To him the advancement of culture is the sole cause of all human depravity. According to him there is no salvation for man but in a State of Nature; and—what indeed flows most accurately from his principles—that class of men who most effectually promote the advancement of culture,—the Scholar-class,—is at once the source and centre of all human misery and corruption.

Such a theory has been propounded by a man who has himself cultivated his mental faculties in a very high degree. With all the power which he acquired by this superior cultivation, he laboured, wherever it was possible, to convince mankind of the justice of his doctrines,—to persuade them to return to that State of Nature which he so much commended. To him retrogression was progress, and that forsaken State of Nature the ultimate end which a now marred and perverted humanity must finally attain. Thus he did precisely that which we do,—he laboured to advance humanity according to his own ideas, and to aid its progress towards its highest end. He did that precisely which he himself so bitterly censured; his actions stand in opposition to his principles.

The same contradiction reigns in his principles themselves. What excited him to action but some impulse of his heart? Had he examined into this impulse, and



connected it with that which led him into error, he would then have had unity and harmony both in his actions and in his conclusions. If we can reconcile the first contradiction, we shall, at the same time, have reconciled the second; the point of agreement of the first is likewise that of the second. We shall discover this point, we shall solve the contradiction, we shall understand Rousseau better than he understood himself, and we shall then discover him to be in perfect harmony with himself and with us.

Whence did Rousseau derive this extraordinary theory, maintained indeed partially by others before him, but as a whole so completely opposed to the general faith? Did he deduce it by reason from some higher principle? Oh no! Rousseau did not penetrate on any side to the confines of human knowledge; he does not appear ever to have proposed such an investigation to himself. What truth he possessed, he founded immediately on his feelings; and his knowledge has therefore the faults common to all knowledge founded on mere undeveloped feeling,—that it is partly uncertain, because man cannot render to himself a complete account of his feelings;—that the true is mixed up with the untrue, because a judgment resting upon feeling alone regards as of like meaning things which are yet essentially different. Feeling does not err; but the judgment errs, because it misinterprets feeling, and mistakes a compound for a pure feeling. From these undeveloped feelings, upon which Rousseau grounds his reflections, he proceeds with perfect justice: once in the region of syllogism, he is in harmony with himself, and hence carries the reader who can think with him, irresistibly along. Had he allowed his feelings to influence the *course* of his inquiries, they would have brought him back to the right path from which they had first led him astray. To have erred less than he did, Rousseau must have possessed either more or less acuteness of intellect

than he actually did possess; and so he who reads his works must, in order not to be led astray by them, possess either a much higher or a much lower degree of acuteness than he possessed;—he must be either a complete thinker, or no thinker at all.

Separated from the great world, and guided by his pure feeling and lively imagination, Rousseau had sketched a picture of society, and particularly of the Scholar-class,—with whose labours he especially occupied himself,—*as they ought to be*, and as they necessarily must and would be, if they followed the guidance of common feeling. He came into the great world; he cast his eyes around him, and what were his sensations when the world and its Scholars, *as they actually were*, met his gaze! He saw, at its most fearful extreme, that scene which every one may see who turns his eyes towards it; \*—men bowed down to the dust like beasts, chained to the earth regardless of their high dignity and the divinity within them;—saw their joys, their sorrows, their whole existence, dependent on the satisfaction of a base sensuality whose demands rose higher with every gratification;—saw them careless of right or wrong, holy or unholy, in the satisfaction of their appetites, and ever ready to sacrifice humanity itself to the desire of the moment;—saw them ultimately lose all *sense* of right and wrong, and place wisdom in selfish cunning, and duty in the gratification of lust;—saw them at last place their glory in this degradation and their honour in this shame, and even look down with contempt on those who were not *so* wise, and not *so* virtuous as themselves;—saw those who ought to have been the teachers and guides of the nation sunk into the accommodating slaves of its corruption; those who ought to have given to the age a character of wisdom and of earnestness,

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\* The reader will bear in mind that these Lectures were delivered in 1794, during the Revolutionary Epoch in France.

assiduously catching the tones of the reigning folly and the predominant vice ;—heard them ask, for the guidance of their inquiries, not, Is it true ? is it good and noble ? but, Will it be well received ?—not, What will *humanity* gain by it ? but, What shall *I* gain by it ? how much gold, or what prince's favour, or what beauty's smile ?—saw them even look on this mode of thought as their highest honour, and bestow a compassionating shrug on the imbeciles who understood not like them to propitiate the spirit of the time ;—saw talent, and art, and knowledge, united in the despicable task of extorting a more delicate enjoyment from nerves already wasted in pleasure, or in the detestable attempt to palliate or justify human depravity, to raise it to the rank of virtue, and wholly demolish everything which yet placed a barrier in its way ;—saw at length,—and learned it by his own unhappy experience,—that those unworthy men were sunk so low that the last misgiving which truth once produced within them, the last doubt which its presence called into being, having utterly disappeared, they became quite incapable of even examining its principles ;—that even with the demand for inquiry ringing in their ears, they could only answer,—“ Enough ! it is not true, we do not wish it to be true, for it is no gain to us.” He saw all this, and his strained and disappointed feelings revolted against it. With deep indignation he rebuked his Age.

Let us not blame him for this sensibility,—it is the mark of a noble soul : he who feels the godlike within him, will often thus sigh upwards to eternal Providence : “ These then are my brethren ! these the companions whom thou hast given me on the path of earthly existence ! Yes, they bear my shape, but our minds and hearts are not related ; my words are to them a foreign speech, and theirs to me : I hear the sound of their voices, but there is nothing in my heart to give them a meaning ! Oh eternal Providence ! wherefore didst thou cause

me to be born among such men? or if it were necessary that I should be born among them, wherefore didst thou give me these feelings, this longing presentiment of something better and higher? why didst thou not make me like them? why didst thou not make me base even as they are? I could then have lived contentedly among them." Ye do well to reprove his melancholy, and censure his discontent, ye to whom all around you seems good; ye do well to commend to him the contentment with which ye derive enjoyment from all things, and the modesty with which ye accept men as they are! He would have been as modest as ye are, had he been tormented with as few noble aspirations. Ye cannot rise to the conception of a better state, and for you truly the present is well enough.

In this fulness of bitter feeling, Rousseau was now incapable of seeing anything but the object which had called it forth. Sensualism reigned triumphant; that was the source of the evil: he would know how to destroy this empire of sensualism at all hazards, cost what it might. No wonder that he fell into the opposite extreme. Sensualism shall not reign;—it cannot reign when it is destroyed,—when it ceases to exist; *or* when it is not developed,—when it has not acquired power. Hence Rousseau's State of Nature.

In the State of Nature the faculties peculiar to man shall not be cultivated; they shall not even be distinguished. Man shall have no other wants than those of his animal nature; he shall live like the beast on the meadow beside him. It is true that in this State none of those crimes against which Rousseau's feelings so strongly revolted would find a place; man would eat when he hungered, and drink when he was athirst, whatever he found before him; and, when satisfied, would have no interest in depriving others of that which he could not use himself. Once satiated himself, any one might eat or drink before him what and how much soever he would,

for now he desires rest, and has no time to disturb others. In the anticipation of the future lies the true character of humanity; it is therefore the source of all human vice. Shut out the source, and vice is no more;—and Rousseau did effectually exclude it from his State of Nature.

But it is also true that man, as surely as he is man and not a beast, is not destined to remain in this condition. Vice, indeed, would thus cease; but with it Virtue, and Reason too, would be destroyed. Man becomes an irrational creature; there is a new race of animals; men no longer exist.

There can be no doubt that Rousseau acted honourably with men: he longed himself to live in that State of Nature which he so warmly recommended to others, and showed throughout every indication of this desire. We may then put the question to him, what was it in truth which he sought in this State of Nature? He felt himself imprisoned, crushed down by manifold wants, and—what is indeed no great evil to the majority of men, but the bitterest oppression to such a man as he was,—he was often seduced from the path of rectitude and virtue by these wants. Living in a State of Nature, he thought he should be without these wants; and be spared so much pain from their denial, and so much yet bitterer pain from their dishonourable gratification;—he should then be *at peace with himself*. He also found himself oppressed on every side by others, because he stood in the way of the satisfaction of their desires. Man does not do evil in vain and for no purpose, thought Rousseau, and we with him; none of those who injured him would have done so, had they not felt these desires. Had all around him lived in a State of Nature, he should then have been *at peace with others*. Thus Rousseau desired undisturbed tranquillity within and without. Well: but we inquire further—To what purpose would he apply this unruffled peace? Undoubtedly to that to which he applied the measure of rest that did actually belong to him;—to reflection on his

destiny and his duties, thereby to ennoble himself and his fellow-men. But how was that possible in the state of animalism which he assumed,—how was it possible without the previous culture which he could only obtain in the state of civilization? He thus insensibly transplanted himself and society into this State of Nature, *with all that cultivation which they could only acquire by coming out of the State of Nature*; he imperceptibly assumed that they had already left it and had traversed the whole path of civilization, and yet had not left it and had not become civilized. And thus we have arrived at Rousseau's false assumption, and are now able to solve his paradoxes without any serious difficulty.

Rousseau would not transplant men back into a State of Nature with respect to spiritual culture, but only with respect to independence of the desires of sense. And it is certainly true, that as man approaches nearer to the highest end of his existence, it must constantly become easier for him to satisfy his sensual wants;—that his physical existence must cost him less labour and care; that the fruitfulness of the soil must increase, the climate become milder; an innumerable multitude of new discoveries and inventions be made to diversify and facilitate the means of subsistence;—that further, as Reason extends her dominion, the wants of man will constantly diminish in strength,—not as in a rude State of Nature in which he is ignorant of the delights of life,—but because he can bear their deprivation;—he will be ever equally ready to enjoy the best with relish, when it can be enjoyed without violation of duty, and to endure the want of everything which he cannot obtain with honour. Is this state considered ideal?—in which respect it is unattainable like every other Ideal State,—then it is identical with the golden age of sensual enjoyment without physical labour which the old poets describe. Thus what Rousseau, under the name of the State of Nature, and these poets under the title of the Golden Age, place *behind us*, lies actually

*before us.* (It may be remarked in passing, that it is a phenomenon of frequent occurrence, particularly in past ages, that what we *shall become* is pictured as something which we already *have been*; and that what we have to attain is represented as something which we have formerly lost: a phenomenon which has its proper foundation in human nature, and which I shall explain on a suitable occasion.)

Rousseau forgot that humanity can and ought to approach nearer to this state only by care, toil, and struggle. Nature *is* rude and savage without the hand of man: and it *should be* so, that thereby man may be forced to leave his natural state of inactivity, and elaborate her stores; that thereby he himself, instead of a mere product of Nature, may become a free reasonable being. He does most certainly leave it; he plucks at all hazards the apple of knowledge, for the impulse is indestructibly implanted within him, to be like God. The first step from this state leads him to misery and toil: his wants are awakened, and clamorously demand gratification. But man is naturally indolent and sluggish, like matter from whence he proceeded. Hence arises the hard struggle between want and indolence: the first triumphs, but the latter bitterly complains. Now in the sweat of his brow he tills the field, and it frets him that it should bear thorns and thistles which he must uproot. Want is not the source of vice,—it is the motive to activity and virtue; indolence, sluggishness, is the source of all vice. *How to enjoy as much as possible,—how to do as little as possible?*—this is the question of a perverted nature, and the various attempts made to answer this question are its crimes. There is no salvation for man until this natural sluggishness is successfully combated,—until he find all his pleasures and enjoyments in activity, and in activity alone. To that end pain is associated with the feeling of want. It should rouse us to activity.

This is the object of all pain; it is peculiarly the object of that pain which we experience at every view of the

imperfection, depravity, and misery of our fellowmen. He who does not feel this pain, this bitter indignation, is a mean-souled man. He who does feel it, ought to endeavour to release himself from it, by directing all his powers to the task of improving, as far as possible, all within his sphere and around him. And even supposing that his labours should prove fruitless, and he should see no use in their continuance, still the feeling of his own activity, the consciousness of his own power which he calls forth to the struggle against the general depravity, will cause him to forget this pain. Here Rousseau failed. He had energy, but energy rather of suffering than of action; he felt strongly the miseries of mankind, but he was far less conscious of his own power to remedy them;—and thus as he felt himself he judged of others; as he conducted himself amid his own peculiar sorrows, so did humanity at large, in his view, endure the common lot. He took account of its sorrows; but he forgot the power which the human race possesses,—to *help itself*.

Peace be with his ashes, and blessings upon his memory! He has done his work. He has kindled fire in many souls, who have carried on what he began. But he wrought almost without being conscious of his own influence;—he wrought without intending to rouse others to the work, without weighing their labour against the sum of general evil and depravity. This want of endeavour after self-activity reigns throughout his whole system of ideas. He is the man of passive sensibility, not at the same time of proper active resistance to its power. His lovers, led astray by passion, become virtuous; but we do not rightly perceive how they become so. The struggle of reason against passion,—the victory, gradual and slow, gained only by exertion, labour, and pain,—that most interesting and instructive of all spectacles, he conceals from our view. His pupil is developed by himself alone. The teacher does little more than remove the obstructions to his growth, and leave the rest to the care of Nature.



She must henceforth and for ever retain him under her guardianship. The energy, ardour, and firm determination to war against and to subdue her, he has not taught him. Among good men he will be happy ; but among bad,—and where is it that the majority are not bad ?—he will suffer unspeakable misery. Thus Rousseau throughout depicted Reason *at peace*, but not *in strife* ;—*he weakened Sense, instead of strengthening Reason*.

I have undertaken the present inquiry in order to solve the famous paradox which stood so directly opposed to our principles : but not for that purpose alone. I would at the same time show you, by the example of one of the greatest men of our own age, *what you ought not to be*. I would, by his example, unfold to you an important lesson for your whole life. You are now learning, by philosophic inquiry, what the men *ought to be* with whom you have not as yet generally entered into any near, close, and indissoluble relations. You will soon come into closer relations with them. You will find them very different in reality from what your philosophy would have them to be. The nobler and better you are yourselves, the more painfully will you feel the experience which awaits you. Be not overcome by this pain, but overcome it by action :—it does not exist without a purpose ; it is a part of the plan of human improvement. To stand aloof and lament over the corruption of man, without stretching forth a hand to diminish it, is weak effeminacy ; to cast reproach and bitter scorn on man, without showing him how he can become better, is unfriendly. Act ! act !—it is to that end we are here. Should we fret ourselves that others are not *so perfect* as we are, when we ourselves are only *somewhat less imperfect* than they ? Is not this our greatest perfection,—the vocation which has been given to us,—that we must labour for the perfecting of others ? Let us rejoice in the prospect of that widely extended field which we are called to cultivate ! Let us rejoice that power is given to us, and that our task is infinite !



ON  
THE NATURE OF THE SCHOLAR  
AND ITS  
MANIFESTATIONS  
LECTURES  
DELIVERED AT ERLANGEN  
1805.

LECTURE I. — GENERAL PLAN.

II. — CLOSER DEFINITION OF THE MEANING OF THE DIVINE  
IDEA.

III. — OF THE PROGRESSIVE SCHOLAR GENERALLY, AND IN  
PARTICULAR OF GENIUS AND INDUSTRY.

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## LECTURE I.

## GENERAL PLAN.

I NOW open the course of public lectures which I have announced on the roll under the title "*De Moribus Eruditorum*." This inscription may be translated—"Morality for the Scholar,"—"On the Vocation of the Scholar,"—"On the Duty of the Scholar," &c.;—but in what way soever the title may be translated and understood, the idea itself demands a deeper investigation. I proceed to this preliminary inquiry.

Generally speaking, when we hear the word Morality the idea is suggested of a formation of character and conduct according to rule and precept. But it is true only in a limited sense, and only as seen from a lower point of enlightenment, that man is formed by precept, or can form himself upon precept. On the contrary, from the highest point,—that of absolute truth, on which we here take our stand,—whatever is to be manifested in the thought or deed of man, must first be inwardly present in his Nature, and indeed itself constitute his Nature, being, and life; for that which lies in the essential Nature of man must *necessarily* reveal itself in his outward life, shine forth in all his thoughts, desires, and acts, and become his unvarying and unalterable character. How the freedom of man, and all the efforts by means of culture,

instruction, religion, legislation, to form him to goodness, are to be reconciled with this truth, is the object of an entirely different inquiry, into which we do not now enter. We can here only declare in general, that the two principles may be thoroughly reconciled, and that a deeper study of philosophy will clearly show the possibility of their union.

The fixed disposition and modes of action, or in a word, the character, of the true Scholar, when contemplated from the highest point of view, can, properly speaking, only be described, not by any means enacted or imposed. On the contrary, this apparent and outwardly manifest character of the true Scholar is founded upon that which already exists in his own inward Nature, independently of all manifestation and before all manifestation; and it is necessarily produced and unchangeably determined by this inward Nature. Hence, if we are to describe his character, we must first unfold his Nature:—only from the idea of the latter can the former be surely and completely deduced. To make such a deduction from this pre-supposed Nature, is the proper object of these lectures. Their contents may therefore be briefly stated: they are—*a description of the Nature of the Scholar, and of its manifestations in the world of freedom.*

The following propositions will aid us in attaining some insight into the Nature of the Scholar:—

1. The whole material world, with all its adaptations and ends, and in particular the life of man in this world, are by no means, in themselves and in deed and truth, that which they seem to be to the uncultivated and natural sense of man; but there is something higher, which lies concealed behind all natural appearance. This concealed foundation of all appearance may, in its greatest universality, be aptly named *the Divine Idea*; and this expression, “Divine Idea,” shall not in the meantime

signify anything more than this higher ground of appearance, until we shall have more clearly defined its meaning.

2. A certain part of the meaning of this Divine Idea of the world is accessible to, and conceivable by, the cultivated mind; and, by the free activity of man, under the guidance of this Idea, may be impressed upon the world of sense and represented in it.

3. If there were among men some individuals who had attained, wholly or partially, to the possession of this last-mentioned or attainable portion of the Divine Idea of the world,—whether with the view of maintaining and extending the knowledge of the Idea among men by communicating it to others, or of imaging it forth in the world of sense by direct and immediate action thereon,—then were these individuals the seat of a higher and more spiritual life in the world, and of a progressive development thereof according to the Divine Idea.

4. In every age, that kind of education and spiritual culture by means of which the age hopes to lead mankind to the knowledge of the ascertained part of the Divine Idea, is the Learned Culture of the age; and every man who partakes in this culture is a Scholar of the age.

From what has now been said, it clearly follows that the whole of the training and education which an age calls Learned Culture, is only the means towards a knowledge of the attainable portion of the Divine Idea, and is only valuable in so far as it actually is such a means, and truly fulfils its purpose. Whether in any given case this end has been attained or not, can never be determined by common observation, for *it* is quite blind to the Idea, and can do no more than recognize the merely empirical fact whether a man has enjoyed, or has not enjoyed, the advantage of what is called Learned Culture. Hence there are two very different notions of a Scholar:—the one,

*according to appearance and mere intention* ; and in this respect, every one must be considered a Scholar who has gone through a course of Learned Culture, or as it is commonly expressed, who has studied or who still studies :—the other, *according to truth* ; and in this respect, he only is to be looked upon as a Scholar who has, through the Learned Culture of his age, arrived at a knowledge of the Idea. *Through the Learned Culture of his age*, I say ; for if a man, without the use of this means, can arrive at a knowledge of the Idea by some other way (and I am far from denying that he may do so), yet such an one will be unable either to communicate his knowledge theoretically, or to realize it immediately in the world, according to any well-defined rule, because he must want that knowledge of his age, and of the means of influencing it, which can be acquired only in schools of learning. Hence there may indeed be a higher life alive within him, but not such a life as can grasp the rest of the world and call forth its powers ;—he may display all the special results of Learned Culture, but without this plastic power ;—and hence we may have a most excellent Man indeed, but not a Scholar.

As for us, we have here no thought of considering this matter by outward seeming, but only according to truth. Henceforward, throughout the whole course of these Lectures, he only will be esteemed a Scholar who, through the Learned Culture of his age, has actually attained a knowledge of the Idea, or at least strives with life and strength to attain it. He who has received this culture without thereby attaining to the Idea, is in truth (as we are now to look upon the matter) *nothing* ;—he is an equivocal mongrel between the possessor of the Idea and him who derives his strength and confidence from common reality ;—in his vain struggles after the Idea, he has lost the power to lay hold of and cultivate reality, and now wavers between two worlds without properly belonging to either of them.



The distinction which we have already noticed in the modes of the direct application of the Idea *in general*, is obviously also applicable *in particular* to him who comes to the possession of this Idea through Learned Culture ;—that is, to the Scholar. Either, it is his special and peculiar object to communicate to others the Ideas of which he has himself attained a living knowledge ;—and then his proper business is the theory of Ideas, general or particular,—he is a Teacher of Knowledge. But it is only as distinguished from, and contrasted with the second application of Ideas, that the business of the scientific teacher is characterized as mere theory ; in a wider sense it is as practical as that of the directly active man. The object of his activity is the human mind and spirit ; and it is a most ennobling employment systematically to prepare and elevate these for the reception of Ideas. Or, it may be the peculiar business of him who through Learned Culture has obtained possession of Ideas, to fashion the world (which, as regards his design, is a passive world) in accordance with these Ideas ; perhaps to model the Legislation,—the legal and social relations of men to each other,—or even that all-surrounding nature which constantly presses upon their higher being,—after the Divine Idea of justice or of beauty, so far as that is possible in the age and under the conditions in which he is placed ; while he reserves to himself his own original conceptions, as well as the art with which he impresses them on the world. In this case he is a pragmatic Scholar. No one, I may remark in passing, ought to intermeddle in the direct guidance and ordering of human affairs, who is not a Scholar in the true sense of the word ; that is, who has not by means of Learned Culture become a participator in the Divine Idea. With labourers and hodmen it is otherwise :—their virtue consists in punctual obedience, and in the careful avoidance of independent thought or self-reliant action in the ordering of their occupations.

From a different point of view arises another significant distinction in the idea of the Scholar: this, namely,—*either* the Scholar has actually laid hold of the whole Divine Idea in so far as it is attainable by man, or of a particular part of it,—which last indeed is not possible without having first a clear survey of the whole;—either he has actually laid hold of it, and penetrated into its significance until it stands lucid and distinct before him, so that it has become his own possession, to be recalled at any time in the same shape,—an element in his personality;—and then he is a complete and Finished Scholar, a man who *has studied*:—*or*, he as yet only strives and struggles to attain a clear insight into the Idea generally, or into that particular portion or point of it from which he, for his part, will penetrate the whole:—already, one by one, sparks of light arise on every side, and disclose a higher world before him; but they do not yet unite into one indivisible whole,—they vanish as they came, without his bidding, and he cannot as yet bring them under the dominion of his will;—and then he is a Progressive, a self-forming Scholar—a *Student*. That it be really the Idea which is either possessed or struggled after is common to both of these: if the striving be only after the outward form—the mere letter of Learned Culture, then we have, if the round be finished—the complete,—if it be unfinished—the progressive, *bungler*. The latter is always more tolerable than the former, for it may still be hoped that in pursuing his course he may perhaps at some future point be laid hold of by the Idea; but of the former all hope is lost.

This, gentlemen, is our conception of the Nature of the Scholar; and these are all the possible modifications of that conception—not in any respect changing, but rather wholly arising out of the original,—the conception, namely, of fixed and definite being, which alone furnishes a sufficient answer to the question,—What is the Scholar?

But philosophical knowledge, such as we are now seeking, is not satisfied with answering the question, What is ?—philosophy asks also for the How, and, strictly speaking, asks for this only, as for that which is already implied in the What. All philosophical knowledge is, by its nature, not empiric, but genetic,—not merely apprehending existing being, but producing and constructing this being from the very root of its life. Thus, with respect to the Scholar, the determinate form of whose being we have now described, there still remains the question,—How does he become a Scholar ?—and since his being and growth is an uninterrupted, living, constantly self-producing being,—How does he maintain the life of a Scholar ?

I answer shortly,—by his inherent, characteristic, and all-engrossing love for the Idea. Consider it thus :—Every form of existence holds and upholds itself ; and in living existences this self-support, and the consciousness of it, is self-love. In individual human beings the Eternal Divine Idea takes up its abode, as their spiritual nature ; this indwelling Divine Idea encircles itself in them with unspeakable love ; and then we say, adapting our language to common appearance, this man loves the Idea, and lives in the Idea,—when in truth it is the Idea itself which, in his place and in his person, lives and loves itself ; and his person is but the sensible manifestation of this existence of the Idea, and has, in and for itself alone, neither significance nor life. These strictly framed definitions or formulæ lay open the whole matter, and we may now proceed once more to adopt the language of appearance without fear of misapprehension. In the True Scholar the Idea has acquired a personal existence which has entirely superseded his own, and absorbed it in itself. He loves the Idea, not before all else, for he loves nothing else beside it,—he loves it alone ;—it alone is the source of all his joys, of all his pleasures ; it alone is the spring of all his thoughts, efforts, and deeds ; for it alone does

he live, and without it life would be to him odious and unmeaning. In both—in the Finished as well as in the Progressive Scholar—does the Idea reside, with this difference only,—that in the former it has attained all the clearness and firm consistency which was possible in that individual and under existing circumstances, and having now a settled abode within him, seeks to expatiate abroad, strives to flow forth in living words and deeds;—while in the latter it is still active only within himself, striving after the development and strengthening of such an existence as it may attain under the circumstances in which he is placed. To both alike would their life be valueless, could they not fashion either others or themselves after the Idea.

This is the sole and unvarying life-principle of the Scholar,—of him to whom *we* give that name. All his deeds and efforts, under all possible conditions in which he can be supposed to exist, spring with absolute necessity from this principle. Hence, we have only to contemplate him in those relations which are requisite for our purpose, and we may calculate with certainty both his inward and outward life, and describe it beforehand. And in this way it is possible to deduce with scientific accuracy, from the essential Nature of the Scholar, its manifestations in the world of freedom or apparent chance. This is our present task, and that the rule for its fulfilment.

We shall turn first of all to the Students,—that is to say, to those who are justly entitled to the name of Progressive Scholars in the sense of that word already defined; and it is proper that we should first apply to them the principles which we have laid down. If they be not such as we have supposed them to be, then our words will be to them mere words, without sense, meaning or application. If they be such as we have supposed them to be, then they will in due time become mature and perfect Scholars; for that effort of the Idea to unfold itself, which

is so much higher than all the pursuits of sense, is also infinitely more mighty, and with silent power breaks a way for itself through every obstacle. It will be well for the studious youth to know now what he shall one day become,—to contemplate in his youth a picture of his riper age. I shall therefore, after performing my first duty, proceed also to construct from the same principles the character of the Finished Scholar.

Clearness is gained by contrast; and therefore, wherever I show how the Scholar will manifest himself, I shall also declare how, for the same reasons, he will *not* manifest himself.

In both divisions of the subject, but particularly in the second, where I shall have to speak of the Finished Scholar, I shall guard myself carefully from making any satirical allusion to the present state of the literary world, any censure of it, or generally any reference to it; and I entreat my hearers once for all not to impute to me any such suggestion. The philosopher peacefully constructs his theorem upon given principles, without deigning to turn his attention to the actual state of things, or needing the recollection of it to enable him to pursue his inquiry; just as the geometer constructs his scheme without troubling himself whether his purely abstract figures can be copied with our instruments. And it is especially well that the unprejudiced and studious youth should remain in ignorance of the degeneracies and corruptions of the society into which he must one day enter, until he shall have acquired power sufficient to stem the tide of its example.

This, gentlemen, is the entire plan of the lectures which I now propose to deliver, with the principles on which they shall be founded. To-day I shall only add one or two observations to what I have already said.

In considerations like those of to-day, or those, necessarily similar in their nature, which are to follow, it is common for men to censure,—first, their severity,—very

often with the good-natured supposition that the speaker was not aware that his strictness would be disagreeable to them,—that they have only frankly to tell him this, and he will then reconsider the matter, and soften down his principles. Thus we have said that he who with his Learned Culture has not attained a knowledge of the Idea, or does not at least struggle to attain it, is, properly speaking, *nothing* ;—and farther on, we have said he is a *bungler*. This is in the manner of those severe sayings by which philosophers give so much offence. Leaving the present case, to deal directly with the general principle, I have to remind you that a thinker of this sort, without having firmness enough to refuse all respect to Truth, seeks to chaffer with her and cheapen something from her, in order by a favourable bargain to obtain some consideration for himself. But Truth, who is once for all what she is, and cannot change her nature in aught, proceeds on her way without turning aside ; and there remains nothing for her, with respect to those who do not seek her simply because she is true, but to leave them standing there, just as if they had never accosted her.

Again, it is a common charge against discourses of this kind, that they cannot be understood. Thus I can suppose—not you, gentlemen,—but some Finished Scholar *according to appearance*, under whose eye, perhaps, these thoughts may come,—approaching them, and, puzzled and doubtful, at last thoughtfully exclaiming :—The Idea—the Divine Idea,—that which lies at the bottom of all appearance,—what may this mean ? I would reply to such an inquirer,—What then may this question mean ?—Strictly speaking, it means, in most cases, nothing more than the following :—Under what other name, and by what other formula, do I already know this thing which thou expressest by a name so extraordinary, and to me so unheard of ?—and to that again, in most cases, the only fitting answer would be,—Thou knowest not this thing at all,

and during thy whole life hast understood nothing of it, neither under this nor under any other name ; and if thou art to come to any knowledge of it, thou must even now begin anew to learn it, and then most fitly under that name by which it is first offered to thee.

In the following lectures the word Idea, which I have used to-day, will be in many respects better defined and explained, and, as I hope, ultimately brought to perfect clearness ; but that is by no means the business of a single hour. We reserve this, as well as everything else to which we have to direct your attention, for the succeeding lectures.

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## LECTURE II.

### CLOSER DEFINITION OF THE MEANING OF *THE DIVINE IDEA.*

THE following were the principles which we laid down in our last lecture as the grounds of our investigation into the Nature of Scholar.

The Universe is not, in deed and truth, that which it seems to be to the uncultivated and natural sense of man ; but it is something higher, which lies behind mere natural appearance. In its widest sense, this foundation of all appearance may be aptly named the Divine Idea of the world. A certain part of the meaning of this Divine Idea is accessible to, and conceivable by, the cultivated mind.

We said at the close of last lecture, that this as yet obscure conception of a Divine Idea, as the ultimate and absolute foundation of all appearance, should afterwards become quite clear and intelligible by means of its subsequent applications.

Nevertheless we find it desirable, in the first place, to define this conception more closely in the abstract, and to this purpose we shall devote the present lecture. To this end we lay down the following principles, which, so far as we are concerned, are the results of deep and formal investigation, and are perfectly demonstrable in them-

selves, but which we can here communicate to you only *historically*, calculating with confidence on your own natural sense of truth to confirm our principles even without perfect insight into their fundamental basis; and also on your observing that by principles thus laid down the most important questions are answered, and the most searching doubts solved.

We lay down, then, the following principles :—

1. Being, strictly and absolutely considered, is living and essentially active. There is no other Being than Life;—it cannot be dead, rigid, inert. What death, that constantly recurring phenomenon, really is, and how it is connected with the only true Being—with Life,—we shall see more clearly afterwards.

2. The only Life which exists entirely in itself, from itself, and by itself, is the Life of God, or of the Absolute;—which two words mean one and the same thing; so that when we say the Life *of* the Absolute, we use only a form of expression, since in truth the Absolute is Life, and Life is the Absolute.

3. This Divine Life lies entirely hidden in itself;—it has its dwelling within itself, and abides there completely realized in, and accessible only to, itself. It is—all Being, and besides it there is no Being. It is therefore wholly without change or variation.

4. Now this Divine Life discloses itself, appears, becomes visible, manifests itself as such—as the Divine Life: and this its Manifestation, presence, or outward existence, is the World. Strictly speaking, it manifests itself as it essentially and really is, and cannot manifest itself otherwise; and hence there is no groundless and arbitrary medium interposed between its true and essential nature and its outward Manifestation, in consequence of which it would be only in part revealed and in part remain concealed; but its Manifestation, *i. e.* the World, is fashioned and un-

changeably determined by two conditions only; namely, by the essential nature of the Divine Life itself, and by the unvarying and absolute laws of a revelation or Manifestation abstractly considered. God reveals himself as God can reveal himself: His whole, in itself essentially inconceivable, Being comes forth entire and undivided, in so far as it can come forth in any mere Manifestation.

5. The Divine Life in itself is absolute self-comprehending unity, without change or variableness, as we said above. In its Manifestation, for a reason which is quite conceivable although not here set forth, it becomes a self-developing existence, eternally unfolding itself, and ever advancing towards higher realization in an endless stream of time. In the first place, it continues in this Manifestation, as we said, to be life. Life cannot be manifested in death, for these two are altogether opposed to each other; and hence, as Absolute Being alone is life, so the only true Manifestation of that Being is living existence, and death has neither a real, nor, in the highest sense of the word, has it even a relative existence. This living and visible Manifestation we call the human race. The human race is thus the only true finite existence. As Being—Absolute Being—constitutes the Divine Life, and is wholly exhausted therein, so does Existence in Time, or the Manifestation of that Divine Life, constitute the whole united life of mankind, and is thoroughly and entirely exhausted therein. Thus, in its Manifestation the Divine Life becomes a continually progressive existence, unfolding in perpetual growth according to the degree of inward activity and power which belongs to it. Hence,—and the consequence is an important one,—hence the Manifestation of Life in Time, unlike the Divine Life, is limited at every point of its existence,—*i. e.* it is in part not living, not yet interpenetrated by life, but in so far—dead. These limitations it must gradually break through, lay aside, and transform into life, in its onward progress.

In this view of the limitations which surround Existence in Time, we have, when it is thoroughly laid hold of, the conception of the objective and material world, or what we call Nature. This is not living and capable of infinite growth like Reason; but dead,—a rigid, self-contained existence. It is this which, arresting and hemming in the Time-Life, by this hindrance alone spreads over a longer or shorter period of time what would otherwise burst forth at once, a perfect and complete life. Further, in the development of spiritual existence, Nature itself is gradually interpenetrated by life; and it is thus both the obstacle to, and the sphere of, that activity and outward manifestation of power in which human life eternally unfolds itself.

This, and absolutely nothing more than this, is Nature in the most extended meaning of the word; and even man himself, in so far as his existence is limited in comparison with the original and Divine Life, is nothing more than this. Since the perpetual advancement of this second life,—not original, but derived and human,—and also its finitude and limitation in order that such advancement may be so much as possible,—both proceed from the self-manifestation of the Absolute, so Nature also has its foundation in God,—not indeed as something that is and ought to be for its own sake alone, but only as the means and condition of another being,—of the Living Being in man,—and as something which shall be gradually and unceasingly superseded and displaced by the perpetual advancement of this being. Hence we must not be blinded or led astray by a philosophy assuming the name of *natural*,\* which pretends to excel all former philosophy by striving to elevate Nature into Absolute Being, and into the place of God. In all ages, the theoretical errors as well as the moral corruptions of humanity have arisen

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\* Schelling's "Natur-Philosophie" is here referred to.

from falsely bestowing the name of life on that which in itself possesses neither absolute nor even finite being, and seeking for life and its enjoyment in that which in itself is dead. Very far therefore from being a step towards truth, that philosophy is but a return to old and already most widely spread error.

6. All truth contained in the principles which we have now laid down may be perceived by man, who himself is the Manifestation of the Original and Divine Life, *in its general aspect*, as we for example, have now perceived it, —either through rational conviction, or only from being led to it by an obscure feeling or sense of truth, or from finding it probable because it furnishes a complete solution of the most important problems. Man may perceive it; that is, the Manifestation may fall back on its Original, and picture it forth in reflection with absolute certainty as to the fact; but it can by no means analyse and comprehend it fully, for the Manifestation ever remains only a Manifestation, and can never go beyond itself and return to Absolute Being.

7. We have said that man may perceive this in so far as regards the fact, but he cannot perceive the reason and origin of the fact. *How* and *why* from the Divine Life, this and no other Time-Life arises and constantly flows forth, can be understood by man only on condition of fully comprehending all the parts of this latter, and interpreting them all, one by the other, mutually and completely, so as to reduce them once more to a single idea, and that idea equivalent to the one Divine Life. But this forth-flowing Time-Life is infinite, and hence the comprehension of its parts can never be completed: besides, the comprehender is himself a portion of it, and at every conceivable point of time he himself stands chained in the finite and limited, which he can never throw off without ceasing to be Manifestation,—without being himself transformed into the Divine Life.

8. From this it seems to follow, that the Time-Life can be conceived of by thought only *as a whole*, and according to its general nature,—*i. e.* as we have endeavoured to conceive of it above,—and then as a Manifestation of the one Original and Divine Life;—but that *its details* must be immediately felt and experienced in their individual import, and can only by and through this Experience be imaged forth in thought and consciousness. And such is actually the case in a certain respect and with a certain portion of human life. Throughout all time, and in every individual part of it, there remains in human life something which does not entirely reveal itself in Idea, and which therefore cannot be anticipated or superseded by any Idea, but which must be directly felt if it is ever to attain a place in consciousness;—and this is called the domain of pure empiricism or Experience. The above-mentioned philosophy errs in this,—that it pretends to have resolved human life entirely into Idea, and thus wholly superseded Experience; instead of which, it defeats its own purpose, and in attempting to explain life completely, loses sight of it altogether.

9. I said that such was the case with the Time-Life *in a certain respect and with a certain portion of it*. For in another respect and with another portion of it, the case is quite otherwise,—and that on the following ground, which I shall here only indicate in popular phraseology, but which is well worthy of deeper investigation.

The Time-Life does not enter into Time in individual parts only, but also in entire homogeneous masses; and it is these masses, again, which divide themselves into the individual parts of actual life. There is not only *Time*, but there are *times*, and succession of times, epoch after epoch, and age succeeding age. Thus, for example, to the deeper thought of man, the entire Earthly Life of the human race, as it now exists, is such a homogeneous mass, projected at once into Time, and ever present there,

whole and undivided,—only as regards *sensuous* appearance spread out into world-history. When these homogeneous masses have appeared in Time, the general laws and rules by which they are governed may be comprehended, and, in relation to the whole course of these masses, anticipated and understood; while the obstacles over which they take their way—that is, the hindrances and obstructions of life—are only accessible to immediate Experience.

10. These cognizable laws of homogeneous masses of Life, which may be perceived and understood prior to their actual consequences, must necessarily appear as laws of Life itself, as it ought to be, and as it should strive to become, founded on the self-supporting and independent principle of this Time-Life, which must here appear as Freedom:—hence, *as laws for the free action and conduct of the living being*. If we go back to the source of this legislation, we shall find that it lies in the Divine Life itself, which could not reveal itself in Time otherwise than under this form of a law; and, indeed, as is implied in the preceding ideas, nowise as a law ruling with blind power and extorting obedience by force, such as we assume in passive and inanimate nature,—but as the law of a Life which is conscious of its own independence, and cannot be deprived of it, without at the same time tearing up the very root of its being; hence, as we said above, as a Divine Law of Freedom, or Moral Law.

Further, as we have already seen, this life according to the law of the original Divine Life, is the only True Life and ground of all other;—all things else besides this Life are but hindrances and obstructions thereto, existing only that by them the True Life may be unfolded and manifested in its strength:—hence, all things else have no existence for their own sakes, but only as means for the development of the True Life. Reason can comprehend the connexion between means and end only by supposing

a mind in which the end has been determined. The thoroughly moral Human Life has its source in God: by analogy with our own understanding we conceive of God as proposing to himself the moral Life of man as the sole purpose for which He has manifested himself and called into existence every other thing; not that it *is* absolutely thus as we conceive of it, and that God really *thinks* like man, and that Existence itself is in him distinguished from the conception of Existence,—but *we* think thus only because we are unable otherwise to comprehend the relation between the Divine and the Human Life. And in this absolutely necessary mode of thought, Human Life *as it ought to be* becomes the idea and fundamental conception of God in the creation of a world,—the purpose and the plan which God intended to fulfil by the creation of the world.

And thus it is sufficiently explained for our present purpose how the Divine Idea lies at the foundation of the actual world, and how, and how far, this Idea, hidden from the common eye, may become conceivable and attainable by cultivated thought, and necessarily appear to it as that which man by his free activity *ought* to manifest in the world.

Let us not forthwith restrict our conception of this *ought*,—this free act of man, to the familiar categorical imperative, and to the narrow and paltry applications of it which are given in our common systems of Morality,—such applications as must necessarily be made by such a science. Almost invariably, and that from causes well founded in the laws of philosophical abstraction through which systems of Morality are produced, it has been usual to dwell at greatest length on the mere *form* of Morality,—to inculcate simply and solely obedience to the commandment;—and even when our moralists have proceeded to its *substance*, still their chief aim seems to have been



to induce men to cease from doing evil, rather than to persuade them to do good. Indeed, in any *system* of human duties, it is necessary to maintain such a generality of expression that the rules may be equally applicable to all men, and for this reason to point out more clearly what man ought not to do, than what he ought to do. This, too, is the Divine Idea,—but only in its remote and borrowed shape—not in its fresh originality. The original Divine Idea of any particular point of time remains for the most part unexpressed until the God-inspired man appears and declares it. What the Divine Man does, that is divine. In general, the original and pure Divine Idea—that which he who is immediately inspired of God should do and actually does—is (with reference to the visible world) creative, producing the new, the unheard-of, the original. The impulse of mere natural existence leads us to abide in the old, and even when the Divine Idea is associated with it, it aims at the maintenance of whatever has hitherto seemed good, or at most to petty improvements upon it; but where the Divine Idea attains an existence pure from the admixture of natural impulse, there it builds new worlds upon the ruins of the old. All things new, great, and beautiful, which have appeared in the world since its beginning, and those which shall appear until its end, have appeared and shall appear through the Divine Idea, partially expressed in the chosen ones of our race.

And thus, as the Life of Man is the only immediate implement and organ of the Divine Idea in the visible world, so is it also the first and immediate object of its activity. The progressive Culture of the human race is the object of the Divine Idea, and of those in whom that Idea dwells. This last view makes it possible for us to separate the Divine Idea into its various modes of action, or to conceive of the one indivisible Idea as several.

*First*,—In the actual world, the Life of Man, which is

in truth essentially one and indivisible, is divided into the life of many proximate individuals, each of whom possesses freedom and independence. This division is an arrangement of nature, and hence is a hindrance or obstruction to the True Life,—and exists only in order that through it, and in conflict with it, that unity of Life which is demanded by the Divine Idea may *freely* fashion itself. Human Life has been divided by nature into many parts, in order that it may *form itself* to unity, and that all the separate individuals who compose it may through Life itself blend themselves together into oneness of mind. In the original state of nature, the various wills of these individuals, and the different powers which they call into play, mutually oppose and hinder each other. It is not so in the Divine Idea, and it shall not continue so in the visible world. The first interposing power (not founded in nature, but subsequently introduced into the world by a new creation) on which this strife of individual powers must break and expend itself until it shall entirely disappear in a general morality, is the founding of States, and of just relations between them; in short, all those institutions by which individual powers, single or united, have each their proper sphere assigned to them, to which they are confined, but in which at the same time they are secured against all foreign aggression. This institution lay in the Divine Idea; it was introduced into the world by inspired men in their efforts for the realization of the Divine Idea; by these efforts it will be maintained in the world, and constantly improved until it attain perfection.

*Secondly*,—This Race of Man, thus raising itself through internal strife to internal unity, is surrounded by an inert and passive Nature, by which its free life is constantly hindered, threatened, and confined. So it must be, in order that this Life may attain such unity by its own free effort; and thus, according to the Divine Idea, must this strength and independence of the sensuous life, pro-

gressively and gradually unfold itself. To that end it is necessary that the powers of Nature be subjected to human ends, and (in order that this subjection may be possible) that man should be acquainted with the laws by which these powers act, and be able to calculate beforehand the course of their operations. Moreover, Nature is not designed merely to be useful and profitable to man, but also to become his fitting companion, bearing the impress of his higher dignity, and reflecting it in radiant characters on every side. This dominion over Nature lies in the Divine Idea, and is ceaselessly extended by the power of that Idea through the agency of all in whom it dwells.

*Lastly*,—Man is not placed in the world of sense alone, but the essential root of his being is, as we have seen, in God. Hurried along by sense and its impulses, the knowledge of this Life in God may readily be concealed from him, and then, however noble may be his nature, he lives in strife and disunion with himself, in discord and unhappiness, without true dignity and enjoyment of Life. Only when the consciousness of the true source of his existence first rises upon him, and he joyfully resigns himself to it till his being is steeped in the thought, do peace, joy, and blessedness flow in upon his soul. And it lies in the Divine Idea that all men must come to this gladdening consciousness,—that the otherwise aimless Finite Life may thus be pervaded by the Infinite and so enjoyed; and to this end all who have been filled with the Divine Idea have laboured and shall still labour, that this consciousness in its purest possible form may be spread throughout the race of man.

The modes of activity which we have indicated,—**LEGISLATION**,—**SCIENCE** (knowledge of nature—power over nature)—**RELIGION**,—are those in which the Divine Idea most commonly reveals and manifests itself through man in the world of sense. It is obvious that each of

these chief branches has also its separate parts, in each of which, individually, the Idea may be revealed. Add to these the KNOWLEDGE of the Divine Idea,—knowledge that there is such a Divine Idea, as well as knowledge of its import, either in whole or in some of its parts,—and further, the ART or SKILL actually to make manifest in the world the Idea which is thus clearly recognised and understood,—both of which, however,—Knowledge and Art—can be acquired only through the immediate impulse of the Divine Idea,—and then we have the *five* great modes in which the Idea reveals itself in man.

That mode of culture by which, in the view of any age, a man may attain to the possession of this Idea or these Ideas, we have named the *Learned Culture* of that age; and those who, by this culture, do actually attain the desired possession, we have named the *Scholars* of the age;—and from what we have said to-day you will be able more easily to recognise the truth of our position, to refer back to it the different branches of knowledge recognised among men, or to deduce them from it; and thus test our principle by its applications.

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## LECTURE III.

OF THE PROGRESSIVE SCHOLAR GENERALLY; AND IN  
PARTICULAR OF GENIUS AND INDUSTRY.

IT is the Divine Idea itself which, by its own inherent power, creates for itself an independent and personal life in man, constantly maintains itself in this life, and by means of it moulds the outward world in its own image. The natural man cannot, by his own strength, raise himself to the *supernatural*; he must be raised thereto by the power of the *supernatural*. This self-forming and self-supporting life of the Idea in man manifests itself as Love;—strictly speaking, as Love of the Idea for itself; but, in the language of common appearance, as Love of man for the Idea. This was set forth in our first lecture.

So it is with Love in general;—and it is not otherwise, in particular, with the love of the knowledge of the Idea, which knowledge the Scholar is called upon to acquire. The love of the Idea absolutely for itself, and particularly for its essential light, shows itself in those men whom it has inspired, and of whose being it has fully possessed itself, as *knowledge* of the Idea;—in the Finished Scholar, with a well-defined and perfect clearness,—in the Progressive Scholar, as a striving towards such a degree of clearness as it can attain under the circumstances in which

he is placed. Following out the plan laid down in the opening lecture, we shall speak, in the first place, of the Progressive Scholar.

In him the Idea strives, in the first place, to assume a definite form, and to establish for itself a fixed place amid the tide of manifold images which flows in ceaseless change over his soul. In this effort he is seized with a presentiment of a truth still unknown to him, of which he has as yet no clear conception; he feels that every new acquisition which he makes still falls short of the full and perfect truth, without being able to state distinctly in what it is deficient, or how the fullness of knowledge which is to take its place can be attained or brought about. This effort of the Idea within him becomes henceforward his essential life,—the highest and deepest impulse of his being,—superseding his hitherto sensuous and egoistical impulse, which was directed only towards the maintenance of his personal existence and physical well-being,—subjecting this latter to itself, and thereby for ever extinguishing it as the one and fundamental impulse of his nature. Actual personal want does still, as hitherto, demand its satisfaction; but that satisfaction does not continue, as it has hitherto continued, even when its immediate demands have been supplied, to be the engrossing thought, the ever-present object of contemplation, the motive to all conduct and action of the thinking being. As the sensuous nature has hitherto asserted its rights, so does emancipated thought, armed with new power, in its own strength and without outward compulsion or ulterior design, return from the strange land into which it has been led captive, to its own proper home, and betake itself to the path which leads towards that much wished-for *Unknown*, whose light streams upon it from afar. Towards that unknown it is unceasingly attracted; in meditating upon it, in striving after it, it employs its best spiritual power.

This impulse towards an obscure, imperfectly-discerned spiritual object, is commonly named Genius;—and it is so named on good grounds. It is a *supernatural* instinct in man, attracting him to a *supernatural* object;—thus indicating his relationship to the spiritual world and his original home in that world. Whether we suppose that this impulse, which, absolutely considered, should prompt to the pursuit of the Divine Idea in its primitive unity and indivisibility, does originally, and at the first appearance of any individual in the world of sense, so shape itself that this individual can lay hold of the Idea only at some one particular point of contact, and only from that point penetrate gradually to the other parts of the spiritual universe;—or whether we hold that this peculiar point of contact for the individual is determined during the first development of the individual power on the manifold materials which surround it, and always occurs in that material which chance presents at the precise moment when the power is sufficiently developed;—which of these opinions soever we adopt, still, so far as its outward manifestation is concerned, the impulse which shows itself in man and urges him onward, will always exhibit itself as an impulse towards some particular side of the one indivisible Idea; or, as we may express it, after the principles laid down in our last lecture, without fear of being misunderstood,—as an impulse towards one particular idea in the sphere of all possible ideas; or if we give to this impulse the name of Genius, then Genius will always appear as a *specific* Genius, for philosophy, poetry, natural science, legislation, or the like,—never clothed with an *absolute* character, as Genius in the abstract. According to the first opinion, this specific Genius possesses its distinguishing character as an innate peculiarity; according to the second, it is originally a universal Genius determined to a particular province only by the accident of culture. The decision of this controversy lies beyond the limits of our present task.

In whatever way it may be decided, two things are evident:—*in general*, the necessity of previous spiritual culture, and of preliminary acquaintance with ideas and knowledge, so that Genius, if present, may disclose itself; and, *in particular* the necessity of bringing within the reach of every man, ideas of many different kinds, so that either the inborn *specific* Genius may come into contact with its appropriate material, or the originally *universal* Genius may freely choose one particular object from among the many. Even in this preliminary spiritual culture, future Genius reveals itself; for its earliest impulse is directed towards Knowledge only as Knowledge,—merely for the sake of knowing;—and thus manifests itself solely as a desire to know.

But even when this impulse has visibly manifested itself either in the active investigation of some attractive problem or in happy anticipations of its solution, still persevering industry, uninterrupted labour, are imperatively requisite. The question has often been raised, whether Genius or Industry be more essential in science. I answer, both must be united:—the one is of little worth without the other. Genius is nothing more than the effort of the Idea to assume a definite form. The Idea, however, has in itself neither body nor substance, but only shapes for itself an embodiment out of the scientific materials which environ it in Time, of which Industry is the sole purveyor. On the other hand, Industry can do nothing more than provide the elements of this embodiment;—to unite them organically, and to breathe into them a living spirit, is not the work of Industry, but belongs only to the Idea revealing itself as Genius. To impress its image on the surrounding world is the object for which the living Idea dwelling in the True Scholar seeks for itself an embodiment. It is to become the highest life-principle, the innermost soul of the world around it;—it must therefore assume the same



forms which are borne by the surrounding world, establish itself in these forms as its own proper dwelling-place, and with a free authority regulate the movements of all their individual parts according to the natural purposes of each, even as a healthy man can set in motion his own limbs. As for him with whom the indwelling Genius proceeds but half-way in its embodiment, and stops there,—whether it be because the paths of Learned Culture are inaccessible to him, or because, from idleness or presumptuous self-conceit, he disdains to avail himself of them,—between him and his age, and consequently between him and every possible age, and the whole human race in every point of its progress, an impassable gulf is fixed, and the means of mutual influence are cut off. Whatever may now dwell within him,—or, more strictly speaking, whatever he might have acquired in the course of his progressive culture,—he is unable to explain clearly either to himself or others, or to make it the deliberate rule of his actions and thus realize it in the world. He wants the two necessary elements of the true life of the Idea,—clearness and freedom. *Clearness* ;—his fundamental principle is not thoroughly transparent to his own mind, he cannot follow it securely throughout all its modifications, from its innermost source where it descends immediately from the Divinity upon his soul, to all those points at which it has to manifest and embody itself in the visible world, and through the different forms which, under different conditions, it must assume. *Freedom* ; which springs from clearness, and can never exist without it ;—for he does not recognise at first sight the form which the Idea must assume in each phase of reality that presents itself, and the proper means of that realization ;—nor has he those means at his free disposal. He is commonly called a *visionary*,—and he is rightly so called. He, on the contrary, in whom the Idea perfectly reveals itself, looks out upon and thoroughly penetrates all reality

by the light of the Idea. Through the Idea itself he understands all its related objects,—how they have become what they are, what in them is complete, what is still wanting, and how the want must be supplied; and he has, besides, the means of supplying that want completely in his power. The embodiment of the Idea is then for the first time completed in him, and he is a matured Scholar;—the point where the Scholar passes into the free Artist is the point of maturity for the Scholar. Hence it is evident that even when Genius has disclosed itself, and visibly becomes a self-forming life of the Idea, untiring Industry is necessary to its perfect growth. To show that at the point where the Scholar reaches maturity the creative existence of the Artist begins; that this, too, requires Industry, that it is infinite;—lies not within our present inquiry; we only allude to it in passing.

But what did I say?—that even after the manifestation of Genius, Industry is requisite?—as if I would call forth Industry by my prescription, my advice, my demonstration of its necessity, and thus expected to rouse to exertion those in whom it is wanting! Rather let us say, that where Genius is really present, Industry spontaneously appears, grows with a steady growth, and ceaselessly impels the advancing Scholar onwards towards perfection;—where, on the contrary, Industry is not to be found, it is not Genius nor the impulse of the Idea which has shown itself, but, in place of it, only some mean and unworthy motive.

The Idea is not the ornament of the individual (for, strictly speaking, there is no such thing as individuality in the Idea), but it seeks to flow forth in the whole human race, to animate it with new life, and to mould it after its own image. This is the distinctive character of the Idea; and whatever is without this character is not the Idea. Wherever, therefore, it attains such a life, it

irresistibly strives after this universal activity, not through the life of the individual, but through its own essential nature. It thus impels every one in whom it has an abode, even against the will and wish of his sensuous, personal nature, and as though he were a passive instrument,—impels him forward to this universal activity, to the skill which is demanded in its exercise, and to the Industry which is necessary for the acquisition of that skill. Even without need of the personal intention of its instrument, it never ceases from spontaneous activity and self-development until it has attained such a living and efficient form as is possible for it under the conditions by which it is surrounded. Wherever a man, after having availed himself of the existing and accessible means for the acquirement of Learned Culture—(for the second case, where those means do not exist or are inaccessible, does not belong to our present subject)—wherever, I say, in the first case, such a man remains inactive, satisfied with the persuasion that he is in possession of something resembling the Idea or Genius,—then in him there is neither Idea nor Genius, but only a vain ostentatious disposition, which assumes a singular and fantastic costume in order to attract notice. Such a disposition shows itself at once in self-gratulatory contemplation of its own parts and endowments, dwelling on these in complacent indolence, commonly accompanied by contemptuous disparagement of the personal qualities and gifts of others;—while, on the contrary, he who is constantly urged on by the Idea has no time left to think of his own personality;—lost with all his powers in the object he has in view, he never weighs his own capacities of grasping it against those of other men. Genius, where it is present, sees its object only—never sees itself;—as the sound eye fixes itself upon something beyond it, but never looks round upon its own brightness. In such an one the Idea does certainly not abide. What is it, then, that animates him,—that

moves him to those eager and restless efforts which we behold? It is mere pride and self-conceit, and the desperate purpose, despite of natural disqualification, to assume a character which does not belong to him;—these animate, impel, and spur him on, and stand to him in the room of Genius. And what is it which he produces, which appears to the common eye (itself neither clear nor pure, and in particular incapable of appreciating the sole criteria of all true Ideals—clearness, freedom, reasonableness, artistic form) as if it were the Idea?—what is it? Either something which he has himself imagined, or which has accidentally occurred to him,—which, indeed, he does not understand, but which he hopes, nevertheless, may appear new, striking, paradoxical, and therefore blaze forth far and wide;—with this he commits himself to the chance of fortune, trusting that in the sequel he himself, or some one else, may discover a meaning therein. Or else he has borrowed it from others,—cunningly distorting, disarranging, and unsettling it, so that its original form cannot easily be recognised; and, by way of precaution, depreciating the source whence it came, as utterly barren and unprofitable, lest the unprejudiced observer might be led to inquire whether he has not possibly obtained from thence that which he calls his own.

In one word,—self-contemplation, self-admiration, and self-flattery, although the last may remain unexpressed, and even carefully shrouded from any other eye than his own,—these, and the indolence and disdain of the treasures already gathered together in the storehouses of learning which spring from these, are sure signs of the absence of true Genius; whilst forgetfulness of self in the object pursued, entire devotion to that object, and inability to entertain any thought of self in its presence, are the inseparable accompaniments of true Genius. It follows that true Genius in every stage of its growth, but particularly during its early development, is marked by amiable

modesty and retiring bashfulness. Genius knows least of all about itself; it is there, and works and rules with silent power, long before it comes to consciousness of its own nature. Whoever is constantly looking back upon himself to see how it stands with him, of what powers he can boast, and who is himself the first discoverer of these,—in him truly there is nothing great.

Should there then be here among you any opening Genius, far be it from me to wound its native modesty and diffidence by any general invitation to you to examine yourselves to see whether or not you are in possession of the Idea,—I would much rather earnestly dissuade you from such self-examination. And that this advice may not seem to you the suggestion of mere pedantic school-wisdom, and perhaps of extravagant caution, but may approve itself to your minds as arising from absolute necessity, I would add that this question can neither be answered by yourselves, nor can you obtain any sure answer to it from any one else;—that therefore truth is not elicited by such a premeditated self-examination, but, on the contrary, the youth is taught a self-contemplation and conceited brooding over his own nature, through which the man becomes at length an intellectual and moral ruin. There are many signs by which we may know that the Genius which possibly lies concealed in a Student has not yet declared itself,—and we shall find occasion in the sequel to point out the most remarkable of these;—but there is only one decisive criterion by which we may determine whether Genius has existed or has never existed in him; and that one decisive criterion can be applied only after the result has become apparent. Whoever has really become a mature Scholar and Artist, in the sense in which we have used these words,—grasping the world in his clear, penetrating Idea, and able to impress that Idea upon the world at every point—he has had Genius, he has been inspired by

the Idea; and this may now confidently be said of him. He who, notwithstanding the most diligent study, has come to years of maturity without having raised himself to the Idea—he has been without Genius, without communion with the Idea; and this may henceforth be said of him. But of him who is still upon the way, neither of these judgments can be pronounced.

This disposition of things, which is as wise as it is necessary, leaves but one course open to the youthful student who cannot know with certainty whether or not Genius dwells within him;—this, namely, that he continue to act as though there were latent within him that which must at last come to light; that he subject himself to all conditions, and place himself in all circumstances, in which, if present, it may come to light; that, with untiring Industry and true devotion of his whole mind, he avail himself of all the means which Learned Culture offers to him. In the worst case,—if at the termination of his studies he find that, out of the mass of learning which he has accumulated, no spark of the Idea has beamed upon him, there yet remains for him *this consciousness* at least,—a consciousness more indispensable to man than even Genius itself, and without which the possessor of the greatest Genius is far less worthy than he,—the consciousness that if he has not risen higher, no blame can attach to him,—that the point at which he has stopped short is the place which God has assigned to him, whose law he will joyfully obey. No one need pride himself upon Genius, for it is the free gift of God; but of honest Industry and true devotion to his destiny any man may well be proud; indeed this thorough Integrity of Purpose is itself the Divine Idea in its most common form, and no really honest mind is without communion with God.

Farther:—the knowledge which he has acquired by means of this sincere effort after something higher, will render him always a suitable instrument in the hands of

the higher Scholar,—of him who has attained possession of the Idea. To him he will unhesitatingly submit without grudge or jealousy,—without any unsatisfied struggle after an elevation for which he was not formed; his guidance he will follow with a true loyalty which shall have become to him a second nature, and thus he will obtain a sure consciousness of having fulfilled his vocation as the last and highest destiny to which, in any sphere of life, man can attain.

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## LECTURE IV.

## OF INTEGRITY IN STUDY.

HE who is to become a True Scholar, so that in him the Divine Idea of the world may attain to such a measure of clearness and influence over the surrounding world as is possible in his circumstances, must be laid hold of by the Idea itself through its own inherent power, and by it be urged forward unceasingly towards the desired end.

In our portraiture of the Nature of the True Scholar, we are now engaged with the Progressive Scholar, or the Student.

If the Student is really inspired by the Idea,—or, what is the same thing, if he possesses Genius and true talent, he is already far above all our counsels ; Genius will fulfil its vocation in him without our aid, and even without his own concurrence :—of this we have spoken sufficiently in our last lecture.

But, as we have likewise seen in the same lecture, the Progressive Scholar can never determine for himself whether or not he possesses Genius in our sense of the term, nor can any one else determine this for him :—hence there is nothing left for him but with sincere and perfect Integrity so to act as if there lay within him Genius which must ultimately come to light. True Genius, when present, manifests itself precisely in the same way as does

this Integrity in Study ; in appearance, both assume the same form, and cannot be distinguished the one from the other.

Turning from the tests of Genius which, in the Progressive Scholar at least, are inscrutable, we have now only to exhaust the indications of Integrity in Study, and we shall then have completed the portraiture of the true follower of learning. The honest Student is to us the only True Student ; the two ideas flow into each other.

Integrity in the abstract, as we have also remarked before, is itself a Divine Idea ; it is the Divine Idea in its most common form, embracing all men. Hence, like the Idea itself, it acts by its own inherent power ;—it makes itself, as we said before of Genius, without aid from personal feeling,—nay, even annihilating self-love as far as possible,—into an independent life in man, irresistibly urging him forward and pervading all his thoughts and actions. His actions, I say ; for the idea of Integrity is an immediately practical idea, determining the outward, visible, free doings of man ;—whereas the influence of Genius is, in the first place, internal,—affecting spiritual insight. He who truly possesses Genius *must be* successful in his studies : to him light and knowledge will spring up on all sides from the objects of his contemplation. He who possesses Integrity in Study, of him this success cannot be so surely predicted : but should it not follow, he will be blameless, for he will neglect nothing within his power which may enable him to attain it ; and even if he be not at last a sharer in the triumph, he shall at least have deserved to be so.

Integrity, as a living and governing principle, rises above the person of him who is animated by it, and regards this person as standing under a definite law,—as existing only for a certain purpose, and as means to a higher end. Man shall *be* and *do* something ; his temporal life shall leave behind it in the spiritual world an im-

perishable and eternal result,—a particular result arising from the life of each individual, belonging to him alone and demanded of him alone. It is thus that the true-minded man looks upon all personal Life in Time, and particularly on that life which lies nearest to him,—namely, his own. He in whom this Integrity has become a living idea cannot conceive of human life in any other way than this;—from this principle he sets forth, to it he constantly returns, and by it he regulates all his other modes of thought. Only in so far as he obeys this law and fulfils this purpose, which he recognises as his being's end and aim, is he satisfied with himself: everything in him which is not directed to this high end,—which is not evidently a means to its attainment, he despises, hates, desires to have swept away. He looks upon his individual person as a thought of the Deity; and thus his vocation—the design of his being—is to him as a purpose of God himself. This, and nothing else, is the *idea* of Integrity, whether he who is ruled by it calls it by this *name* or by another.

Success cannot indeed be certainly predicted of mere Integrity as such, either in study or in any other purpose it may propose to itself; but in all its pursuits it will surely display the independent power of the Idea pressing steadily forward to its mark; and of the true-minded man it may confidently be said, that in Integrity itself, his defence and support, he will find a noble reward. In advancing on the path of rectitude, it will become continually less needful for him to admonish, to arouse himself to the struggle against recurring evil desires; for the true feeling, the legitimate mode of thought, will spontaneously reveal itself to him, and become his ruling principle,—his second nature. Whatever thou doest, do it with Integrity: if thou studiest, let it guide thy studies; and then, as to whether thou shalt prosper in what thou doest,—leave that to God;—thou hast most surely left it to him, when

thou goest to work with true and honest purpose : with the attainment of that Integrity thou shalt also attain unbroken peace, inward cheerfulness, and an unstained conscience ;—and in so far thou shalt assuredly prosper.

We have said that the honest man *in general* looks upon his free personal life as unalterably determined by the eternal thought of God ;—the honest Student *in particular* looks upon himself as designed by the thought of God to the end that the Divine Idea of the constitution of this universe may enter his soul, shine in him with steady lustre, and through him maintain a certain influence on the surrounding world. Thus does he conceive of his vocation ; for in this lies the essential Nature of the Scholar :—so surely as he has entered upon his studies with Integrity, *i. e.* with the persuasion that God has given a purpose to his life, and that he must direct all his free actions towards the fulfilment of that purpose,—so surely has he made the supposition that it is the Divine Will that he should become a Scholar. It matters not whether we have chosen this condition for ourselves with freedom and foresight, or others have chosen it for us, placed us in the way of preparation for it, and closed every other condition of life against us. How could any one, at the early age at which this choice of a condition usually occurs, and in most cases must occur, have attained the mature wisdom by which to decide for himself whether or not he is possessed of the as yet untried and undeveloped capacity for knowledge ? When we come to exercise our own understanding, the choice of a condition is already made, —it has been made without our aid, because we were incapable at the time of rendering any aid in the matter ; and now we cannot turn back,—a necessity precisely similar to the unalterable conditions under which our freedom is placed by the Divine Will. If an error should occur in the choice thus made for us by others, the fault is not ours ; we could not decide whether or not an error had

been committed, and could not venture to presuppose one; if it has occurred, then it is our business, so far as in us lies, to correct it. In any case, it is the Divine Will that every one, in the station where he has been placed by necessity, should do all things which properly belong to that station. *We* have met together to *study*; hence it is assuredly the Divine Will that we consider ourselves as Students, and apply to ourselves all that is comprehended in that idea.

This thought, with its indestructible certainty, enters and fills the soul of every honest Student:—this, namely —“I, this sent, this expressly commissioned individual, as I may now call myself, am actually here, have entered into existence for this cause and no other,—that the eternal counsel of God in this universe may through me be seen of men in another, hitherto unknown light,—may be made clearly manifest in the world so as not again to be extinguished; and this phase of the Divine Thought, thus bound up with my personality, is the only true living being within me; all else, though looked upon even by myself as belonging to my being, is dream, shadow, nothing;—this alone is imperishable and eternal within me; all else shall again disappear in the void from which it has seemingly, but never really, come forth.” This thought fills his whole soul; whether it is itself clearly conceived and expressed or not, everything else which is there clearly conceived, expressed, wished, or willed, is referred back to it as to its first condition, can only be explained by it, and only considered possible on the supposition of its truth.

Through this fundamental principle of all his thoughts, he himself, and Knowledge, the object of his activity, become to him, before all other things, honourable and holy. *He himself becomes honourable and holy.* Not, by any means, that he dwells with self-complacent pride on the superiority of his vocation—to share in some degree

the counsel of God and reveal it to the world—over other less distinguished callings, invidiously weighing them against each other, and thus esteeming himself as of more value than other men. If one form of human destiny appears to him superior to another, it is not because it offers a better field for personal distinction, but because in it the Divine Idea reveals itself with greater clearness. Man has no peculiar value beyond that of faithfully fulfilling his vocation, whatever that may be ; and in this all are alike, irrespective of the different natures of their callings. Moreover, the Progressive Scholar does not even know whether he shall ultimately attain the proper end of his studies, the possession of the Idea ; nor, therefore, if that noble vocation be really his ;—he is only bound to suppose the possibility of this. The perfect Scholar—of whom we do not now speak—when he has the completed result in his possession, can then indeed with certainty recognise his vocation ; but even in him the cravings of the Idea for more extended manifestation still continue, and shall continue while life endures, so that he can never have time to muse over the superiority of his vocation, even were such musings not utterly vain in themselves. All pride is founded on what we think *we are*,—*are* in attained and perfect being ; and thus pride is in itself vain and contradictory,—for that which is our true being,—that to which endless growth belongs,—is precisely that to which we have not yet attained. Our true and undervived being in the Divine Idea always manifests itself as a desire for progress, and hence as dissatisfaction with our present state ; and thus the Idea makes us truly modest, and bows us down to the dust before its majesty. By his pride itself, the proud man shows that, more than any one else, he has need of humility ; for while he thinks of himself that he is something, he shows by his pride that he is really nothing.

Hence, in the thought to which we gave utterance, the

Student is holy and honourable to himself above everything else,—not in respect of what he *is*, but of what he *ought to be*, and what he evermore must strive *to become*. The peculiar self-abasement of a man consists in this,—when he makes himself an instrument of a temporary and perishable purpose, and deigns to spend care and labour on something else than the Imperishable and Eternal. In this view, every man should be honourable and holy to himself,—and so, too, should the Scholar.

To what end, then, O Student, dost thou give to Knowledge this attention, which, be it great or small, still costs thee some effort,—wherefore concentrate thy thoughts here, when thou wouldst rather let them rove abroad,—wherefore deny thyself so many enjoyments, for which, nevertheless, the appetite is not wanting in thee? Dost thou answer,—“That I may not some day come to want;—that I may acquire a sufficient maintenance, a respectable competency, whereby I may satisfy myself with good things;—that my fellow-citizens may respect me, and that I may more easily move them to the fulfilment of my purposes”? I ask,—Who then is this *thou*, in whose future nursing and comfort thou art so keenly interested, and for whom thou dost now toil so hard and sacrifice so much? It is as yet quite uncertain whether it ever reach this hoped-for land of self-gratification:—but suppose it should do so, and even enjoy for many years the pampering thou hast provided for it, what will be the end of it all at last? All this nursing will have an end; the pampered body will sink and crumble into a heap of ashes; and for this wilt thou begin the monotonous, mechanical, often irksome business of life, and even add to its inherent bitterness by deliberating beforehand on the burden which it lays on thee? In such circumstances, I at least would rather begin at the end of the romance, and go down this day to the grave, into which sooner or later I must descend. Or dost thou answer thus, more praiseworthily in appearance

at least, but not more profoundly,—“ I will thereby become useful to my fellow-men and promote their welfare ? ” —then I ask, What end will thy usefulness serve ? In a few years, of all whom thou desirest to serve, and whom I freely grant thou mayest serve, not one shall remain,—not one shall have the least need of thy services any more : thou hast spent thy labour on perishable things ;—they disappear, and thou disappearest with them, and a time comes when every trace of thy existence shall be utterly effaced. Not so the true Student, who has brought Integrity with him to his task. “ I am,” he may say ; “ but as surely as I am, is my existence a thought of God ; for He alone is the fountain of all being, and besides Him there is no being. Whatever I am, in and by this thought, I am before all Time, and do so remain independent of all time and change. This thought will I strive to know,—to its fulfilment I will apply all my powers ;—then shall they be employed on what is eternal, and their result shall endure for ever. I am Eternal, and it is below the dignity of the Eternal to waste itself on things that perish.”

*By the same principle does Knowledge, the object of his activity, become honourable to the Student.* At his entrance into the world of science, he meets with many things which seem to him strange and unaccountable, insignificant or unattractive ;—he cannot comprehend the grounds of their necessity, nor their influence on the great whole of Knowledge, which he is as yet unable to embrace in one view. How shall the beginner, who must first gather together the different parts,—how shall he see and understand them in the light of the whole, to which he has not yet attained ? Whilst one man thoughtlessly neglects and despises whatever is unintelligible to him, and so remains ignorant ; whilst another learns it mechanically, with blind faith, or in the hope that it may one day prove useful to him in some business of life ;—the True Scholar worthily and nobly welcomes it into the general idea of



Knowledge which he already possesses. All which comes before him belongs in every case to the circle of things out of which the Divine Idea is to appear to him, and to the material in which the Eternal Life within him shall reveal itself and assume a definite form. If Knowledge appears to those who are without both Genius and Integrity only as a means to the attainment of certain worldly ends, she reveals herself to him who with honest heart consecrates himself to her service, not only in her highest branches which touch closely upon things divine, but down even to her meanest elements, as something originating in, and determined by, the Eternal Thought of God himself,—originated there expressly for, and in relation to, him,—destined to be perfected by its action upon him, and, through him, upon the whole Eternal Universe.

And so does his own person ever become holier to him through the holiness of Knowledge, and Knowledge again holier through the holiness of his person. His whole life, however unimportant it may outwardly seem, has acquired an inward meaning,—a new significance. Whatever may or may not flow from it, it is still a god-like life. And in order to become a partaker in this life, neither the Student, nor the follower of any human pursuit, needs peculiar talents, but only a living and active Integrity of Purpose, to which the thought of our high vocation and of our allegiance to an Eternal Law, with all that flows from these, will be spontaneously revealed.

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## LECTURE V.

HOW THE INTEGRITY OF THE STUDENT MANIFESTS  
ITSELF.

THE lectures which I now resume have been begun under many unfavourable circumstances. In the first place, I have had to contemplate my subject from a point of view much higher than the common one,—from an elevation to which every Student may not have been prepared to rise. A newly-installed teacher in a University cannot be well acquainted with the extent to which scientific culture is really to be found there ; and yet it may naturally be assumed that the means of such culture long notoriously in existence have been already brought into use. But could I have known, even to certainty, that the public as a whole were not sufficiently prepared for such views, yet I must have treated my subject precisely in the way in which I have treated it, or else have never touched it at all. No man should linger about the surface of a thought, and repeat in another form what has been said an hundred times before : he who can do no more than this had better be silent altogether ; but he who can do otherwise will never hesitate to do so. Further, the individual parts of what is in itself a systematic whole, have been necessarily broken up by intervals of weeks ;

and in these public lectures, I could not well adhere strictly to the practice which I have generally adopted in all purely philosophical instruction,—i. e. before every new lecture to recapitulate the substance of the previous one in its connexion with the subject at large, and thus conduct the hearer once more over all that has gone before, and enable him again to grasp the spirit of the whole. Lastly, in these lectures my discourse is not, as in my other lectures, entirely free, descending to the familiar tones of conversation ; but is deliberately composed, and delivered as it is written down. This too, I conceive, is demanded by propriety,—that I should give these lectures all the outward polish which is possible in the only available time which I can spare from my other duties to devote to them. Public lectures are the free gifts of an academical teacher ; and he who is not ignoble would wish to make his gifts the best which he has it in his power to bestow.

The two last-mentioned circumstances are unavoidable, and nothing remains for you but to change them into favourable conditions for yourselves. The first is already obviated, for such of you as attend my private course, by my last lecture upon the distinction between the philosophical and historical points of view ; and I therefore consider you to be sufficiently prepared by that lecture for the reception of the views we shall now take of our present subject. To-day I shall, in the first place, survey the whole of that subject in the form to which you have been accustomed in the other course, and in that form exhibit and repeat it to you.

Any subject whatever which engages the attention of man, may be considered in a double aspect, and, as it were, with a double organ of sense ; either *historically*, by mere outward perception alone ; or *philosophically*, by inward spiritual vision ;—and in this double aspect may the object of our present inquiries—the Nature of the

Scholar—be surveyed. The historical view lays hold of existing opinions about the object, selects from among them the most common and prevalent, regards these as truth, but thus obtains mere illusion and not truth. The philosophical view regards things as they are in themselves,—*i. e.* in the world of pure thought, of which world God is the essential and fundamental principle,—and thus as God himself must have thought of them, could we attribute thought to him. Hence the inquiry,—What is the Nature of the Scholar?—as a philosophical question, means the following:—How must God conceive of the Nature of the Scholar, were He to conceive of it? In this spirit we have taken up the question, and in this spirit we have given it the following answer:—In the first place, God has conceived of the whole world, not only *as it now is*, but also *as it shall become* by its own spontaneous growth; moreover, *what it now is* lies in the original Divine Thought as the germ of an endless development,—and that a development proceeding from the *highest* that exists in it, namely, from the rational beings, by means of their own freedom. If, then, these rational beings are to realize, by their own free act, that Divine Thought of the world *as it ought to be*, they must before all things comprehend and know this Thought. Now this comprehension and knowledge of the original Divine Thought is unattainable by them, except on condition of a second Divine Thought;—this, namely,—that they to whom it is given should comprehend the Thought. But those who are conceived of in the Divine world-creative Thought as in part comprehending that original Divine Thought, are therein conceived of as Scholars; and, on the other hand, Scholars are possible and actually exist, where they do exist, only through the Divine Thought; and in that Divine Thought they are those who in part comprehend God in his original Thought of the world;—Scholars, namely, in so far as they have elevated themselves to that

Divine Thought by the various means to the attainment of the highest spiritual culture which exist in every age through the Divine Thought itself.

That Divine Thought of man as a Scholar must now itself take possession of him, and become his innermost soul, the true essential life dwelling in his life. This can happen in two ways, either *directly* or *indirectly*. If it lay hold of the man *directly*, it will form itself in him, spontaneously and without outward aid, into such a knowledge of the Divine Plan of the universe as can find a place in that individual; all his thoughts and impulses will of themselves take the most direct way to this end; whatever he does, prompted by this thought, is good and right, and must assuredly prosper, for it is an immediately *divine* act. This phenomenon we call Genius. In individual cases it can never be determined whether a man is, or is not, the subject of this immediate influence of the Divine Thought.

Or, the second and generally applicable case is when the Divine Thought of man as a Scholar lays hold of, inspires, and animates him *indirectly*. He finds himself necessitated to study by his position, which being determined without his assistance, he must regard as the purpose of God with him. He enters upon this vocation in consequence of the thought that it is the purpose of God in him and for him, with Integrity; for so we call the faith that God has a purpose in our being. By thus embracing his vocation not merely because *it is his*, but because *it is made his solely by the Divine Thought and purpose*, does his person as well as knowledge, which is his calling, become to him, before all other things, honourable and holy. It was this last-mentioned thought of which we treated particularly in our previous lecture, and which we purpose to follow out to-day.

This thought of the divinity and holiness of his vocation is the soul of his life, the impulse which produces all

that goes forth from him, the æther in which everything around him is bathed. His conduct and doings in the outward world must then harmonize with this thought. He needs no conscious effort of his individual will to bring his actions into harmony with this Divine Thought; he needs not to exhort, urge, or compel himself to this harmony, for he cannot possibly act otherwise: were he to endeavour to act in opposition to it, then he would need to persuade, to urge, to compel himself to that course, but without success.

Keep this steadfastly in view while we now pass from the *idea* of the true-minded Scholar, to its outward *manifestation*. Our Morality,—if it be Morality which we now propound to you,—our Morality does not enact laws; like all philosophy, it confines itself to nature and necessity, and only describes what does and does not flow from these. Could this Morality permit itself an external wish, and hope for its realization, it would be to strike the hard and barren rock which confines the fountain of good, so that its waters might spontaneously gush forth in their original purity to enrich the inward juices of the tree; but it would never desire with idle art to engraft thereon foreign fruits which cannot grow from such a stock. Hence I shall not even touch upon many things which might seem appropriate in this place; and upon many others which I do touch, I shall speak with reserve,—not as if I did not know that these things have other aspects under which they must be spoken of with greater severity, but because I shall here judge the Actual only by the holiness of the Ideal, which must on no account be dragged down to certain depths of degradation. Let who will be teacher of external Morality, we shall not here come into contact with the vulgar who find their motives to action in impulses from without.

We have already said that the acceptance of his vocation by the Student *as a Divine Thought*, makes his own

person holy and honourable to him. This view of his person will spontaneously manifest itself in his outward life, without direct thought and will upon his part, as sacred purity and freedom from all constraint;—not expressly recognised as such by himself, but because no other mode of life falls within his range of thought.

To describe his life in one word:—*he shuns the contact of the vulgar and ignoble*. Where these meet him, he draws back, like the well-known sensitive plant which shrinks from the touch of our finger. Where aught vulgar or ignoble is present, he is not to be found;—it has forced him away from it, before it came near to him.

*What is vulgar and ignoble?* So asks not he;—his inward sense prompts, in every case, an immediate answer. We put the question only that we may describe his higher life and delight ourselves in contemplating the picture.

Everything is vulgar and ignoble which degrades the fancy and blunts the taste for the Holy. Tell me what direction thy thoughts take,—not when with tightened hand thou constrainest them to a purpose,—but when in thy hours of recreation thou allowest them freely to rove abroad; tell me what direction they *then* take, where they naturally turn as to their most loved home, in what thou thyself in the innermost depths of thy soul findest thy chief enjoyment;—and then I will tell thee what are thy tastes. Are they directed towards the Godlike, to those things in nature and art wherein the Godlike most directly reveals itself in imposing majesty?—then is the Godlike not dreadful to thee but friendly; thy tastes lead thee to it,—it is thy most loved enjoyment. Do they, when released from the constraint with which thou hast directed them towards a serious pursuit, eagerly turn to brood over sensual pleasures, and find relaxation in the pursuit of these?—then hast thou a vulgar taste, thou must invite animalism into the innermost recesses of thy soul before it can seem well with thee there. Not so the noble Student.



His thoughts, when exhausted by exertion and toil, return in moments of relaxation to the Holy, the Great, the Sublime,—there to find repose, refreshment, and new energy for yet higher efforts. In nature as well as in the Arts, in Poetry and in Music, he seeks for the Sublime, and that in its great and imposing style. In Poetry for example, and in Oratory, he delights in the lofty voices of the ancient world; and, among the moderns, in that only which is produced and interpenetrated by the spirit of the ancients. Amusements in which the form of art is thrown around unmeaning emptiness, or even productions which appeal to the senses alone, and seek to please man by awakening and exciting his animal nature,—these have no charms for him. It is not necessary for him to consider beforehand how hurtful they might prove to him;—they do not please him, he can acquire no liking for them.

The man of mature age may indeed turn his thoughts to such perversions, that he may discover in themselves the evidence of their perversion, and so laugh at them: he is secure from their contagion. Not so the inexperienced youth; a secret voice calls him back from them altogether. The man of ripe years, who is no longer occupied in forming his Ideal, but now seeks to impress it on the actual world,—he has to deal with perversion, and must pursue it through all its doublings and turnings, into its most secret haunts; and he cannot do this without contemplating it. Our hatred of the vulgar becomes weakened and blunted by time, by the experience that the foolishness of the world suffers no abatement, and that almost the only certain advantage which can be gained from it is a laugh at its expense. But the youth cannot thus contemplate life,—he must not thus contemplate it. Every period of life has its peculiar calling. Good-natured laughter at vulgarity belongs to ripened age; the attitude of youth towards it ought to be that of stern aversion;—

and no one will be able in after years to look on it, and to laugh at it, and yet remain truly free and pure from its taint, who does not begin in youth by avoiding and hating it. Jestings is not suited for youth,—they know little of man who think so; where youth is wasted in sport, it will never attain to earnestness and true existence. The portion of youth in life is the Earnest and the Sublime;—only after such a youth does maturity attain to the Beautiful, and with it to sportful enjoyment of the Vulgar.

Further, everything is vulgar and ignoble which weakens spiritual power. I shall instance idleness;—to mention drunkenness or sensuality would be below the dignity of our subject. To live without active occupation,—to cast a dull and unmeaning gaze around us, will soon make our minds dull and unmeaning. This propensity to non-existence, to spiritual torpor, becomes a habit, a second nature; it surprises us in our studies or while listening to our teacher, creates a chasm in what would otherwise be a strictly connected whole, interposes itself here and there between ideas which we should connect together, so that we cannot comprehend even those which are most easy and intelligible. How this propensity should seize upon youth, may remain unaccountable even to men of the deepest penetration and judgment; in most cases it would be no delusion to seek its cause in some secret infirmity or vice. Youth is the age of newly-developed power; everywhere there are still impulses and principles destined to burst forth into new creations;—the peculiar character of youth is restless and uninterrupted activity; left to itself, it can never be without occupation. To see *it* slothful is the sight of winter in the time of spring, the blight and withering of a newly-opened flower. Were it naturally possible that this idleness should attempt to gain dominion over the true-minded and virtuous Student, he would never for a moment endure it. In the Eternal Thought of God his spiritual power has its source; it is

thus his most precious treasure, and he will not suffer it to fall into impotent rigidity before it has fulfilled its task. He watches unceasingly over himself, and never allows himself to rest in slothful inaction. It is only for a short period that this exertion of the will is needful; afterwards, its result continues of itself, for it is happily as easy,—or even more easy because it is more natural,—for man to accustom himself to industry than to idleness, and after a time passed in sustained activity it even becomes impossible for him to live without employment.

Lastly, everything is vulgar and ignoble which robs man of respect for himself, of faith in himself, and of the power of reckoning with confidence upon himself and his purposes. Nothing is more destructive of character than for man to lose all faith in his own resolutions, because he has so often determined, and again determined, to do that which nevertheless he has never done. Then he feels it necessary to flee from himself; he can no longer turn inward to his own thoughts, lest he be covered with shame before them; he shuns no society so much as his own, and deliberately gives himself up to dissipation and self-abandonment. Not so the upright Student: he abides by his purpose; whatever he has resolved to do, that he does, were it only because he has resolved to do it. For the same reason,—that he must be guided by his own purpose and his own insight,—he will not become a slave to the opinion of others, or even to common opinion. It is doubtless of all things most ignoble, when man,—out of too great complacency, which at bottom is cowardice and want of spirit, or out of indolence, which prevents him from thinking for himself and drawing the principles of his conduct from his own mind,—gives himself up to others, and relies upon them rather than upon himself. Such an one has indeed no *self* within him, and believes in no *self* within him, but goes as a suppliant to others, and entreats of them, one after another, to lend him their

personality. How can such an one regard himself as honourable and holy, when he neither knows nor acknowledges his own being?

I have said that the true-minded Student will not make himself a slave to common opinion; nevertheless he will accommodate himself to established customs where these are in themselves indifferent, simply because he honours himself. The educated youth grows up amid these customs; were he to cast them off, he must of necessity deliberately resolve to do so, and attract notice and attention to himself by his singularities and his offences against decorum. How should he whose time is occupied with weightier matters find leisure to ponder such a subject? Is the matter so important, and is there no other way in which he can distinguish himself, that he must take refuge in a petty peculiarity? "No!" answers the noble-minded Student; "I am here to comprehend weightier things than outward manners, and I will not have it appear that I am too awkward to understand these. I will not by such littleness cause myself and my class to be despised and hated by the uncharitable, or good-naturedly laughed at by those of better disposition; my fellow-citizens of other classes, or of my own,—my teachers, my superiors, shall have it in their power to honour and respect me as a man in every relation of human life."

And thus in all its relations does the life of the studious youth, who respects himself, flow on—blameless and lovely.

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## LECTURE VI.

## OF ACADEMICAL FREEDOM.

THE point which we had attained at the close of last lecture in our portraiture of the Student to whom his own person had become holy through the view of his vocation as a Divine Thought was the consideration of his outward manners. With this subject is connected an idea, frequently broached but seldom duly weighed,—the idea of the Academical Freedom of the Student. Much, indeed, of what has been said regarding this subject lies below the dignity of these lectures; and only in the sequel will we be able to find a way of elevating it to our own standard. Hence I not only cheerfully admit that the discussion of this idea, which I hope to accomplish to-day, is a mere episode in my general plan; I must even entreat you so to consider it. But to pass over altogether a subject to which one is led, almost unconsciously, in a review of the moral behaviour of the Student, I hold to be only less permissible because it is commonly avoided; and quite properly avoided, since it may so easily degenerate into polemics or satire from both of which we are secured by the tone of these lectures.

*What is Academic Freedom?* The answer to this question is our task for to-day. As every object may be looked upon from a double point of view,—partly historical,

partly philosophical,—so may the subject of our present inquiry. Let us in the first place survey it from the historical point of view,—*i. e.* let us try to discover what *they* meant by it who first allowed and introduced Academic Freedom.

Academies have always been considered as higher schools, in contrast with the lower preparatory schools, or *schools* properly so called;—hence the *student* at the academy as distinguished from the *pupil* at the school. The freedom of the former could thus only be understood to be emancipation from some constraint to which the latter was subject. The pupil, for example, was compelled to appear at his class in a particular kind of clothing, which in those days indicated the dignity of the *future* Scholar; he dared not neglect his fixed hours of study; and he had many other duties imposed upon him, which were then regarded as a sort of sacred service preparatory to the future spiritual office to which the Student was usually destined,—as for instance, choir-singing. In all these respects he was subject to strict and constant inspection;—the transgressor was often ignominiously punished; and indeed the teacher himself was both overseer and judge. Meanwhile Universities arose; and the outward, unlearned world would naturally be inclined to place them under regulations similar to those adopted in the only educational institutions with which it was familiar,—*i. e.* such as it saw in the schools. But this did not ensue,—and it was impossible that it should ensue. The founders of the first Universities were Scholars of distinguished talent and energy; they had fought their way through the surrounding darkness of their age to whatever insight they possessed; they were wholly devoted to their scientific pursuits and lived in them alone; they were encompassed by a brilliant reputation; in the circles of the great they were esteemed, honoured, consulted as oracles. They could never condescend to assume the position of over-

seers and pedagogues towards their hearers. Hence it was that, to a great extent, they held in contempt the teachers of the lower schools, from whose level they had raised themselves by their own ability; and for that reason they would neither practise, nor allow themselves to be distinguished by, those things which characterized the former. Their call assembled around them hundreds and thousands from all countries of Europe; the number of their hearers increased both their importance and their wealth; and it was not to be expected that they should expose to annoyance those who brought such benefits to them. Besides, how was it possible that young men, with whom they had but a passing acquaintance among hundreds of their fellows,—who in a few months, a year, or at most a few years, would return to distant homes,—should interest them closely, or engage their affections? Neither the moral demeanour nor the scientific progress of their hearers was of any consequence to them; and in these days a well-known Latin adage which speaks of “taking gold and sending home” very naturally arose. Academic Freedom had arisen, as emancipation from the constraints of school, and from all supervision on the part of the teacher over the morality, industry, or scientific progress of the Student, who was to him a hearer and nothing more.

This is one side of the picture. It may easily be imagined, and, where no very high standard of morality existed, it might very naturally occur, that these founders of the early universities did so think of this matter, and that a portion of this mode of thought has come down to us through past centuries. Let us now look at the other side.

What, then, would be the natural and reasonable *effect* of this idea of Academic Freedom on the minds of the Students? Could they have thought themselves highly honoured by this indifference on the part of their teacher

to their moral dignity and scientific improvement?—could they have demanded this indifference as a sacred right? I cannot believe it,—for such indifference amounts to disregard and contempt of the Student, and it is surely most offensive to tell him to his face by such conduct—“It is nothing to me what becomes of you.”—Or would it have been natural for them to conclude from the carelessness of others about their moral demeanour and regular application to study that therefore they themselves were entitled to neglect these things if they chose?—would they have acted reasonably had they regarded their Academic Freedom as only a right to be immoral and indolent? I cannot believe it. Much more reasonable would it have been, had they determined, because of this want of foreign superintendence, to exercise a stricter surveillance over themselves; if out of this freedom from outward constraint had arisen a clearer perception of their duty to urge themselves onward so much the more powerfully, to watch over themselves so much the more incessantly, and to look upon their Academic Freedom as liberty to do all that is right and becoming *by their own free determination*.

In short, the Academic Freedom of the Student, taken historically, according to its actual introduction into the world, exhibits in its origin, in its progress, and in what of it still exists, an unjust and indecent contempt for the whole Student-Class; and the Student who considers himself honoured by this Freedom, and lays claim to it as a right, has fallen into a most extraordinary delusion;—he is certainly ill informed, and has never seriously reflected on the subject. It may indeed become the well-disposed man of riper years, who is always a lover of life and youth, to turn aside from the awkwardness, the rudeness, and the many errors into which unbridled energy is apt to fall, goodnaturedly to laugh at these, and to think that wisdom will come with years; but the youth who feels himself honoured by this judgment, and even demands it



as his due, cannot be supposed to possess a very delicate sense of honour.

Let us now consider this subject—the Academic Freedom of the Student—in its philosophical sense ; i. e. *as it ought to be* ; as, under certain conditions, it may be ; and, what follows from that, how the actually existing Academic Freedom will be accepted by the Student who understands and honours his vocation. We shall open a way to the attainment of insight into this matter through the following principles :—

1. The external freedom of the Citizen is limited, in every direction and on all possible sides, by Law ; and the more perfect the Law the greater is the limitation,—and so it ought to be :—this is the proper office of Law. Hence, there is no sphere remaining in which the *inward* freedom and morality of the Citizen can be *outwardly* exhibited and demonstrated,—and there ought to be no such sphere. All that is to be done is commanded, under penalties ; all that is not to be done is forbidden, likewise under penalties. Every inward temptation to neglect what is commanded, or to do what is forbidden, is counterbalanced in the conscience of the Citizen by the certainty that should he give way to the temptation he must in consequence suffer such and such an amount of evil. Let it not be said,—“There is no existing legislation so all-comprehensive, nor is the sagacity and vigilance of any tribunal so infallible, that every offence is sure to meet its punishment.” I know this ; but as I said before, it *ought to be* thus, and this is what we should regularly and constantly approximate to. Legislation cannot calculate on the morality of men ; for its object—the freedom and security of all within their respective spheres—cannot be left to depend on anything so uncertain. For the just man there is indeed no *law* under any possible legislation ; he will commit no evil even although it were not forbidden, and whatsoever is good and right, that he will do

without reference to the command of authority; he is never tempted to crime, and therefore the idea of its attendant punishment never enters his mind. He is conscious of his virtue, and in this consciousness he has his reward within himself. But *externally* there is no distinction between him and the unjust man who is withheld from the commission of wrong and impelled to the performance of duty only by the threatenings of the law:—the former cannot do anything more or leave undone anything more than the latter, but only does or leaves undone the same things from a different motive which is not outwardly apparent.

2. Under this legislation, the Scholar and the unlearned person stand, and ought to stand, on common ground,—*as Citizens*. Both can raise themselves above the law in the same way,—by integrity of purpose;—but this is not calculated upon in either of them, and in neither can this integrity become apparent in the sphere of external legislation. And since the Scholar is further a member of a certain class in the State, and practises in it a certain calling, he lies also under the compulsory obligations belonging to that class and calling;—and here once more it cannot be apparent whether he fulfils his duties in this sphere from integrity of purpose or from fear of punishment; nor does it in any way concern the community by what motive he is actuated so that his duties are fulfilled. Lastly, in those regions which have either not yet been reached by an imperfect legislation, or which cannot be reached at all by an external legislation, he is still accompanied by the fear of disgrace;—and here again it cannot be seen whether he does his duty in consequence of this fear or from inward integrity of purpose.

3. But, besides these, there are yet other relations of the Scholar, with which external legislation cannot interfere, and in which it cannot watch over the fulfilment of his duty,—where the Scholar must be a law to himself

and hold himself to its fulfilment. In the Divine Idea he carries in himself the form of the future Age which one day must clothe itself with reality; and he must show an example and lay down a law to coming generations, for which he will seek in vain either in present or in past times. In every age that Idea clothes itself in a new form, and seeks to shape the surrounding world in its image; and thus do continually arise new relations of the world to the Idea, and a new mode of opposition of the former to the latter. It is the business of the Scholar so to interpose in this strife as to reconcile the activity with the purity of his Idea, its influence with its dignity. His Idea must not lie concealed within him; it must go forth and lay hold upon the world, and he is urged to this activity by the deepest impulses of his nature. But the world is incapable of receiving this Idea in its purity; on the contrary, it strives to drag down the Idea to the level of its own vulgar thought. Could he forego aught of this purity, his task would be an easy one; but he is filled with reverence for the Idea, and he can give up no part of its perfection. Hence he has before him the difficult task of reconciling these conditions. No law,—but why do I speak of *laws*?—no *example* of the fore-world or of his own time can reveal to him the means of this reconciliation,—for so surely as the Idea has assumed a new form in him has his case never before occurred. Even reflection, of itself, cannot give him the required point of union; for although, by reflection, the Idea itself in all its purity is revealed as the first point of the union, yet much more is needed before the second point—the mental condition of the surrounding world, and what may safely be expected from it—can be clearly and fully comprehended in the same thought. Well may those who have wrought most mightily upon their age have closed their career with the inward confession that their reliance on the spirit of their time had proved fallacious, that they

never supposed it to be so perverse and imbecile as they had found it, and that while they accurately estimated one of its aberrations and avoided it, another, hitherto unperceived, revealed itself. To succeed at all at any time, there is needed, in addition to reflection, a certain *tact*, which can only be acquired by early exercise and habit.

Farther, it is clear that in this matter—in doing everything possible to reconcile the opposition between the inward purity of the Idea and its external activity—the Scholar can be guided only by his own determination, can have no other judge but himself, and no motive external to himself. In this no stranger can judge him—in this no stranger can even wholly understand him, nor divine the deep purpose of his actions. In this region, so far is respect for the judgment of others from aiding his intention, that on the contrary he must here cast aside foreign opinion altogether, and look upon it as if it were not. He must be guided and upheld by his own purpose alone;—and truly he needs a mighty and immovable purpose to keep his ground against the temptations which arise even from his noblest inclinations. What is more noble than the impulse to action, to sway the minds of men, and to compel their thoughts to the Holy and Divine?—and yet this impulse may become a temptation to represent the Holy in a common and familiar garb for the sake of popularity, and so to desecrate it. What is more noble than the deepest reverence for the Holy, and disdain and abnegation of everything vulgar and opposed to it?—and yet this very reverence might tempt some one to reject his age altogether,—to cast it from him and avoid intercourse with it. A mighty and good will is needed to resist the first of these temptations, and the mightiest of all to overcome the second.

It is evident from these considerations, that, for his peculiar vocation, the Scholar needs shrewd practical

wisdom, a profound morality, strict watchfulness over himself, and a fine delicacy of feeling. It follows, that at an early age he ought to be placed in a position where it is possible and necessary for him to acquire this practical wisdom and delicacy of feeling, and that this cultivation of mind and character should be a peculiar element in the education of the future Scholar. Every Citizen, without exception, may cultivate these qualities, and must have it in his power to do so; legislation must leave this possibility open to him,—it is compelled to do so by its very nature. But it does not concern the legislature or the commonwealth whether the Citizen does or does not elevate himself to this vocation, because his calling will still remain within the range of external jurisdiction. But as for the Scholar, it is of importance to the Commonwealth, and to the whole Human Race, that he should both raise himself to the purest morality and acquire sound practical wisdom, since he is destined one day to enter a sphere where he absolutely leaves behind him all external judgment. The legislation *for him*, therefore, should not merely allow him the possibility of moral cultivation like every other Citizen, but, so far as in it lies, it should place him under the outward necessity of acquiring this cultivation.

And how can it do this? Evidently only by leaving him to his own judgment as to what is becoming, seemly, and appropriate, and to his own superintendence of himself. Is he to create for himself an independent sense of what is proper and becoming? How can he do so if the law accompanies him everywhere, and everywhere declares what he is to do and what not to do? Let the law prohibit those whom she can retain under her yoke from indulgence in everything which she wishes them to renounce; but, as for him who must one day leave her jurisdiction, let her trust him betimes as a noble and free man. The man of refined morality does not wait until

the law discovers a thing to be unseemly and directs its prohibition against it,—it would be ignominy for him to need such direction ;—he anticipates the decree, and relinquishes that in which the vulgar around him indulge without scruple, simply because it is unbecoming his higher nature. Give the Student room to place himself in this class of noble and free men by his own effort alone. Is he to unfold in himself a profound and powerful morality, a tender delicacy of sentiment, a deep sense of honour ? How can he do this surrounded by threats of punishment ? Let the law rather speak to him thus :—“ So far as I am concerned, thou mayest leave the path of right and follow after evil ; no other harm shall overtake thee but to be despised and scorned,—despised even by thyself when thou turnest thine eye inwards. If thou wilt venture on this peril, venture on it without fear.” Is the Human Race one day to confide to him its most important interests, and in his dealings with those interests is he to have confidence in himself ? How can men trust him when they have never proved him ?—how can he trust himself when he has never proved his own strength ? He who has not yet been faithful in small things cannot be entrusted with great things ; and he who has not been able to stand a trial before himself cannot without the basest dishonour accept an important trust. On these grounds we rest the claims of Academic Freedom,—of an extensive yet well-considered Academic Freedom.

In a Perfect State, the outward constitution of Universities would, in my opinion, be the following :—In the first place, the Students would be separated from other classes of the community pursuing other vocations, so that these classes might not be harassed or injured by the possible abuse of Academic Freedom, tempted to similar license or misled into hatred of the law while living under its rule by daily contact with a class free from its

restraints. The Students at these Universities would enjoy a high degree of freedom ;—instructions on Morality and Duty, and impressive pictures of a True Life, would indeed be laid before them ; they would be surrounded by good examples, and their teachers would not only be profound Scholars, but the *élite* of the best men in the nation ;—of compulsory laws, however, there would be very few. Let them freely choose either good or evil : the time of study is but the time of trial ; the time for the decision of their fate comes afterwards ;—and our arrangement would have this advantage, that unworthiness, where it existed, would be clearly recognised as such, and could no longer be concealed.

The present actual constitution of Universities is indeed by no means of this kind. It is doubtful whether Academic Freedom was every looked upon from the point of view from which we have described it, particularly whether it was ever so looked upon by those who gave the Universities their constitution. Academic Freedom has *actually* arisen in the way described in a former part of this lecture,—*i. e.* from disrespect towards the Student-class : and we may leave it undetermined by what influence the remnants of this system are now maintained ; for even were it admitted that the same disrespect for the class, which still exists although in a less degree, and perhaps want of opportunity to get rid of these relics of another age, were its only supports, yet this is of no moment to the true-minded Student, who judges of things not by their outward form but by their inward spirit. Whatever others may think of Academic Freedom, he, for his part, takes it in its true sense :—as a means by which he may learn to direct himself when outward precept leaves him,—watch over himself when no one else watches over him,—urge himself forward where there is no longer any outward impulse,—and thus train and strengthen himself for his future high vocation.





## LECTURE VII.

## OF THE FINISHED SCHOLAR IN GENERAL.

THE true-minded Scholar looks upon his vocation—to become a partaker of the Divine thought of the universe—as the purpose of God in him; and therefore both his person and his calling become to him, before all other things, honourable and holy; and this holiness shows itself in all his outward manifestations. Such is the point at which we have now arrived.

We have hitherto spoken of the Progressive Scholar—the Student; and we have seen how the sense of the dignity conferred upon his person by this exalted vocation expresses itself in his life. How his conviction of the holiness of Knowledge pervades and influences his studies we have already noticed in one of the earlier lectures, and it is not necessary to add anything to what we have said upon this point.

And it is the less necessary since this reverence for Knowledge which is felt by the Student manifests itself chiefly in the appropriate estimation and consecration of his *person* and is therein exhausted; while it is quite otherwise in the Finished Scholar. In the Progressive Scholar, that which he strives after—the Idea—has yet to acquire a form and an independent life :—these it does

not yet possess. As yet the Student does neither immediately possess, nor is he thoroughly penetrated by, the Idea; he reverences it only at a distance, and can comprehend it only by means of his personality, as the standard to which he ought to raise himself, the spirit by which he ought to be swayed. He can as yet do nothing directly in its service; he can only live for it indirectly, by consecrating and devoting his person to its use as its appointed instrument; preserving himself pure in sense and spirit because all impurity would mar and disqualify him for that function; by giving himself up entirely to its influence and pursuing and executing with unwearied industry everything which may become a means or opportunity of the Idea unfolding itself within him. It is otherwise with the Finished Scholar. As surely as he is such, the Idea has already commenced its proper and independent life within him; his *personal life* has now actually passed into the *Life of the Idea*, and is therein absorbed;—an absorption of self in the Idea which was only striven after by the Student. As surely as he is a perfect Scholar, so surely is there now no longer in him any thought of self, but his whole thought is henceforth absorbed in the thought of the Idea. And thus the distinction which we originally made between the holiness of his *person* and the holiness of his *vocation* now becomes a point of transition from the contemplation of the Progressive to that of the Finished Scholar,—the portraiture of whom it is now my purpose to place beside that of the Progressive Scholar.

Hitherto we have considered the Progressive Scholar chiefly in the character of a Student at a University; and these two ideas have been almost constantly associated together in our previous lectures. Now, for the first time, when we have to accompany the Student from the Academy into Life, we must call to mind that the studies

and character of the Progressive Scholar are not necessarily completed with his residence at the University; nay, further on, we shall even perceive a ground upon which we may say that, properly speaking, his studies have their true beginning only after his academic course has closed. This much, however, remains true, as the sure result of what has been already said,—that the youth who during his residence at the University is not *at least* inspired with respect for the holiness of Knowledge, and does not *at least* learn to honour his own person to such an extent as not to render it unworthy of that high vocation, will never *afterwards* attain to any true sense of the dignity of Knowledge; and whatever part he may be called on to play in life, he will take to it as a common handicraft and with the sentiment of an hireling who has no other motive to his labour than the pay he is to receive for it. To say anything more of such an one lies beyond the boundaries of our present subject.

But the Student who is penetrated with the conviction that the essential purpose of his studies will be defeated unless the Idea acquire an intrinsic form and independent life within him, and that in the highest perfection, —*he* will by no means lay aside his studies and scientific labours when he leaves the University. Even if he be compelled by outward necessity to enter upon a secular employment, he will devote to Knowledge all the time and energy he can spare from that employment, and will neglect no opportunity which presents itself of attaining a higher culture. The discipline of his faculties in the pursuit of learning will be profitable to him even in the transaction of his ordinary business. Amid the brilliant distinctions of office, and even in mature age, he will restlessly strive and labour to master the Idea, never resigning the hope of becoming greater than he now is, so long as strength permits him to indulge it. Without this untiring effort, much true Genius would be wholly

lost, for scientific talent usually unfolds itself more slowly the higher and purer its essential nature, and its clear development waits for mature years and manly strength.

The Student who is penetrated with deep respect for the holiness of the Scholar's vocation, will be guided by that respect in his choice of a civil profession ; and, *particularly*, in the province of learning, if he do not feel a profound conviction of his ability to fulfil its highest duties, he will choose a subordinate occupation, restrained from assumption by his reverence for the dignity of Knowledge. But a subordinate Scholar-occupation is one in which the ends to be attained have been prescribed by some other intellect possessed with a knowledge of the Idea, and in which the capacities which have been acquired through study pursued for the attainment of the Idea, are employed only as means to fulfil those purposes which have thus been prescribed from without. His person is thus not degraded into a passive instrument ; he is for ever secured against that by the general view he takes of human life and its significance ;—he serves God alone in spirit and in sense ; and, under the guidance of his superiors, whom he leaves to answer for the direction which they give to his actions and their results, he promotes God's purposes with men, which must embrace all forms of human activity. Thus does he proceed in his choice of a secular employment as surely as he has been inspired in his youth with respect for the dignity of the peculiar vocation of the Scholar. To undertake such an employment without the consciousness of possessing the needful power and cultivation is to profane it, and manifests a want both of delicacy and of principle. And it is impossible that he should fall into error on this point ; for if he has passed through his academic course in a creditable manner, then he has certainly acquired, in some degree, a perception of what is worthy, and has obtained a standard by which he can take his own intellectual dimensions. If a con-

scientious course of study at a University secured no other advantage than that of presenting to youth a picture of the dignified calling of the Scholar as a model for life, and of repelling from this sphere those who are not endowed with the requisite power, such a course would, on account of this advantage alone, be of the utmost importance to the Student.

We have thus generally described the nature of a subordinate Scholar-occupation. It does not require in him who pursues it the immediate possession of the Idea, but only that knowledge which is acquired in striving after such possession. It is to be understood that in this again there are higher and lower grades, according as the occupation requires a wider or narrower range of knowledge,—and that, in this respect too, the conscientious man will not undertake anything which exceeds his powers. It is unnecessary to describe these subordinate Scholar-occupations in detail. The higher and peculiar calling of the Scholar may be described so as to exhaust all its particular forms, and it is then easy to draw this consequence :—“ All those pursuits which are usually followed by educated men, but which do not find a place in this all-comprehensive delineation of the higher calling of the Scholar, but are excluded from it, are subordinate Scholar-occupations.” We have therefore only now to lay before you this perfect delineation.

In our first lecture we have already definitely characterized the life of him in whom Learned Culture has fulfilled its end :—his life is itself the creative and formative life of the Divine Idea in the world. In the same place we have said that this life may manifest itself in two forms ;— either in actual external Being and Action, or only in Idea ; which two distinct modes of manifestation together constitute the peculiar vocation of the Scholar. The first class comprehends all those who are called to lead on human affairs, through their own strength

and according to their own idea, to new and progressive harmony with each succeeding age; who, originally, as the highest free *Leaders* of men, direct their social relations, and the relation of the whole to passive nature;—not those only who stand in the higher places of the earth, as kings, or the immediate councillors of kings, but all without exception who possess the right and calling, either by themselves or in concert with others, to think, judge, and resolve independently concerning the original disposal of these affairs. The second class embraces the *Scholars*, properly and pre-eminently so called, whose vocation it is to maintain among men the *knowledge* of the Divine Idea, to elevate it unceasingly to greater clearness and precision, and thus to transmit it from generation to generation, ever growing brighter in the freshness and glory of renewed youth. The first class act directly upon the world,—they are the immediate point of contact between God and reality;—the second are the mediators between the pure spirituality of thought in the God-head, and the material energy and influence which that thought acquires through the instrumentality of the first class; they are the trainers of the first class,—the enduring pledge to the human race that the first class shall never fail from among men. No one can belong to the first class without having already belonged to the second,—without always continuing to belong to it.

The second class of Scholars is again separated into subdivisions according to the manner in which they communicate to others their conceptions of the Idea. Either their immediate object is, by direct and free personal communication of their ideal conceptions, to cultivate in future Scholars a capacity for the reception of the Idea, so that their pupils may afterwards lay hold of it and comprehend it for themselves:—and then they are educators of Scholars, *Teachers* in the higher or lower schools;—or, they propound their conceptions of the Idea, in a

complete and finished form, to those who have already cultivated the capacity to comprehend it. This is at present done by books,—and they are thus—*Authors*.

The classes which we have now enumerated, whose several occupations are not necessarily portioned out to different individuals, but may readily be united in one and the same person, comprise all true and proper Scholars, and exhaust the whole vocation of those in whom Learned Culture has fulfilled its end. Every other function, whatever name it may bear, which the *Educated Man* \* (who may be distinguished by this title from the True Scholar) is called upon to fulfil, is a subordinate Scholar-occupation. The Educated Man continues in it, only because he has not by his studies been able to attain to the rank of the True Scholar, but nevertheless finds here a useful purpose to which the capacities and knowledge which he has acquired may be applied. It is by no means the object of Learned Culture to train subalterns, and no one should study with a view to the office of a subaltern; for then it may happen that he shall not attain even to that rank. Only because it was certain that a majority of Students would fall short of their proposed destination, have subordinate occupations been set apart for them. The subaltern receives the direction of his activity from a foreign intellect; he must exercise judgment in the choice of his *means*, but in respect of the *end* only the most punctual obedience. The acknowledged sacredness of the peculiar vocation of the Scholar restrains every honest 'Educated Man' who is not conscious of the possession of the Idea, from undertaking it, and constrains him to content himself with a subordinate office:—this and nothing more have we to say of him, for his business is no true Scholar-employment. We leave him to the

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\*Germ. "*Studirte*," one who has studied,—contrasted with "*Studirende*," one who studies. We have no single equivalent for "*Studirte*" in English.

—TRANSLATOR.

sure guidance of that general Integrity and faithfulness to Duty which already during his studies have become the innermost principle of his life.

Such an one, by *renunciation* of the peculiar calling of the Scholar, shows that he looks upon it as sacred; he also, who with honesty and a good conscience *accepts* this calling in any of its forms, shows by his actions and by his whole life that he looks upon it as sacred. How this recognition of the Holy specially manifests itself in each particular department of the Scholar's vocation, as these have now been set forth,—of this we shall speak in succession in the subsequent lectures. To-day we shall confine ourselves to showing how it manifests and reveals itself *in general*—*i. e.* to that form of its manifestation which belongs in common to all departments of the Scholar's vocation.

The true-minded Scholar will not admit of any life and activity within him except the immediate life and activity of the Divine Idea. This unchangeable principle pervades and determines all his inward thoughts;—it also pervades and determines all his outward actions. With respect to the first,—as he suffers no emotion within him that is not the direct emotion and life of the Divine Idea which has taken possession of him, so is his whole life accompanied by the indestructible consciousness that it is at one with the Divine Life,—that in him and by him God's work shall be achieved and His Will accomplished; he therefore reposes on that Will with unspeakable love, and with the immovable conviction that it is right and good. Thus does his thought become holy, enlightened, and religious; blessedness arises within him,—and in it, abiding joy, peace and power,—as these may in like manner be acquired and enjoyed by the unlearned, and even the lowliest among men, through true devotion to God and honest performance of duty viewed as the Will of God. Hence these are no exclusive property of the Scholar, but are noticed

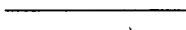


here only with the view that he too may become a partaker in this religious aspect of life, and that by the appointed way.

This principle pervades the conduct of the True Scholar. He has no other purpose in action but to express his Idea, and embody the truth which he recognises in word or work. No personal regard, either for himself or others, can impel him to do that which is not required by this purpose,—no such regard can cause him to neglect anything which is demanded by this purpose. His person, and all personality in the world, have long since vanished from before him, and entirely disappeared in his effort after the realization of the Idea. The Idea *alone* impels him; where it does not move him, he rests and remains inactive. He does nothing with precipitation, hurried forward by disquietude and restlessness; these may well be symptoms of unfolding power, but they are never to be found in conjunction with true, developed, mature and manly strength. Until the Idea stands before him clear and breathing, finished and perfect even to word or deed, nothing moves him to action; the Idea rules him entirely, governs all his powers, and employs all his life and effort. To its manifestation he devotes his whole personal being without reserve or intermission, for he looks upon his life as only the instrument of the Idea.

Would that I could make myself intelligible to you,—would that I could persuade you,—touching this one point which we now approach on every side!—Whatever man may do, so long as he does it from himself as a finite being, by himself, and through his own counsel,—it is vain, and will sink to nothing. Only when a foreign power takes possession of him, and urges him forward, and lives within him in room of his own energy, does true and real existence first enter into his life. This foreign power is ever the power of God. To look up to it for counsel,—implicitly to follow its guidance,—is the only

true wisdom in every employment of human life, and therefore most of all in the highest occupation of which man can partake,—the vocation of the True Scholar.



## LECTURE VIII.

## OF THE SCHOLAR AS RULER.

HE in whom Learned Culture has actually accomplished its end,—the attainment and possession of the Idea,—shows, by the manner in which he regards and practises the calling of the Scholar, that his vocation is to him, before all other things, honourable and holy. The Idea, in its relation to the progressive improvement of the world, may be expressed—either, *first*, in actual life and conduct; or, *secondly*, in ideas only. It is expressed in the first mode by those who, as the highest free *Leaders* of men, originally guide and order their affairs:—their relations with each other, or the legal condition,—and their relation to passive nature, or the dominion of reason over the irrational world;—who possess the right and calling, either by themselves or in concert with others, to think, judge, and resolve independently concerning the actual arrangement of these relations. We have to speak to-day of the worthy conception and practice of this vocation. As we have already taken precautions against misunderstanding by a strict definition of our meaning, we shall, for brevity's sake, term those who practise this calling—*Rulers*.

The business of the Ruler has been described in our early lectures,—and so definitely, that no further analysis

is necessary for our present purpose. We have now only to show what capacities and talents must be possessed by the true Ruler,—by what estimate of his calling, and what mode of practising it, he proves that he looks upon it as sacred.

He who undertakes to guide his Age and order its constitution, must be exalted above it,—must not merely possess an historical knowledge of it, but must thoroughly understand and comprehend it. The Ruler possesses, in the first place, a living and comprehensive idea of that relation of human life which he undertakes to superintend ; —he knows what is its essential nature, meaning, and purpose. Further, he perfectly understands the changing and adventitious forms which it may assume in reality without prejudice to its essential nature. He knows the particular form which it has assumed at the present time, and through what new forms it must be led nearer and nearer to its unattainable Ideal. No part of its present form is, in his view, necessary and unchangeable, but is only an incidental point in a progression by which it is constantly rising towards higher perfection. He knows the Whole of which that form is a part, and of which every improvement of it must still remain a part ; and he never loses sight of this Whole in contemplating the improvement of individual parts. This knowledge gives to his inventive faculty the means of accomplishing the improvements he may devise ; the same knowledge secures him from the mistake of disorganizing the Whole by supposed improvements of individual parts. His eye always combines the part with the Whole, and the idea of the latter with its actual manifestation in reality.

He who can not look upon human affairs with this unfettered vision is never a Ruler, whatever station he may occupy,—nor can he ever become one. Even his mode of thought, his faith in the unchangeableness of the present, places him in a state of subordination, makes him

an instrument of him who created that arrangement of things in the permanence of which he believes. This frequently happens; and thus all times have not actual Rulers. Great spirits of the fore-world often rule over succeeding Ages long after their death, by means of men who in themselves are nothing, but are only continuations and prolongations of other lives. Very often too this is no misfortune; but those who desire to penetrate human life with deeper insight ought to know that these are not true Rulers, and that under them the Age does not move forward, but rests,—perhaps to gain strength for new creations.

The Ruler, I said, thoroughly comprehends that relation of human life which he undertakes to superintend; he knows the essential character and idea of all its component parts, and he looks upon it as the absolute will of God with man. It is not to him a means to the attainment of any end whatever, nor in particular to the production of human happiness; but he looks upon it as in itself an end,—as the absolute mode, order, and form in which the human race should live.

Thus, in the first place, is his occupation ennobled and dignified in accordance with the nobility of his mode of thought. To direct his whole thoughts and efforts,—to devote his whole life to the accomplishment of such a purpose as this:—that mortal men may fall out as little as possible with each other in the short span of time during which they have to live together, that they may have somewhat to eat and drink, and wherewithal to clothe themselves, until they make way for another generation, which again shall eat, and drink, and clothe itself,—this business would appear to a noble mind a vocation most unworthy of its nature. The Ruler, after our idea of him, is secure against this view of his calling. Through the idea of human life by which he is animated, the Race among whom he practises his vocation is like-

wise ennobled. He who has constantly to keep in view the infirmities and weaknesses of men, who has to watch their daily course, and who has frequent opportunities of observing their general meanness and corruption, and who sees nothing more than these, cannot be much disposed to honour or to love them; and indeed those powerful spirits who have filled the most prominent places among men, but have not been penetrated by true religious feeling, have at no time been known to bestow much honour or respect upon their Race. The Ruler, after our idea of him, in his estimate of mankind looks beyond that which they are *in the actual world*, to that which they are *in the Divine Idea*—to that which therefore they may be, ought to be, and one day assuredly will be; and he is thus filled with reverence for a Race called to so high a destiny. Love is not required of him; nay, if you think deeper of it, it is even a kind of arrogance for a Ruler to presume to *love* the whole Human Race, or even his own nation,—to assure it of his love, and, as it were, make it dependent on his kindness. A Ruler such as we have described is free from such presumption: his reverence for humanity, as the image and protected child of God, does more than overpower it.

He looks upon his vocation as the Divine Will with regard to the Human Race; he looks upon its practice as the Divine Will with regard to himself—the present individual; he recognises in himself one of the first and immediate servants of God,—one of the material organs through which God enters into communion with reality. Not that this thought excites him to vain self-exaltation;—he who is penetrated by the Idea has in it lost his personality, and he has no longer remaining any feeling of self, except that of employing his personal existence truly and conscientiously in his high vocation. He knows that it is not of himself that he has this intuition of the Idea and the power which accompanies it, but that he

has received them; he knows that he can add nothing to what has been given him except its honest and conscientious use; he knows that the humblest of men can do this in the same degree as he himself can do it, and that the former has the same value in the sight of God which he himself has in his own station. All outward rank and elevation above other men which have been given, not to his person but to his dignity, and which are but conditions of the possession of this dignity,—these will not dazzle him who knows how to value higher and more substantial distinctions. In a word :—he looks upon his calling, not as a friendly service which he renders to the world, but as his absolute personal duty and obligation, by the performance of which alone he obtains, maintains, and justifies his personal existence, and without which he would pass away into nothing.

This view of his calling as the Divine Will in him, supports and justifies him before himself in an important difficulty, which must very often occur to him who conscientiously follows this vocation, and makes his step firm, determined, and unwavering. In no circumstances indeed should the individual, *considered strictly as an individual*, be sacrificed to the Whole; however unimportant the individual, however great the Whole and the interest of the Whole which is at stake. But the parts of the Whole must often be placed in peril on account of the Whole;—peril by which, and not by the Ruler, its victims are selected from among individual men. How could a Ruler who recognises no other destiny for the Human Race but happiness here below, and looks upon himself only as the kind guardian of that happiness,—how could he answer before his conscience for the danger and possible sacrifice of any individual victim, since that individual must have had as good a claim to happiness as any other? How could such a Ruler, for example, answer before his conscience for determining upon a just war,—a war

undertaken for the support of the national independence threatened either immediately or prospectively?—for the victims who should fall in such a war, and for the manifold evils thereby inflicted on humanity? The Ruler who sees a Divine Purpose in his vocation stands firm and immovable before all these doubts, overtaken by no unmanly weakness. Is the war just?—then it is the will of God that there should be war; and it is God's will with him that he resolve upon it. Whatever may fall a sacrifice to it, it is still the Divine Will that chooses the sacrifice. God has the most perfect right over all human life and human happiness, for both have proceeded from him and both return to him; and in his creation nothing can be lost.—So also in the business of legislation. There must be a general law, and this law must be administered absolutely without exception. The universality of the law cannot be given up for the sake of one individual who thinks his case so peculiar that he is aggrieved by the strict enforcement of the law, even although his allegation may have some truth in it. Let him bring the small injustice which is done to himself as an offering to the general support of justice among men.

The Divine Idea, ruling in the Ruler, and through him moulding the relations of his age and nation, now becomes his sole and peculiar Life;—which indeed is the case with the Idea under any form in which it may enter the soul of man;—he cannot have, nor permit, nor endure, any Life within him except this Life. He comprehends this Life with clear consciousness as the immediate life and energy of God within him, as the fulfilment of the Divine Will in and by his person. It is unnecessary to repeat the proofs which we have already adduced in general, that through this consciousness his thought is sanctified, transfigured, and bathed in the Divinity. Every man needs Religion,—every man may acquire it,—and with it every man may obtain Blessedness;—most of all, as we have



seen above, does the Ruler need it. Unless he clothe his calling in the light of Religion, he can never pursue it with a good conscience. Without this, nothing remains for him but either thoughtlessness and a mere mechanical fulfilment of his vocation, without giving account to himself of its reasonableness or justice ; or if not thoughtlessness,—then want or principle, obduracy, insensibility, hatred and contempt of the Human Race.

The Idea, thus moulded on the Divine Life, lives in his life instead of his own personality. It alone moves him,—nothing else in its room. His personality has long since disappeared in the Idea,—how then can any motive now arise from it ? He lives in *honour*, transfused in God to work His Eternal Will,—how then can *fame*, the judgment of mortal and perishable men, have any significance for him ? Devoted to the Idea with his whole being,—how can he ever seek to pamper or to spare himself ? His person,—all personality,—has disappeared in the Divine Idea of universal order. That order is his ever-present thought ; only through it does he conceive of individual men : hence neither friend nor foe, neither favourite nor adversary, finds a place before him ; but all alike, and he himself with them, are lost for ever in the thought of the independence and equality of all.

The Idea alone moves him,—and where it does not move him, there he has no life, but remains quiescent and inactive. He will never rouse himself to energy and labour merely that something may come to pass, or that he may gain a reputation for activity ; for his desire is not merely that something may come to pass, but that the will of the Idea may be accomplished. Until it speaks, he too is silent ;—he has no voice but for it. He does not respect old things because they are old ;—but as little does he desire novelty for its own sake. He looks for what is *better* and more perfect than the present ; until this rises before him clearly and distinctly,—so long as change would

lead only to difference, not improvement,—he remains inactive, and concedes to the old the privilege it derives from ancient possession.

In this way does the Idea possess and pervade him without intermission or reserve, and there remains nothing either of his person or his life that does not burn a perpetual offering before its altar. And thus is he the most direct manifestation of God in the world.

That there is a God, is made evident by a very little serious reflection upon the outward world. We must end at last by resting all existence which demands an extrinsic foundation, upon a Being the fountain of whose life is within Himself; by allying the fugitive phenomena which colour the stream of time with ever-changing hues to an eternal and unchanging essence. But in the life of Divine Men the Godhead is manifest in the flesh, reveals itself to immediate vision, and is perceptible even to outward sense. In their life the unchangeableness of God manifests itself in the firmness and intrepidity of human will which no power can force from its destined path. In it the essential light of the Divinity manifests itself in human comprehension of all finite things in the One which endures for ever. In it the energy of God reveals itself, not in directly surrounding the Human Race with happiness—which is not its object—but in ordering, elevating, and ennobling it. A Godlike life is the most decisive proof which man can give of the being of a God.

It is the business of all mankind to see that the conviction of the Divine Existence, without which the very essence of their own being passes away into nothing, shall never perish and disappear from among them;—above all, it is the business of the Rulers as the highest disposers of human affairs. It is not their part to bring forward the *theoretical* proof from human reason, or to regulate the mode in which this proof shall be adduced by the second class of Scholars; but the *practical* proof, by their own

lives, and that in the highest degree, devolves peculiarly upon them. If firm and intrepid will,—if clear and all-comprehending vision,—if a spirit of order and nobility speak to us in their conduct, then in their works do we see God face to face, and need no other proof:—God is, we will say,—for they are, and He in them.

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## LECTURE IX.

## OF THE SCHOLAR AS TEACHER.

BESIDES those possessors of the Idea, whose business it is, by guiding and ordering the affairs of men, to introduce the Idea immediately into life, there is yet another class—those, namely, who are peculiarly and by preëminence called Scholars, who manifest the Idea directly in spiritual conceptions, and whose calling it is to maintain among men the conviction that there is, in truth, a Divine Idea accessible to human thought, to raise this Idea unceasingly to greater clearness and precision, and thus to transmit it from generation to generation fresh and radiant in ever-renewed youth.

This latter Vocation again divides itself into two very different callings, according to the immediate purpose in view, and the mode of its attainment. Either the minds of men are to be trained and cultivated to a capacity for receiving the Idea; or the Idea itself is to be produced in a definite form for those who are already prepared for its reception. The *first* calling has particular men for its primary and immediate objects;—in it the only use which is made of the Idea is as a means of training and cultivating these men so that they may become capable of comprehending the Idea by their own independent effort. It follows that, in this calling, regard must be had solely

to the men who are to be cultivated, the degree of their cultivation, and their capacity of being cultivated ; and that an influence is valuable here only in so far as it may be efficiently applied to those individuals upon whom it is specially directed. The *second* has for its immediate object the Idea itself, and the fashioning of the Idea into a distinct conception, and has no reference whatever to any subjective disposition or capacity of men ; it has no one specially in view as peculiarly called to or fitted for the reception of the Idea in the form thus given to it ; the work itself settles and determines who shall receive it, and it is addressed only to those who can receive it. The first object will be best and most fitly attained by the verbal discourses of the Teacher ; the second by literary writings.

Both these callings belong to the vocation of the Scholar in its proper and highest sense, and not to the subordinate Scholar-occupations, which devolve upon a man only because he has not attained the proper end of his studies. He who prosecutes his studies conscientiously, and so acquires a conviction of the importance of the vocation of the Scholar, but yet does not feel within himself a clear consciousness of the capacity to fulfil it, shows that he recognises its sacred character by not undertaking it ;—he who does undertake it, manifests the same conviction by exercising it worthily. In the next lecture we shall speak of the true Author ; to-day we shall discourse of the upright Teacher of future Scholars.

The Teachers and Educators of those who devote themselves to the occupation of the Scholar may be divided into two classes :—they are Teachers either in the lower Schools of learning, or in the higher or Universities. Not without deliberation do I class the Teachers in the lower Schools among true and not subaltern Scholars, and therefore demand of them that they attain possession of the Idea, and be penetrated by it,—if not with perfect

light, yet with living warmth. He who is destined to study will, even while a boy, surround himself invisibly with the Idea and with its sanctity, and bathe his whole being in its influence. Nothing from which any ideal result may one day unfold itself will be pursued by him as a piece of vulgar handicraft, or used only as a means to the attainment of a partial object. Happily the subjects of study which are peculiar to these Schools are of such a nature as to elevate him who pursues them thoroughly and conscientiously, and through him those who are committed to his care, above vulgar modes of thought ;—did but the outward circumstances of the Teacher answer to his dignity, and his independence and station in society correspond with his most honourable calling. The *subjects* of school-instruction, I said. In a fundamental study of Language, pursued, as it must be, amid old modes of speech, far removed from our habits of thought, a deeper insight into ideas is gained ; and from the works of the Ancients, by means of which this study is pursued, an excellent and ennobling spirit speaks to the youthful mind. For this reason, the Teacher in these lower Schools should be a partaker of the Idea, because it is his task imperceptibly to familiarize the youth with the high and noble before he is able for himself to distinguish these from the vulgar,—to accustom him to these, and to estrange him from the low and ignoble. Thus guarded in his early years, and thus prepared for higher progress, the youth enters the University. Here, for the first time, can he be clearly taught, and led to comprehend and acknowledge—that which I have endeavoured to utter to you in these lectures,—that our whole race has its only true existence in the Divine Thought,—that its only worth consists in its harmony with this Divine Thought,—and that the class of Scholars has therein an existence only to the end that they may comprehend this Divine Thought and imprint it on the world. At the University

the Student first receives a clear idea of the nature and dignity of that vocation to which his life has been devoted beforehand. He *must* obtain that clear idea here :—the Teacher in the lower Schools may look forward to another education for his pupils, and counts upon that ; but the Academic Teacher has no higher instruction to calculate upon except that which the Progressive Scholar may bestow upon himself,—to the capacity for which, however, the Teacher must train him so that he may have it in his power to become his own instructor ;—once released from the lecture-room he is committed to himself and to the world. Herein, therefore, lies the characteristic difference between the lower and the higher Schools,—that at the lower School the youth has only a presentiment of his vocation, while at the University he clearly comprehends and recognises it ;—and from this distinction the specific duties of the Teacher in the respective institutions may easily be deduced.

The Academic Teacher, of whom chiefly we have to speak, ought to train the Student who has been made acquainted with the nature and dignity of his calling, to the capacity of receiving the Idea, and to the power of developing it anew, and giving it a form peculiar to himself :—he should do *all* this *if he can*. But in every case, and *unconditionally*, he must fill the Student with respect and veneration for the proper calling of the Scholar. The first object of all study,—to lay hold of the Idea from a new and peculiar point of view, is by no means to be given up either by the Student himself, or by the Teacher on his behalf ; but it is nevertheless possible that it may not be attained, and both must reconcile themselves beforehand to this possibility. Should this first object of study remain unaccomplished, the Student may still become a useful, worthy, upright man. But the second object of study,—that he acquire a reverence for the Idea during his efforts to attain it,—that on account of this reverence



he forbear from undertaking anything for which he does not know himself to be qualified,—that he consecrate himself to the service of the Idea, at least by permanently cherishing this reverence for what is unattainable by him, and contributing to the extent of his ability to maintain such a reverence among men;—this object is never to be relinquished; for were *it* not attained, then even through his wasted study would his dignity as a man be lost, and he would sink the lower in consequence of the height to which he ought to have risen. The attainment by the Student of the first object of study is, to the Academic Teacher, a *conditional* duty,—conditioned by the possibility of its fulfilment. The attainment of the second he must ever look upon and acknowledge as his *unconditional* duty, which he must never deliberately relinquish. It may indeed happen that he cannot accomplish even this, but he must never admit a doubt of its ultimate attainment.

What, then, can the Academic Teacher do for the attainment of this second object? I answer, he can do nothing for it exclusively; he can do nothing else than that which he must do for the first and higher object by itself. In pursuing and attaining the second, he is advancing to the attainment of the first. Would he inculcate upon his pupils reverence for Knowledge?—they will not believe him if he do not himself exhibit in his whole life the profound reverence which he recommends to them. Would he thoroughly impress them with this reverence?—let him teach it, not in words only, but in deeds; let him be himself the living example, the abiding illustration, of the principles which he desires them to accept as the guides of their life. He has described to them the Nature of the Scholar-vocation as a manifestation of the Divine Idea,—he has told them that this Idea entirely pervades the True Scholar, and establishes its peculiar life, in place of his own, within him;—

perhaps he has even told them by what precise way he himself, for his part, has to fulfil the purposes of Knowledge, and in what his peculiar calling, as an Academic Teacher, consists. Let him show himself before them in his proper and essential character,—as devoted to his vocation,—as a perpetual offering before its altar,—and they will learn to comprehend that Knowledge is a sacred thing.

The *duties* of the Academic Teacher are not indeed changed by this aspect of his vocation; for, as we have said, he can do nothing for the attainment of the latter object but what he must have done for the former and higher by itself;—but his own view of his calling becomes thereby more confirmed and immovable. Although it should not become directly visible and evident to him that he has attained his peculiar object,—of leading those who are entrusted to his care from mere passive dependence to spontaneous activity, from the dead letter to the living spirit;—yet will he not suppose that he has laboured in vain. To Academic Study must succeed that special study to which the first is but a preparative. He can never know that he has not roused a powerful incentive to this study,—that he has not thrown into the soul some sparks of love and devotion to it which, though now unapparent, will blaze forth at the proper time. Even in the worst possible event,—that he has not accomplished even so much as this,—his activity has still another object; and if he has done something for it, his labour has not been utterly lost. If he has, at least, upheld, and in some breasts quickened or renewed, the faith that there is *something* worthy of the reverence of men; that by industry and faithfulness men may elevate themselves to the contemplation of this object of reverence, and in this contemplation become strong and blessed; if some have only had their work made holier in their eyes, so that they may approach it with somewhat less levity than

before; if he can venture to hope that some have left his hall, if not precisely with more light, yet with more modesty than they entered it;—then he has not laboured wholly in vain.

We said, that the Academic Teacher becomes an example of reverence for Knowledge, by showing himself to be thoroughly and entirely penetrated by and devoted to his calling,—an instrument consecrated to its service.

What does this calling demand? Is the Academic Teacher to prepare men for the reception of the Idea?—then he must himself know the Idea, have attained it, and be possessed by it; otherwise how could he recognise in others the capacity for receiving that to which he himself is a stranger? He must first have cultivated this capacity in himself, and have a distinct and clear consciousness of possessing it; for it can be recognised only by him who truly possesses it, and the art of acquiring it can be understood only by him who has himself acquired it. He can cultivate this capacity in men only by means of the Idea itself, by presenting it to them, and testing it for them, in all its varied forms and applications. In this the Idea differs wholly from all that is merely mechanical in knowledge;—only by its reception can man cultivate the power of receiving it. By the mechanical communication of knowledge man may become versed in such mechanism, but can never be raised to the Idea. It is an obligation from which the Academic Teacher cannot be released, that he shall have comprehended the Idea with perfect clearness *as Idea*; that, in the Idea, he shall have also comprehended the particular branch of Knowledge which he cultivates, and through the Idea have understood the true nature, meaning, and purpose of this branch of Knowledge;—even his particular science is on no account to be taught merely for its own sake, but because it is a form or aspect of the one Idea; and in order that this form may be tested by the Student, and

he be tested by it. If, at the conclusion of his university training it were found that even then the Student could not be made to comprehend the true nature of study, then study would altogether disappear from the world ;—there would be study no longer, but the number of handicrafts would be increased. He who is not conscious of a living and clear comprehension of the Idea, and is at the same time an upright and honourable man, will forbear to assume the vocation of the Academic Teacher. He will thus show his respect for that vocation the nature of which he must have learned in the course of his studies.

The vocation of the Academic Teacher requires him to communicate the Idea,—not as the Author does, abstractly, in the one perfect conception under which it presents itself to his own mind,—but he must mould, express, and clothe it in an infinite variety of forms, so that he may bring it home, under some one or other of those adventitious vestures, to those by whose present state of culture he must be guided in the exercise of his calling. He must thus possess the Idea, not as a mere abstraction, but in great vitality, power, and flexibility. Above all, he must possess that which we have already described as the creative or artist-talent of the Scholar ; namely, a perfect readiness and capacity to recognise, under any circumstances, the first germ of the Idea as it begins to unfold itself ;—in each individual case to discover the most suitable means of aiding it to the attainment of perfect life, and in every case to associate it with an appropriate form. The Author may possess only one form for his Idea,—if that form be perfect, he has fulfilled his duty ;—the Academic Teacher must possess an infinite multiplicity of forms,—it is not his business to discover the most perfect form, but in each case to find the most suitable form. A good Academic Teacher must be capable of being also an excellent Author if he choose ; but it does not follow that, on the other hand, a good Author should also be

a good Academic Teacher. Yet this skill and versatility exist in different degrees, and he is not to be entirely excluded from the Academic calling who does not possess them in the highest degree.

From this skill which is required of the Academic Teacher in the embodiment of the Idea, there arises another demand upon him,—this, namely, that his mode of communication shall be always new, and bear upon it the mark of fresh and active life. Only living and present thought can enter other minds and quicken other thought: a dead, worn-out form, let it have been ever so living at a former time, must be called back to life by the power of others as well as its own;—the Author has a right to require this from his readers, but the Academic Teacher, who in this matter is not an Author, has no right to demand it.

The upright and conscientious man, as surely as he accepts this calling, and so long as he continues to practise it, gives himself up entirely to its fulfilment; willing, thinking, desiring nothing else than to be that which, according to his own conviction, he ought to be; and thus he shows openly his reverence for Knowledge.

For Knowledge, I say, as such, and *because it is* Knowledge,—for Knowledge in the abstract,—as the Divine Idea one and homogeneous through all the different forms and modes in which it is revealed. It is quite possible that a Scholar who has devoted his life to a particular department of knowledge may entertain a prepossession in favour of that department and be apt to esteem it above all others,—either because he has accustomed himself to it, or because he thinks that his more distinguished calling may reflect some of its lustre upon himself. Whatever ability such an one may bring to the cultivation of his own department, he will never present to the unprejudiced spectator the picture of one who reveres Knowledge for its own sake, and will never persuade the acute observer

that he does so while he shows less respect for other departments of knowledge which are as essential as his own. It will only thereby become evident that he has never conceived of Knowledge as one perfect whole,—that he does not think of his own department as a portion of this whole,—hence that he does not love his own department *as Knowledge*, but only as a handicraft; which love for a handicraft may indeed be praiseworthy enough elsewhere, but in the domain of Knowledge excludes him entirely from any right to the name of a Scholar. He who, although labouring in a limited province, has become a partaker of Knowledge as a whole, and accepts his own calling as but a part thereof, may perhaps have little even historical acquaintance with other provinces, but he has a general conception of the nature of all others, and will constantly exhibit an equal reverence for all.

Let this love of his vocation and of Knowledge be the sole guide of his life, visible to all men;—let him be moved by nothing else, regarding no personal interest either of himself or of others. Here, as elsewhere, I shall say nothing of the common and vulgar desires which may *not* enter within the circle of him who has approached and handled the sacred things of Knowledge. I shall not suppose it possible, for instance, that a Priest of Knowledge, who seeks to consecrate other Priests to her service, should refrain from saying to them something which they do not hear willingly, in order that they may continue to hear *him* willingly. Yet I may perhaps be permitted to mention one error not quite so ignoble and vulgar, and to hold up its opposite to your view. In every word uttered by the Academic Teacher in the exercise of his calling, let it be Knowledge that speaks,—let it be his longings to extend her dominion,—let it be his deep love for his hearers, not as *his* hearers, but as the future ministers of Knowledge:—Knowledge, and these living desires to extend her dominion, let these speak, not the Teacher. An

effort to speak for the mere sake of speaking,—to speak finely for the sake of fine speaking, and that others may know of it,—the disease of word-making,—sounding words, in which nevertheless no idea is audible,—is consistent with no man's dignity, and least of all with that of the Academic Teacher, who represents the dignity of Knowledge to future generations.

Let him give himself up entirely to this love of his vocation and of Knowledge. The peculiar nature of his calling consists in this,—that Knowledge, and especially that side of Knowledge from which he conceives of the whole, shall continually burst forth from him in new and fairer forms. Let this fresh spiritual youth never grow old within him ; let no form become fixed and rigid ; let each sunrise bring him new love for his vocation, new joy in its exercise, and wider views of its significance. The Divine Idea is absolutely fixed and determined,—all its individual parts are likewise determined. The particular form of its expression for a particular Age may also be determined ; but the living movement of its communication is infinite as the growth of the Human Race. Let no one continue in this calling in whom the mode of this communication, although it may *have been* the most perfect of his Age, begins to grow old and formal,—none in whom the fountain of youth does not still flow on with unimpaired vigour. Let him faithfully trust himself to its current so long as it will bear him forward : when it leaves him, then let him be content to retire from this ever-shifting scene of onward movement ;—let him separate the dead from the living.

It was a necessary part of the plan which I marked out to you, to treat of the dignity of the Academic Teacher. I hope that in doing so I have shown the same strictness with which I have spoken of the other subjects which have fallen under our notice,—without allowing myself to be seduced into any lenity towards it by the consideration

that I myself practise the calling of which I have spoken, and that I have practised it even in speaking of it. Whence I have derived this firmness,—on what feeling it rests,—you may inquire at another time ; it is sufficient for you now to understand clearly, that Truth, in every possible application of it, still remains true.

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## LECTURE X.

## OF THE SCHOLAR AS AUTHOR.

To complete and close our survey of the vocation of the Scholar, we have to-day to speak of the Scholar as *Author*.

I have hitherto contented myself with clearly setting forth the *true Idea* of the special subjects of our inquiry, without turning aside to glance at the *actual* state of things in the present age. It is almost impossible to proceed in this way with the subject which I am to discuss to-day. The *Idea* of the Author is almost unknown in our age, and something most unworthy usurps its name. This is the peculiar disgrace of the age,—the true source of all its other scientific evils. The inglorious has become glorious, and is encouraged, honoured, and rewarded.

According to the almost universally received opinion, it is a merit and an honour for a man to have printed something, merely because he has printed it, and without any regard to what it is which he has printed, and what may be its result. They, too, lay claim to the highest rank in the republic of letters who undertake to announce the fact that somebody has printed something and what that something is; or, as the phrase goes, who “*review*” the works of others. It is almost inexplicable how such

an absurd opinion could have arisen and taken root, when we consider the subject in its true light.

Thus stands the matter : In the latter half of the past century *Reading* took the place of some other amusements which had gone out of fashion. This new luxury demanded, from time to time, new fancy goods ; for it is of course quite impossible that one should read over again what one has read already, or those things which our forefathers have read before us ; just as it would be altogether unbecoming to appear frequently in fashionable society in the same costume, or to dress according to the notions of one's grandfather. The new want gave birth to a new trade, striving to nourish and enrich itself by purveying the wares now in demand,—namely, *Bookselling*. The success of those who first undertook this trade encouraged others to engage in it, until, in our own days, it has come to this, that this mode of obtaining a livelihood is greatly overstocked and the quantity of the goods produced is much too large in proportion to the consumers. The book-merchant, like the dealer in any other commodity, orders his goods from the manufacturer, solely with the view of bringing them to the market ;—at times also he buys uncommissioned goods which have been manufactured only on speculation ; and the Author who writes for the sake of writing is this manufacturer. It is impossible to conceive why the book-manufacturer should take precedence of any other manufacturer ; he ought rather to feel that he is far inferior to any other manufacturer, inasmuch as the luxury to which he ministers is more pernicious than any other. That he find a merchant for his wares may indeed be useful and profitable to him, but how it should be an honour is not readily discoverable. Of course, on the judgment of the publisher, which is only a judgment on the saleableness or unsaleableness of the goods, no value can be set.

Amid this bustle and pressure of the literary trade, a

happy thought struck some one ;—this, namely, out of all the books which were printed, to make one periodical book ; so that the reader of this book might be spared the trouble of reading any other. It was fortunate that this last purpose was not completely successful, and that everybody did not take to reading this book exclusively, since then no others would have been purchased, and consequently no others printed ; so that this book too, being constantly dependent upon other books for the possibility of its own existence, must likewise have remained unprinted.

He who undertook such a work, which is commonly called a Literary Journal, Literary Gazette, &c. &c., had the advantage of seeing his work increase by the charitable contributions of many anonymous individuals, and of thus earning honour and profit by the labour of others. To veil his own poverty of ideas, he pretended to pass judgment on the authors whom he quoted,—a shallow pretence to the thinker who looks below the surface. For either the book is—as most books are at present—a bad book, printed only that there might be one more book in the world ; and in this case it ought never to have been written, and is a nullity, and consequently the judgment upon it is a nullity also ;—*or*, the book is a true Literary Work, such as we shall presently describe ; and then it is the result of a whole capable life devoted to Art or Science, and so would require another whole life as capable as the first to be employed in its judgment. On such a work it is not altogether possible to pass a final judgment in a couple of sheets, within three or six months after its appearance. How can there be any honour in contributing to such collections ? True genius, on the contrary, will rather employ itself on a connected work, originated and planned out by itself, than allow the current of its thoughts to be interrupted by every accident of the day until that interruption is again broken by some new occurrence.

The disposition continually to watch the thoughts of others, and on these thoughts, please God, to hang our own attempts at thinking,—is a certain sign of immaturity, and of a weak and dependent mind. Or does the honour consist in this,—that the conductors of such works should consider us capable of filling the office of judge and actually make it over to us? In reality their opinion goes no deeper than that of a common unlettered printer,—of the saleableness or unsaleableness of the goods, and of the outward reputation which may thereby accrue to their critical establishment.

I am aware that what I have now said may seem very paradoxical. All of us who are connected in any way with Knowledge, which in this connexion may be termed Literature, grow up in the notion that literary industry is a blessing,—an advantage,—an honourable distinction of our cultivated and philosophical age; and but few have power to see through this prepossession and recognise its emptiness. The only apparent reason which can be adduced in defence of such perverted industry is, in my opinion, this:—that thereby an extensive literary public is kept alive, roused to attention, and, as it were, held together; so that, should anything of real value and importance be brought before it, this public shall be found already existing, and not have to be first called together. But I answer, that, in the first place, the means appear much too extensive for the end contemplated,—it seems too great a sacrifice that many generations should spend their time upon *nothing*, in order that some future generation may be enabled to occupy itself with *something*;—and further, it is by no means true that a public is only kept alive by this misdirected activity; it is at the same time perverted, vitiated, and ruined for the appreciation of anything truly valuable. Much that is excellent has made its appearance in our age,—I shall instance only the Kantian Philosophy,—but this very activity of the

literary market has destroyed, perverted, and degraded it, so that its spirit has fled, and now only a ghost of it stalks about, which no one can venerate.

The Literary History of our own day shows the real thinker how writing for writing's sake may be honoured and applauded. A few Authors only excepted, our Literary Men have in their own writings borne worse testimony against themselves than any one else could have given against them; and no even moderately well-disposed person would be inclined to consider the writers of our day so shallow, perverse, and spiritless, as the majority show themselves in their works. The only way to retain any respect for the age, any desire to influence it, is this,—to assume that those who proclaim their opinions aloud are inferior men, and that only among those who keep silence some may be found who are capable of teaching better things.

Thus, when I speak of the Literary *Vocation*, it is not the Literary *Trade* of the age which I mean, but something quite other than that.

I have already set forth the Idea of the Author when distinguishing it from that of the oral Teacher of progressive Scholars. Both have to express and communicate the Idea in language: the latter, for particular individuals by whose capacity for receiving it he must be guided; the former, without regard to any individual and in the most perfect form which can be given to it in his age.

The Author must embody the Idea,—he must therefore be a partaker of the Idea. All Literary Works are either works of *Art* or of *Science*. Whatever may be the subject of a work of the first class, it is evident that since it does not directly express any special conception, and thus *teaches* the reader nothing, it can only awaken the Idea itself within him and furnish it with a fitting embodiment; otherwise it would be but an empty play of words and have no real meaning. Whatever may be the subject of

a scientific work, the Author of such a work must not conceive of Knowledge in a mere historical fashion, and only as received from others;—he must for himself have spiritually penetrated to the Idea of Knowledge on some one of its sides, and produce it in a self-creative, new, and hitherto unknown form. If he be but a link in the chain of historical tradition, and can do no more than hand down to others the knowledge which he himself has received, and only in the form in which it already exists in some work whence he has obtained it,—then let him leave others in peace to draw from this fountain whence he also has drawn. What need is there of his officious intermeddling? To do over again that which has been done already, is to do nothing; and no man who possesses common honesty and conscientiousness will allow himself to indulge in such idleness. Can his Age, then, furnish him with no occupation which is suited to his powers, that he must thus employ himself in doing what he need not do? It is not necessary that he should write an entirely *new* work in any branch of Knowledge, but only a *better* work than any hitherto existing. He who cannot do this should absolutely not write;—it is a crime—a want of honesty to do so, which at the most can only be excused by his thoughtlessness and utter want of any true conception of the business he has undertaken.

He must express the Idea in language, in an intelligible manner, in a perfect form. The Idea must therefore have become in him so clear, living, and independent, that it already clothes itself to him in words; and, penetrating to the innermost spirit of his language, frames thence a vesture for itself by its own inherent power. The Idea itself must speak, not the Author. His will, his individuality, his peculiar method and art, must disappear from his page, so that only the method and art of his Idea may live the highest life which it can attain in his language and in his time. As he is free from

the obligation under which the Oral Teacher lies,—to accommodate himself to the capacities of others,—so he has not this apology to plead before himself. He has no specific reader in view,—he himself must mould his reader and lay down to him the law which he must obey. There may be printed productions addressed only to a certain age and a certain circle,—we shall see afterwards under what conditions such writings may be necessary; but these do not belong to the class of essentially *Literary Works* of which we now speak, but are printed discourses,—printed because the circle to which they are addressed cannot be brought together.

In order that in this way the Idea may in his person become master of his language, it is necessary that he shall first have acquired a mastery over that language. The Idea does not rule the language directly, but only through him as possessor of the language. This indispensable mastery of the Author over his language is only acquired by preparatory exercises, long continued and persevered in, which are studies for future works but have no essential value in themselves,—which the conscientious Scholar writes indeed, but will never allow to be printed. It requires, I say, long and persevering exercise; but, happily, these conditions mutually promote each other;—as the Idea becomes more vivid, language spontaneously appears, and as facility of expression is increased, the Idea flows forth in greater clearness.

These are the first and most necessary conditions of all true Authorship. The Idea itself,—and that of expressing the Idea in true and appropriate language,—is that which lives, and alone lives in him within whom the presentiment has arisen that he may one day send forth a *Literary Work*;—it is this which animates him in his preparations and studies for that work, as well as in the future completion of his design.

By this Idea he is inspired with a dignified and sacred

conception of the Literary calling. The work of the Oral Teacher is, in its immediate application, only a work for the time, modified by the degree of culture possessed by those who are entrusted to his care. Only in so far as he can venture to suppose that he is moulding future Teachers worthy of their calling, who, in their turn, will train others for the same task, and so on without end, can he regard himself as working for Eternity. But the work of the Author is *in itself* a work for Eternity. Even should future ages transcend the knowledge expressed in his work, still in that work he has not recorded his knowledge alone, but also the fixed and settled character of his age in its relation to that knowledge; and this will preserve its interest so long as the human race endures. Independent of all vicissitude and change, his pages speak in every age to all men who are able to realize his thought; and thus continue their inspiring, elevating, and ennobling work, even to the end of time.

The Idea, in this its acknowledged sacredness, moves him,—and it alone moves him. He does not believe that he has attained anything until he has attained all,—until his work stands before him in the purity and perfectness which he has striven to attain. Devoid of love for his own person, faithfully devoted to the Idea by which he is constantly guided, he recognises with certain glance, and in its true character, every trace of his former nature which remains in his expression of the Idea, and unceasingly strives to free himself from it. So long as he is not conscious of this absolute freedom and purity, he has not attained his end, but still works on. In such an age as we have already described, in which the communication of knowledge has greatly increased, and has even fallen into the hands of some who are better fitted for any other occupation than for this, it may be necessary for him to give some preliminary account of his labours;—other modes of communication, too, that of the Oral Teacher for instance,



may require such a preliminary account from him ; but he will never put forth such necessary writings for anything else than what they are,—preliminary announcements adapted to a certain age and certain circumstances ; he will never regard them as finished works destined for immortality.

The Idea alone urges him forward ;—nothing else. All personal regards have disappeared from his view. I do not speak of *his own* person,—of his having entirely forgotten himself in his vocation ;—this has been already sufficiently set forth. The personality of others has no more weight with him than his own when opposed to the truth and the Idea. I do not mention that he will not encroach upon the rights of other Scholars or Authors in their civic or personal relations : that is altogether below his dignity who has to do only with realities ;—it is also below the dignity of these discourses to make mention of that. But this I will remark, that he will not allow himself to be restrained, by forbearance towards any person whatever, from demolishing error and establishing truth in its place. The worst insult that can be offered, even to a half-educated man, is to suppose that he can be offended by the exposure of an error he has entertained, or the proclamation of a truth which has escaped his notice. From this bold and open profession of truth as he perceives it, without regard to any man, he will suffer nothing to lead him astray, not even the politely expressed contempt of the so-called fashionable world, which can conceive of the literary calling only by analogy with its own social circles, and would impose the etiquette of the court upon the conduct of the Scholar.

Here I close these Lectures. If a thought of mine have entered into any now present, and shall abide there as a guide to higher truth, perhaps it may sometimes awaken the memory of these lectures and of me,—and only in this way do I desire to live in your recollection.



THE VOCATION OF MAN.



## P R E F A C E.

WHATEVER in the New Philosophy is useful beyond the limits of the schools will form the contents of this work, set forth in that order in which it would naturally present itself to unscientific thought. The more profound arguments by which the subtle objections and extravagances of over-refined minds are to be met, whatever is but the foundation of other Positive Science,—lastly, whatever belongs to Pedagogy in its widest sense, that is, to the deliberate and arbitrary Education of the Human Race,—shall remain beyond the limits of our task. These objections are not made by the natural understanding;—Positive Science it leaves to Scholars by profession; and the Education of the Human Race, in so far as that depends upon human effort, to its appointed Teachers and Statesmen.

This book is therefore not intended for philosophers by profession, who will find nothing in it that has not been already set forth in other writings of the same author. It ought to be intelligible to all readers who are able to understand a book at all. To those who wish only to repeat, in somewhat varied order, certain phrases which they have already learned by rote, and who mistake this business of the memory for understanding, it will doubtless be found unintelligible.

It ought to attract and animate the reader, and to elevate him from the world of sense into a region of supersensuous thought ;—at least the author is conscious that he has not entered upon his task without such inspiration. Often, indeed, the fire with which we commence an undertaking disappears during the toil of execution ; and thus, at the conclusion of a work, we are in danger of doing ourselves injustice upon this point. In short, whether the author has succeeded in attaining his object or not, can be determined only by the effect which the work shall produce on the readers to whom it is addressed, and in this the author has no voice.

I must, however, remind my reader that the “I” who speaks in this book is not the author himself ; but it is his earnest wish that the reader should himself assume this character, and that he should not rest contented with a mere historical apprehension of what is here said, but that during reading he should really and truly hold converse with himself, deliberate, draw conclusions and form resolutions, like his imaginary representative, and thus, by his own labour and reflection, develope and build up within himself that mode of thought the mere picture of which is presented to him in the book.

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## BOOK I.

## DOUBT,

I BELIEVE that I am now acquainted with no inconsiderable part of the world that surrounds me, and I have certainly employed sufficient labour and care in the acquisition of this knowledge. I have put faith only in the concurrent testimony of my senses, only in repeated and unvarying experience ;— what I have beheld, I have touched—what I have touched, I have analyzed ;—I have repeated my observations again and again ; I have compared the various phenomena with each other ; and only when I could understand their exact connexion, when I could explain and deduce the one from the other, when I could calculate the result beforehand, and the observation of the result had proved the accuracy of my calculations, have I been satisfied. Therefore I am now as well assured of the accuracy of this part of my knowledge as of my own existence ; I walk with a firm step in these understood spheres of my world, and do actually every moment venture welfare and life itself on the certainty of my convictions.

But—what am I myself, and what is my vocation ?

Superfluous question ! It is long since I have been completely instructed upon these points, and it would

take much time to repeat all that I have heard, learned, and believed concerning them.

And in what way then have I attained this knowledge, which I have this dim remembrance of acquiring? Have I, impelled by an earnest desire of knowledge, toiled on through uncertainty, doubt and contradiction?—have I, when any belief was presented to me, withheld my assent until I have examined and reexamined, sifted and compared it,—until an inward voice proclaimed to me, irresistibly and without the possibility of doubt,—“Thus it is—thus only—as surely as thou livest and art!”—No! I remember no such state of mind. Those instructions were bestowed on me before I sought them, the answers were given before I had put the questions. I heard, for I could not avoid doing so, and what was taught me remained in my memory just as chance had disposed it;—without examination and without conviction I allowed everything to take its place in my mind.

How then could I persuade myself that I possessed any real knowledge upon these matters? If I know that only of which I am convinced, which I have myself discovered, myself experienced, then I cannot truly say that I possess even the slightest knowledge of my vocation;—I know only what others assert they know about it, and all that I am really sure of is,—that I have heard this or that said upon the subject.

Thus, while I have inquired for myself, and with the most anxious care, into comparatively trivial matters, I have relied wholly on the care and fidelity of others in things of the weightiest importance. I have attributed to others an interest in the highest affairs of humanity, an earnestness and an exactitude, which I have by no means discovered in myself. I have esteemed them indescribably higher than myself.



Whatever truth they really possess, whence can they have obtained it but through their own reflection? And why may not I, by means of the same reflection, discover the like truth for myself, since I too have a being as well as they? How much have I hitherto undervalued and slighted myself!

It shall be no longer thus. From this moment I will enter on my rights and assume the dignity that belongs to me. Let all foreign aids be cast aside! I will examine for myself. If any secret wishes concerning the result of my inquiries, any partial leaning towards certain conclusions, stir within me, I forget and renounce them; and I will accord them no influence over the direction of my thoughts. I will perform my task with firmness and assiduity;—I will honestly accept the result whatever it may be. What I find to be truth, let it sound as it may, shall be welcome to me. I will *know*. With the same certainty with which I am assured that this ground will support me when I tread on it, that this fire will burn me if I approach too near it, will I know what I am, and what I shall be. And should it prove impossible for me to know this, then I will know this much at least, that I cannot know it. Even to this conclusion of my inquiry will I submit, should it approve itself to me as the truth. I hasten to the fulfilment of my task.

I seize on Nature in her rapid and unresting flight, detain her for an instant, hold the present moment steadily in view, and reflect—upon this Nature by means of which my thinking powers have hitherto been developed and trained to those researches that belong to her domain.

I am surrounded by objects which I am compelled to regard as separate, independent, self-subsisting wholes. I behold plants, trees, animals. I ascribe to each individual certain properties and attributes by which I distinguish it from others; to this plant, such a form; to another, another; to this tree, leaves of such a shape; to another, others differing from them.

Every object has its appointed number of attributes, neither more nor less. To every question, whether it is this or that, there is, for any one who is thoroughly acquainted with it, a decisive Yes possible, or a decisive No,—so that there is an end of all doubt or hesitation on the subject. Everything that exists *is* something, or it *is not* this something;—is coloured, or is not coloured;—has a certain colour, or has it not;—may be tasted, or may not;—is tangible, or is not;—and so on, *ad infinitum*.

Every object possesses each of these attributes in a definite degree. Let a measure be given for any particular attribute which is capable of being applied to the object;

then we may discover the exact extent of that attribute, which it neither exceeds nor falls short of. I measure the height of this tree; it is defined, and it is not a single line higher or lower than it is. I consider the green of its leaves; it is a definite green, not the smallest shade darker or lighter, fresher or more faded than it is; although I may have neither measure nor expression for these qualities. I turn my eye to this plant; it is at a definite stage of growth between its budding and its maturity, not in the smallest degree nearer or more remote from either than it is. *Everything that exists is determined throughout; it is what it is, and nothing else.*

Not that I am unable to conceive of an object as floating between opposite determinations. I do certainly conceive of indefinite objects; for more than half of my thoughts consist of such conceptions. I think of a tree *in general*. Has this tree fruit or not, leaves or not; if it has, what is their number?—to what order of trees does it belong?—how large is it?—and so on. All these questions remain unanswered, and my thought is undetermined in these respects; for I did not propose to myself the thought of any particular tree, but of a tree generally. But I deny actual existence to such a tree in thus leaving it undefined. Everything that actually exists has its determinate number of all the possible attributes of actual existence, and each of these in a determinate measure, as surely as it actually exists, although I may admit my inability thoroughly to exhaust all the properties of any one object, or to apply to them any standard of measurement

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But Nature pursues her course of ceaseless change, and while I yet speak of the moment which I sought to detain before me it is gone, and all is changed; and in like manner, before I had fixed my observation upon it, all was

otherwise. It had not always been as it was when I observed it :—it had *become* so.

Why then, and from what cause, had it become so? Why had Nature, amid the infinite variety of possible forms, assumed in this moment precisely these and no others?

For this reason, that they were preceded by those precisely which did precede them, and by no others; and because the present could arise out of those and out of no other possible conditions. Had anything in the preceding moment been in the smallest degree different from what it was, then in the present moment something would have been different from what it is. And from what cause were all things in that preceding moment precisely such as they were? For this reason, that in the moment preceding that, they were such as they were then. And this moment again was dependent on its predecessor, and that on another, and so backwards without limit. In like manner will Nature in the next succeeding moment be necessarily determined to the particular forms which it will then assume—for this reason, that in the present moment it is determined exactly as it is; and were anything in the present moment in the smallest degree different from what it is, then in the succeeding moment something would necessarily be different from what it will be. And in the moment following that, all things will be precisely as they will be, because in the immediately previous moment they will be as they will be; and so will its successor proceed forth from it, and another from that, and so onwards for ever.

Nature proceeds throughout the whole infinite series of her possible determinations without outward incentive; and the succession of these changes is not arbitrary, but follows strict and unalterable laws. Whatever exists in Nature necessarily exists as it does exist, and it is absolutely impossible that it should be otherwise. I enter

within an unbroken chain of phenomena, in which every link is determined by that which has preceded it, and in its turn determines the next; so that, were I able to trace backward the causes through which alone any given moment could have come into actual existence, and to follow out the consequences which must necessarily flow from it, I should then be able, at that moment, and by means of thought alone, to discover all possible conditions of the universe, both past and future;—past, by interpreting the given moment; future, by forecasting its results. Every part contains the whole, for *only* through the whole is each part what it is, but through the whole it is *necessarily* what it is.

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What is it then that I have thus arrived at? If I review my positions as a whole, I find their substance to be this:—that in every stage of progress an antecedent is necessarily supposed, from which and through which alone the present has arisen; in every condition a previous condition, in every existence another existence; and that from nothing, nothing whatever can proceed.

Let me pause here a little, and develope whatever is contained in this principle, until it become perfectly clear to me. For it may be that on my clear insight into this point may depend the success of my whole future inquiry.

Why, and from what cause, I had asked, are the determinate forms of objects precisely such as they are at this moment. I assumed without further proof, and without the slightest inquiry, as an absolute, immediate, certain and unalterable truth,—(as indeed it is, as I now find it to be, and shall ever find it to be)—I assumed, I say, that they had a cause;—that not through themselves, but through something which lay beyond them, they had attained existence and reality. I found their existence insufficient to account for itself, and I was compelled to

assume another existence beyond them, as a necessary condition of theirs. But why did I find the existence of these qualities and determinate forms insufficient for itself? Why did I find it to be an incomplete existence? What was there in it which betrayed to me its insufficiency? This, without doubt:—that, in the first place, these qualities do not exist in and for themselves,—they are qualities of something else, attributes of a substance, forms of something formed; and the supposition of such a substance, of a something to support these attributes,—of a *substratum* for them, to use the phraseology of the Schools,—is a necessary condition of the conceivableness of such qualities. Further, before I can attribute a definite quality to such a *substratum*, I must suppose for it a condition of repose, and of cessation from change,—a pause in its existence. Were I to regard it as in a state of transition, then there could be no definite determination, but merely an indefinite series of changes from one state to another and different state. The state of determination in a thing is thus a state and expression of mere passivity; and a state of mere passivity is in itself an incomplete existence. Such passivity itself demands an activity to which it may be referred, by which it can be explained, and through which it first becomes conceivable;—or, as it is usually expressed,—*which contains within it the ground of this passivity*. ①

What I found myself compelled to suppose was thus by no means that the various and successive determinations of Nature themselves produce each other,—that the present determination annihilates itself, and, in the next moment, when it no longer exists, produces another, which is different from itself and not contained in it, to fill its place:—this is wholly inconceivable. The mere determination produces neither itself nor anything else. ② sub power

What I found myself compelled to assume, in order to account for the gradual origin and the changes of those

determinations, was an active power, peculiar to the object, and constituting its essential nature. *Conclu*

And how, then, do I conceive of this power?—what is its nature, and the modes of its manifestation? This only,—that under these definite conditions it produces, by its own spontaneous energy, this definite effect and no other;—and that it produces this certainly and infallibly.

This principle of activity, of independent and spontaneous development, dwells in itself alone, and in nothing beyond itself, as surely as it is power;—power which is not impelled or set in motion, but which sets itself in motion. The cause of its having developed itself precisely in this manner and no other, lies partly in itself—because it is this particular power and no other; and partly in the circumstances under which it develops itself. Both these,—the inward determination of a power by itself, and its outward determination by circumstances,—must be united in order to produce a change. The latter, the circumstances, the passive condition of things,—can of itself produce no change, for it has within it the opposite of all change,—inert existence. The former, the power,—is essentially determined, for only on this condition is it conceivable; but its determination is completed only through the circumstances under which it is developed. I can conceive of a power, it can have an existence for me, only in so far as I can perceive an effect proceeding from it; an inactive power,—which should yet be a *power* and not an inert *thing*,—is wholly inconceivable. Every effect, however, is determined; and—since the effect is but the expression, but another mode of the activity itself,—the active power is determined in its activity; and the ground of this determination lies partly in itself, because it cannot otherwise be conceived of as a particular and definite power;—partly out of itself, because its own determination can be conceived of only as conditioned by something else. *Change*  
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A flower has sprung out of the earth, and I infer from thence a formative power in Nature. Such a formative power exists for me only so far as this flower and others, plants generally, and animals exist for me :—I can describe this power only through its effects, and it is to me no more than the producing cause of such effects,—the generative principle of flowers, plants, animals, and organic forms in general. I will go further, and maintain that a flower, and this particular flower, could arise in this place only in so far as all other circumstances united to make it possible. But by the union of all these circumstances for its possibility, the actual existence of the flower is by no means explained ; and for this I am still compelled to assume a special, spontaneous, and original power in Nature, and indeed a *flower-producing* power ; for another power of Nature might, under the same circumstances, have produced something entirely different. —I have thus attained to the following view of the Universe.

When I contemplate all things as one whole, one Nature, there is but one power ;—when I regard them as separate existences, there are many powers, which develop themselves according to their inward laws, and pass through all the possible forms of which they are capable ; and all objects in Nature are but those powers under certain determinate forms. The manifestations of each individual power of Nature are determined, become what they are, partly by its own essential character, partly through its own previous manifestations, and partly through the manifestations of all the other powers of Nature with which it is connected. But it is connected with them all—for Nature is one connected whole—and it is therefore necessarily determined by them all. While its essential character remains what it is, and while it continues to manifest itself under these particular circumstances, its manifestations must necessarily be what they



are;—and it is absolutely impossible that they should be in the smallest degree different from what they are.

In every moment of her duration Nature is one connected whole; in every moment each individual part must be what it is, because all the others are what they are; and you could not remove a single grain of sand from its place, without thereby, although perhaps imperceptibly to you, changing something throughout all parts of the immeasurable whole. But every moment of this duration is determined by all past moments, and will determine all future moments; and you cannot conceive even the position of a grain of sand other than it is in the Present, without being compelled to conceive the whole indefinite Past to have been other than what it has been, and the whole indefinite Future other than what it will be. Make the experiment, for instance, with this grain of quicksand. Suppose it to lie some few paces further inland than it does:—then must the storm-wind that drove it in from the sea have been stronger than it actually was; —then must the preceding state of the weather, by which this wind was occasioned and its degree of strength determined, have been different from what it actually was; as well as the previous state by which this particular weather was determined,—and so on; and thus you have, without stay or limit, a wholly different temperature of the air from that which really existed, and a different constitution of the bodies which possess an influence over this temperature, and over which, on the other hand, it exercises such an influence. On the fruitfulness or unfruitfulness of countries, and through that, or even directly, on the duration of human life,—this temperature exercises a most decided influence. How can you know,—since it is not permitted us to penetrate the arcana of Nature, and it is therefore allowable to speak of possibilities,—how can you know, that in such a state of weather as may have been necessary to carry this grain of sand a few paces

further inland, some one of your forefathers might not have perished from hunger, or cold, or heat, before begetting that son from whom you are descended; and that thus you might never have been at all, and all that you have ever done, and all that you ever hope to do in this world, might never have been,—that so a grain of sand might lie in a different place?

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I myself, with all that I call mine, am a link in this chain of the rigid necessity of Nature. There was a time—so others tell me who were then alive, and I am compelled by reasoning to admit such a time of which I have no immediate consciousness,—there was a time in which I was not, and a moment in which I began to be. I then only existed for others,—not yet for myself. Since then, my self, my self-consciousness, has gradually unfolded itself, and I have discovered in myself certain capacities and faculties, wants and natural desires. I am a definite creature, that came into being at a certain time.

I have not come into being by my own power. It would be the highest absurdity to suppose that I was before I came into existence in order to bring myself into existence. I have, then, been called into being by a power beyond myself. And by what power but the universal power of Nature, since I too am a part of Nature? The time at which my existence began, and the attributes with which I came into being, were determined by this universal power of Nature; and all the forms under which these inborn attributes have since manifested themselves, and will manifest themselves as long as I have a being, are determined by the same power. It was impossible that, instead of me, another should have come into existence;—it is impossible that this being, once here, should at any moment of its existence be other than what it is and will be.

That my successive states of being have been accompanied by consciousness, and that some of them, such as thoughts, resolutions, and the like, appear to be nothing but varied modes of consciousness, need not perplex my reasonings. It is the natural constitution of the plant to develop itself, of the animal to move, of man to think,—all after fixed laws. Why should I hesitate to acknowledge the last as the manifestation of an original power of Nature, as well as the first and second? Nothing could hinder me from doing so but mere amazement; thought being assuredly a far higher and more subtle operation of Nature than the formation of a plant or the proper motion of an animal. But how can I accord to such a feeling any influence whatever upon the calm conclusions of reason? I cannot indeed explain how the power of Nature can produce thought; but can I better explain its operation in the formation of a plant or in the motion of an animal? To attempt to deduce thought from any mere combination of matter is a perversity into which I shall not fall; but can I explain from it even the formation of the simplest moss? Those original powers of Nature cannot be explained, for it is only by them that we can explain everything which is susceptible of explanation. Thought exists,—its existence is absolute and independent; just as the formative power of Nature exists absolutely and independently. It is in Nature; for the thinking being comes into existence and develops himself according to the laws of Nature; therefore thought exists through Nature. There is in Nature an original thinking-power, as there is an original formative-power.

This original thinking-power of the Universe goes forth and develops itself in all possible modes of which it is capable, as the other original forces of Nature go forth and assume all forms possible to them. I, like the plant, am a particular mode or manifestation of the formative-power; like the animal, a particular mode or manifesta-

tion of the power of motion ; and besides these I am also a particular mode or manifestation of the thinking-power ; and the union of these three original powers into one,—into one harmonious development,—is the distinguishing characteristic of my species, as it is the distinguishing characteristic of the plant species to be merely a mode or manifestation of the formative-power.

Figure, motion, thought, in me, are not dependent on each other and consequent on each other—so that I should think and conceive of the forms and motions that surround me in such or such a manner because they are so, or on the other hand, that they are so because I so conceive of them,—but they are all simultaneous and harmonious developments of one and the same power, the manifestation of which necessarily assumes the form of a complete creature of my species, and which may thus be called the *man-forming* power. A thought arises within me absolutely, without dependence on anything else ; the corresponding form likewise arises absolutely, and also the emotion which corresponds to both. I am not what I am, because I think so, or will so ; nor do I think and will it, because I am so ; but I am, and I think, both absolutely ; —both harmonize with each other by virtue of a higher power.

As surely as those original powers of Nature exist for themselves, and have their own internal laws and purposes, so surely must their outward manifestations, if they are left to themselves and not suppressed by any foreign force, endure for a certain period of time, and describe a certain circle of change. That which disappears even at the moment of its production is assuredly not the manifestation of one primordial power, but only a consequence of the combined operation of various powers. The plant, a particular mode or manifestation of the formative-power of Nature, when left to itself, proceeds from the first germination to the ripening of the seed. Man, a particular

mode or manifestation of all the powers of Nature in their union, when left to himself, proceeds from birth to death in old age. Hence the duration of the life of plants and of men, and the varied modes of this life.

This form, this proper motion, this thought, in harmony with each other,—this duration of all these essential qualities, amidst many non-essential changes, belong to me in so far as I am a being of my species. But the *man-forming* power of Nature had already displayed itself before I existed, under a multitude of outward conditions and circumstances. Such outward circumstances have determined the particular manner of its present activity, which has resulted in the production of precisely such an individual of my species as I am. The same circumstances can never return unless the whole course of Nature should repeat itself, and two Natures arise instead of one; hence the same individuals, who have once existed, can never again come into actual being. Further, the *man-forming* power of Nature manifests itself, during the same time in which I exist, under all the conditions and circumstances possible in that time. But no combination of such circumstances can perfectly resemble those through which I came into existence, unless the universe could divide itself into two perfectly similar but independent worlds. It is impossible that two perfectly similar individuals can come into actual existence at the same time. It is thus determined what I, this definite person, must be; and the general law by which I am what I am is discovered. I am that which the *man-forming* power of Nature—having been what it was, being what it is, and standing in this particular relation to the other opposing powers of Nature—*could become*; and,—there being no ground of limitation within itself,—since it *could* become, necessarily *must become*. I am that which I am, because in this particular position of the great system of Nature, only such a person, and absolutely no other, was possible;

—and a spirit who could look through the innermost secrets of Nature, would, from knowing one single man, be able distinctly to declare what men had formerly existed, and what men would exist at any future moment;—in one individual he would discern all actual and possible individuals. It is this my inter-connexion with the whole system of Nature which determines what I have been, what I am, and what I shall be; and the same spirit would be able, from any possible moment of my existence, to discover infallibly what I had previously been, and what I was afterwards to become. All that, at any time, I am and shall be, I am and shall be of absolute necessity; and it is impossible that I should be anything else.

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I am, indeed, conscious of myself as an independent, and, in many phases of my life, a free being; but this consciousness may easily be explained on the principles already laid down, and may be thoroughly reconciled with the conclusions which have been drawn. My immediate consciousness, my proper perception, cannot go beyond myself and the modes of my own being;—I have immediate knowledge of myself alone: whatever I may know more than this, I know only by inference, in the same way in which I have inferred the existence of original powers of Nature, which yet do not lie within the circle of my perceptions. I myself however,—that which I call *me*—my personality,—am not the *man-forming* power of Nature, but only one of its manifestations; and it is only of this manifestation that I am conscious, as myself, not of that power whose existence I only infer from the necessity of explaining my own. This manifestation, however, in its true nature, is really the product of an original and independent power, and must appear as such in consciousness. On this account I recognise myself generally as an independent being. For this reason I appear to

myself *as free* in certain phases of my life, when these are the manifestations of the independent power which falls to my share as an individual;—*as restrained and limited*, when, by any combination of outward circumstances, which may arise in time, but do not lie within the original limitations of my personality, I cannot do what my individual power would naturally, if unobstructed, be capable of doing;—*as compelled*, when this individual power, by the superiority of antagonistic powers, is constrained to manifest itself even in opposition to the laws of its own nature.

Bestow consciousness on a tree, and let it grow, spread out its branches, and bring forth leaves and buds, blossoms and fruits, after its kind, without hindrance or obstruction:—it will perceive no limitation to its existence in being only a tree, a tree of this particular species, and this particular individual of the species; it will feel itself perfectly *free*, because, in all those manifestations, it will do nothing but what its nature requires; and it will desire to do nothing else, because it can only desire what that nature requires. But let its growth be hindered by unfavourable weather, want of nourishment, or other causes, and it will feel itself *limited and restrained*, because an impulse which actually belongs to its nature is not satisfied. Bind its free waving boughs to a wall, force foreign branches on it by ingrafting, and it will feel itself *compelled* to one course of action; its branches will grow, but not in the direction they would have taken if left to themselves; it will produce fruits, but not those which belong to its original nature. In immediate consciousness, I appear to myself as free; by reflection on the whole of Nature, I discover that freedom is absolutely impossible; the former must be subordinate to the latter, for it can be explained only by means of it.

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What high satisfaction this system affords to my understanding! What order, what firm connexion, what

comprehensive supervision does it introduce into the whole fabric of my knowledge ! Consciousness is here no longer a stranger in Nature, whose connexion with existence is so incomprehensible ; it is native to it, and indeed one of its necessary manifestations. Nature herself ascends gradually in the determinate series of her creations. In rude matter she is a simple existence ; in organized matter she returns within herself to internal activity,—in the plant to produce form, in the animal motion ;—in man, as her highest masterpiece, she turns inward that she may perceive and contemplate herself,—in him she, as it were, doubles herself, and, from being mere existence, becomes existence and consciousness in one.

How I am and must be conscious of my own being and of its determinations, is, in this connexion, easily understood. My being and my knowledge have one common foundation,—my own nature. The being within me, even because it is my being, is conscious of itself. Quite as conceivable is my consciousness of corporeal objects existing beyond myself. The powers in whose manifestation my personality consists,—the formative—the self-moving—the thinking powers—are not these same powers as they exist in Nature at large, but only a certain definite portion of them ; and that they are but such a portion, is because there are so many other existences beyond me. From the former, I can infer the latter ; from the limitation, that which limits. Because I myself am not this or that which yet belongs to the connected system of existence, it must exist beyond me ;—thus reasons the thinking principle within me. Of my own limitation I am immediately conscious, because it is a part of myself, and only by reason of it do I possess an actual existence ; my consciousness of the source of this limitation,—of that which I myself am not,—is produced by the former, and arises out of it.

Away, then, with those pretended influences and opera-



tions of outward things upon me, by means of which they are supposed to pour in upon me a knowledge which is not in themselves and cannot flow forth from them. The ground upon which I assume the existence of something beyond myself, does not lie out of myself, but within me, in the limitation of my own personality. By means of this limitation, the thinking principle of Nature within me proceeds out of itself, and is able to survey itself as a whole, although, in each individual, from a different point of view.

In the same way there arises within me the idea of other thinking beings like myself. I, or the thinking power of Nature within me, am conscious of some thoughts which seem to have arisen spontaneously within me as an individual form of Nature; and of others, which seem not to have arisen in the same spontaneous manner. And so it is in reality. The former are my own, peculiar, individual contributions to the general circle of thought in Nature; the latter are deduced from them, as what must surely have a place in that circle; but being only inferences so far as I am concerned, must find that place, not in me, but in other thinking beings:—hence I conclude that there are other thinking beings besides myself. In short, Nature becomes in me conscious of herself as a whole, but only by beginning with my own individual consciousness, and proceeding from thence to the consciousness of universal being by inference founded on the principle of causality;—that is, she is conscious of the conditions under which alone such a form, such a motion, such a thought as that in which my personality consists, is possible. The principle of causality is the point of transition from the particular within myself to the universal which lies beyond myself; and the distinguishing characteristic of those two kinds of knowledge is this, that the one is immediate perception, while the other is inference.

In each individual, Nature beholds herself from a par-

ticular point of view. I call myself—*I*, and thee—*thou* ; thou callest thyself—*I*, and me—*thou* ; I lie beyond thee, as thou beyond me. Of what is without me, I comprehend first those things which touch me most nearly ; thou, those which touch thee most nearly ;—from these points we each proceed onwards to the next proximate ; but we describe very different paths, which may here and there intersect each other but never run parallel. There is an infinite variety of possible individuals, and hence also an infinite variety of possible points of outlook of consciousness. This consciousness of all individuals taken together, constitutes the complete consciousness of the universe ; and there is no other, for only in the individual is there definite completeness and reality.

The testimony of consciousness in each individual is altogether sure and trustworthy, if it be indeed the consciousness here described ; for this consciousness arises out of the whole prescribed course of Nature, and Nature cannot contradict herself. Wherever there is a conception, there must be a corresponding existence, for conceptions are only produced simultaneously with the production of the corresponding realities. To each individual his own particular consciousness is wholly determined, for it proceeds from his own nature :—no one can have other conceptions, or a greater or less degree of vitality in these conceptions, than he actually has. The substance of his conceptions is determined by the position which he assumes in the universe ; their clearness and vitality, by the higher or lower degree of efficiency manifested by the power of humanity in his person. Give to Nature the determination of one single element of a person, let it seem to be ever so trivial,—the course of a muscle, the turn of a hair,—and, had she a universal consciousness and were able to reply to thee, she could tell thee all the thoughts which could belong to this person during the whole period of his conscious existence.

In this system also, the phenomenon of our consciousness which we call Will, becomes thoroughly intelligible. A volition is the immediate consciousness of the activity of any of the powers of Nature within us. The immediate consciousness of an effort of these powers which has not yet become a reality because it is hemmed in by opposing powers, is, in consciousness, inclination or desire;—the struggle of contending powers is irresolution;—the victory of one is the determination of the Will. If the power which strives after activity be only that which we have in common with the plant or the animal, there arises a division and degradation of our inward being; the desire is unworthy of our rank in the order of things, and, according to a common use of language, may be called a low one. If this striving power be the whole undivided force of humanity, then is the desire worthy of our nature, and it may be called a high one. The latter effort, considered absolutely, may be called a moral law. The activity of this latter effort is a virtuous Will, and the course of action resulting from it is virtue. The triumph of the former not in harmony with the latter is vice; such a triumph *over* the latter, and despite its opposition, is crime.

The power which, on each occasion, proves triumphant, triumphs of necessity; its superiority is determined by the whole connexion of the universe; and hence by the same connexion is the virtue, vice or crime of each individual irrevocably determined. Give to Nature, once more, the course of a muscle, the turn of a hair, in any particular individual, and, had she the power of universal thought and could answer thee, she would be able to declare all the good and evil deeds of his life from the beginning to the end of it. But still virtue does not cease to be virtue, nor vice to be vice. The virtuous man is a noble product of Nature; the vicious, an ignoble and contemptible one:—although both are necessary results of the connected system of the universe.

Repentance is the consciousness of the continued effort of humanity within me, even after it has been overcome, associated with the disagreeable sense of having been subdued;—a disquieting but still precious pledge of our nobler nature. From this consciousness of the fundamental impulse of our nature, arises the sense which has been called ‘conscience,’ and its greater or less degree of strictness and susceptibility, down to the absolute want of it in many individuals. The ignoble man is incapable of repentance, for in him humanity has at no time sufficient strength to contend with the lower impulses. Reward and punishment are the natural consequences of virtue and vice for the production of new virtue and new vice. By frequent and important victories, our special power is extended and strengthened; by inaction or frequent defeat, it becomes ever weaker and weaker. The ideas of guilt and accountability have no meaning but in external legislation. He only has incurred guilt, and must render an account of his crime, who compels society to employ artificial external force in order to restrain in him the activity of those impulses which are injurious to the general welfare.

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My inquiry is closed, and my desire of knowledge satisfied. I know what I am, and wherein the nature of my species consists. I am a manifestation, determined by the whole connected system of the universe, of a power of Nature which is determined by itself. To understand thoroughly my particular personal being in its deepest sources is impossible, for I cannot penetrate into the innermost recesses of Nature. But I am immediately conscious of this my personal existence. I know right well what I am at the present moment; I can for the most part remember what I have been formerly; and I shall learn what I shall be when what is now future shall become present experience.

I cannot indeed make use of this discovery in the regulation of my actions, for I do not truly act at all, but Nature acts in me; and to make myself anything else than that for which Nature has intended me, is what I cannot even propose to myself, for I am not the author of my own being, but Nature has made me myself, and all that I become. I may repent, and rejoice, and form good resolutions;—although, strictly speaking, I cannot even do this, for all these things come to me of themselves, when it is appointed for them to come;—but most certainly I cannot, by all my repentance, and by all my resolutions, produce the smallest change in that which I must once for all inevitably become. I stand under the inexorable power of rigid Necessity:—should she have destined me to become a fool and a profligate, a fool and a profligate without doubt I shall become; should she have destined me to be wise and good, wise and good I shall doubtless be. There is neither blame nor merit to her nor to me. She stands under her own laws, I under hers. I see this, and feel that my tranquillity would be best ensured by subjecting my wishes also to that Necessity to which my very being is wholly subject.

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But, oh these opposing wishes! For why should I any longer hide from myself the sadness, the horror, the amazement with which I was penetrated when I saw how my inquiry must end? I had solemnly promised myself that my inclinations should have no influence in the direction of my thoughts; and I have not knowingly allowed them any such influence. But may I not at last confess that this result contradicts the profoundest aspirations, wishes, and wants of my being. And, despite of the accuracy and the decisive strictness of the proofs by which it seems to be supported, how can I truly believe in a theory of my being which strikes at the very root of

that being, which so distinctly contradicts all the purposes for which alone I live, and without which I should loathe my existence?

Why must my heart mourn at, and be lacerated by, that which so perfectly satisfies my understanding? While nothing in Nature contradicts itself, is man alone a contradiction? Or perhaps not man in general, but only me and those who resemble me? Had I but been content to remain amid the pleasant delusions that surrounded me, satisfied with the immediate consciousness of my existence, and never raised those questions concerning its foundation, the answer to which has caused me this misery! But if this answer be true, then *I must* of necessity have raised these questions: I indeed raised them not,—the thinking nature within me raised them. I was destined to this misery, and I weep in vain the lost innocence of soul which can never return to me again.

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But courage! Let all else be lost, so that this at least remains! Merely for the sake of my wishes, did they lie ever so deep or seem ever so sacred, I cannot renounce what rests on incontrovertible evidence. But perhaps I may have erred in my investigation;—perhaps I may have only partially comprehended and imperfectly considered the grounds upon which I had to proceed. I ought to retrace the inquiry again from the opposite end, in order that I may at least have a correct starting-point. What is it, then, that I find so repugnant, so painful, in the decision to which I have come? What is it, which I desired to find in its place? Let me before all things make quite clear to myself what are these inclinations to which I appeal.

That I should be destined to be wise and good, or foolish and profligate, without power to change this destiny in aught,—in the former case having no merit, and in the

latter incurring no guilt,—this it was that filled me with amazement and horror. The reference of my being, and of all the determinations of my being, to a cause lying *out of myself*,—the manifestations of which were again determined by other causes *out of itself*,—this it was from which I so violently recoiled. That freedom which was not my own, but that of a foreign power without me, and even that only a limited half-freedom,—this it was which did not satisfy me. I myself,—that of which I am conscious as my own being and person, but which in this system appears as only the manifestation of a higher power,—this “I” would be independent,—would be something, not by another or through another, but of myself,—and, as such, would be the final root of all my own determinations. The rank which in this system is assumed by an original power of Nature I would myself assume; with this difference, that the modes of my manifestations shall not be determined by any foreign power. I desire to possess an inward and peculiar power of manifestation,—infinitely manifold like those powers of Nature; and this power shall manifest itself in the way in which it does manifest itself, for no other reason than because it does so manifest itself;—not, like these powers of Nature, because it is placed under such or such outward conditions.

What then, according to my wish, shall be the especial seat and centre of this peculiar inward power? Evidently not my body, for that I willingly allow to pass for a manifestation of the powers of Nature,—at least so far as its constitution is concerned, if not with regard to its farther determinations; not my sensuous inclinations, for these I regard as a relation of those powers to my consciousness. Hence it must be my thought and will. I would exercise my voluntary power freely, for the accomplishment of aims which I shall have freely adopted; and this will, as its own ultimate ground, determinable by nothing higher, shall move and mould, first my own body,

and through it the surrounding world. My active powers shall be under the control of my will alone, and shall be set in motion by nothing else than by it. Thus it shall be. There shall be a Supreme Good in the spiritual world; I shall have the power to seek this with freedom until I find it, to acknowledge it as such when found, and it shall be my fault if I do not find it. This Supreme Good I shall be able to desire, merely because I desire it; and if I desire anything else instead of it, the fault shall be mine. My actions shall be the results of this will, and without it there shall absolutely no action of mine ensue, since there shall be no other power over my actions but this will. Then shall my powers, determined by, and subject to the dominion of, my will, invade the external world. I will be the lord of Nature, and she shall be my servant. I will influence her according to the measure of my capacity, but she shall have no influence over me.

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This, then, is the substance of my wishes and aspirations. But the system, which has satisfied my understanding, has wholly repudiated these. According to the one I am wholly independent of Nature and of any law which I do not impose upon myself; according to the other, I am but a strictly determined link in the chain of Nature. Whether such a freedom as I have desired be at all conceivable, and, if so, whether, on complete and thorough investigation, there may not be found grounds which may compel me to accept it as a reality and ascribe it to myself, and whereby the result of my former conclusions might be refuted;—this is now the question.

To be free, in the sense stated, means that I myself will make myself whatever I am to be. I must then,—and this is what is most surprising, and, at first sight, absurd in the idea,—I must already be, in a certain sense, that



which I shall become, in order to be able to become so; I must possess a two-fold being, of which the first shall contain the *fundamental* determining principle of the second. If I interrogate my immediate self-consciousness on this matter, I find the following. I have the knowledge of various possible courses of action, from amongst which, as it appears to me, I may choose which I please. I run through the whole circle, enlarge it, examine the various courses, compare one with another, and consider. I at length decide upon one, determine my will in accordance with it, and this resolution of my will is followed by a corresponding action. Here then, certainly, I am beforehand, in the mere conception of a purpose, what subsequently, by means of this conception, I am in will and in action. I am beforehand as a thinking, what I am afterwards as an active, being. I create myself:—my being by my thought, my thought by thought itself. One can conceive the determinate state of a manifestation of a mere power of Nature, of a plant for instance, as preceded by an indeterminate state, in which, if left to itself, it might have assumed any one of an infinite variety of possible determinations. These manifold possibilities are certainly possibilities *within it*, contained in its original constitution, but they are not possibilities *for it*, because it is incapable of such an idea, and cannot choose or of itself put an end to this state of indecision: there must be external grounds by which it may be determined to some one of those various possibilities, to which it is unable to determine itself. This determination can have no previous existence within it, for it is capable of but one mode of determination, that which it has actually assumed. Hence it was, that I previously felt myself compelled to maintain that the manifestation of every power must receive its final determination from without. Doubtless I then thought only of such powers as are incapable of consciousness, and manifest themselves merely

in the outward world. To them that assertion may be applied without the slightest limitation ;—but to intelligences the grounds of it are not applicable, and it was, therefore, rash to extend it to them.

Freedom, such as I have laid claim to, is conceivable only of intelligences ; but to them, undoubtedly, it belongs. Under this supposition, man, as well as Nature, is perfectly comprehensible. My body, and my capacity of operating in the world of sense, are, as in the former system, manifestations of certain limited powers of Nature ; and my natural inclinations are the relations of these manifestations to my consciousness. The mere knowledge of what exists independently of me arises under this supposition of freedom, precisely as in the former system ; and up to this point, both agree. But according to the former, —and here begins the opposition between these systems, —according to the former, my capacity of physical activity remains under the dominion of Nature, and is constantly set in motion by the same power which produced it, thought having here nothing whatever to do but to look on ; according to the latter, this capacity, once brought into existence, falls under the dominion of a power superior to Nature and wholly independent of her laws,—the power of determinate purpose and of will. Thought is no longer the mere faculty of observation ;—it is the source of action itself. In the one case, my state of indecision is put an end to by forces, external and invisible to me, which limit my activity, as well as my immediate consciousness of it—that is, my will—to one point, just as the activity of the plant (undetermined by itself) is limited ;—in the other, it is I myself, independent, and free from the influence of all outward forces, who put an end to my state of indecision, and determine my own course, according to the knowledge I have freely attained of what is best.

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Which of these two opinions shall I adopt ? Am I free and independent ?—or am I nothing in myself, and merely the manifestation of a foreign power ? It is clear to me that neither of the two doctrines is sufficiently supported. For the first, there is no other recommendation than its mere conceivableness ; for the latter, I extend a principle, which is perfectly true in its own place, beyond its proper and natural application. If intelligence is merely the manifestation of a power of Nature, then I do quite right to extend this principle to it ; but, whether it is so or not, is the very question at issue, and this question I must solve by deduction from other premises, not by a one-sided answer assumed at the very commencement of the inquiry, from which I again deduce that only which I myself have previously placed in it. In short, it would seem that neither of the two opinions can be established by argument.

As little can this matter be determined by immediate consciousness. I can never become conscious either of the external powers by which, in the system of universal necessity, I am determined ; nor of my own power, by which, on the system of freedom, I determine myself. Thus whichever of the two opinions I may accept, I still accept it, not upon evidence, but merely by arbitrary choice.

The system of freedom satisfies my heart ; the opposite system destroys and annihilates it. To stand, cold and unmoved, amid the current of events, a passive mirror of fugitive and passing phenomena,—this existence is insupportable to me ; I scorn and detest it. I will love ;—I will lose myself in sympathy ;—I will know the joy and the grief of life. For myself, I myself am the highest object of such sympathy ; and the only mode in which I can satisfy its requirements is by my actions. I will do all for the best ;—I will rejoice when I have done right, I will grieve when I have done wrong ; and even this sor-

row shall be sweet to me, for it is a chord of sympathy,—a pledge of future amendment. In love only there is life ;—without it is death and annihilation.

But coldly and insolently does the opposite system advance, and turn this love into a mockery. If I listen to it, I am not, and I cannot act. The object of my most intimate attachment is a phantom of the brain,—a gross and palpable delusion. Not I, but a foreign, and to me wholly unknown, power acts in me ; and it is a matter of indifference to me how this power unfolds itself. I stand abashed, with my warm affections and my virtuous will ; and blush, as for a ridiculous folly, for what I know to be best and purest in my nature, for the sake of which alone I would exist. What is holiest in me is given over as a prey to scorn.

Doubtless it was the love of this love, an interest in this interest, that impelled me, unconsciously, before I entered upon the inquiry which has thus perplexed and distracted me, to regard myself, without farther question, as free and independent ; doubtless it was this interest which has led me to carry out, even to conviction, an opinion which has nothing in its favour but its intelligibility, and the impossibility of proving its opposite ; it was this interest which has hitherto restrained me from seeking any farther explanation of myself and my capacities.

The opposite system, barren and heartless indeed, but exhaustless in its explanations, will explain even this desire for freedom, and this aversion to the contrary doctrine. It explains everything which I can cite from my own consciousness against it, and as often as I say ‘thus and thus is the case,’ it replies with the same cool complacency, “I say so too ; and I tell you besides why it must *necessarily* be so.” “When thou speakest of thy heart, thy love, thy interest in this and that,” (thus will it answer all my complaints,) “thou standest merely at the point of immediate self-consciousness, and this thou

hast confessed already in asserting that thou thyself art the object of thy highest interest. Now we already know, and have proved it above, that this *thou* for whom thou art so keenly interested, in so far as it is not the activity of thy individual inward nature, is at least an impulse of it;—every such impulse, as surely as it exists, returns on itself and impels itself to activity;—and we can thus understand how this impulse must necessarily manifest itself in consciousness, as love for, and interest in, free individual activity. Couldst thou exchange this narrow point of view in self-consciousness for the higher position in which thou mayest grasp the universe, which indeed thou hast promised thyself to take, then it would become clear to thee that what thou hast named thy love is not *thy* love, but a foreign love,—the interest which the original power of Nature manifesting itself in thee takes in maintaining its own peculiar existence. Do not then appeal again to thy love; for even if that could prove anything beyond itself, its supposition here is wholly irregular and unjustifiable. *Thou lovest not thyself, for, strictly speaking, thou art not; it is Nature in thee which concerns herself for her own preservation.* Thou hast admitted without dispute, that although in the plant there exists a peculiar impulse to grow and develop itself, the specific activity of this impulse yet depends upon forces lying beyond itself. Bestow consciousness upon the plant,—and it will regard this instinct of growth with interest and love. Convince it by reasoning that this instinct is unable of itself to accomplish anything whatever, but that the measure of its manifestation is always determined by something out of itself,—and it will speak precisely as thou hast spoken; it will behave in a manner that may be pardoned in a plant, but which by no means beseems thee, who art a higher product of Nature, and capable of comprehending the universe.”

What can I answer to this representation? Should I

venture to place myself at this point of view, upon this boasted position from whence I may embrace the universe in my comprehension, doubtless I must blush and be silent. This, therefore, is the question,—whether I shall assume this position or confine myself to the range of immediate self-consciousness; whether love shall be made subject to knowledge, or knowledge to love. The latter alternative stands in bad esteem among intelligent people;—the former renders me indescribably miserable, by extinguishing my own personal being within me. I cannot do the latter without appearing inconsiderate and foolish in my own estimation;—I cannot do the former without deliberately annihilating my own existence.

I cannot remain in this state of indecision; on the solution of this question depends my whole peace and dignity. Impossible as it is to decide for myself, I have absolutely no ground of decision in favour of the one opinion or the other.

Intolerable state of uncertainty and irresolution! By the best and most courageous resolution of my life, I have been reduced to this! What power can deliver me from it?—what power can deliver me from myself?

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## BOOK II.

## KNOWLEDGE.

CHAGRIN and anguish stung me to the heart. I cursed the returning day which called me back to an existence whose truth and significance were now involved in doubt. I awoke in the night from unquiet dreams. I sought anxiously for a ray of light that might lead me out of these mazes of uncertainty. I sought, but became only more deeply entangled in the labyrinth.

Once, at the hour of midnight, a wondrous shape appeared before me, and addressed me :—

“Poor mortal,” I heard it say, “thou heapest error upon error, and fanciest thyself wise. Thou tremblest before the phantoms which thou hast thyself toiled to create. Dare to become truly wise. I bring thee no new revelation. What I can teach thee thou already knowest, and thou hast but to recall it to thy remembrance. I cannot deceive thee; for in every step thou thyself wilt acknowledge me to be in the right; and shouldst thou still be deceived, thou wilt be deceived by thyself. Take courage;—listen to me, and answer my questions.”

I took courage. “He appeals to my own understanding. I will make the venture. He cannot think his own thoughts into my mind; the conclusion to which I shall come must be thought out by myself; the conviction which I shall accept must be of my own creating.

Speak, wonderful Spirit!" I exclaimed, "whatever thou art! Speak, and I will listen. Question me, and I will answer."

*The Spirit.* Thou believest that these objects here, and those there, are actually present before thee and out of thyself?

*I.* Certainly I do.

*Spirit.* And how dost thou know that they are actually present?

*I.* I see them; I would feel them were I to stretch forth my hand; I can hear the sounds they produce; they reveal themselves to me through all my senses.

*Spirit.* Indeed! Thou wilt perhaps by and by take back the assertion that thou seest, feelest, and hearest these objects. For the present I will speak as thou dost, as if thou didst really, by means of thy sight, touch, and hearing, perceive the real existence of objects. But observe, it is only *by means of* thy sight, touch, and other external senses. Or is it not so? Dost thou perceive otherwise than through thy senses? and has an object any existence for thee, otherwise than as thou seest it, hearest it, &c.?

*I.* By no means.

*Spirit.* Sensible objects, therefore, exist for thee, only in consequence of a particular determination of thy external senses: thy knowledge of them is but a result of thy knowledge of this determination of thy sight, touch, &c. Thy declaration—'there are objects out of myself,' depends upon this other—'I see, hear, feel, and so forth?'

*I.* That is my meaning.

*Spirit.* And how dost thou know then that thou seest, hearest, feelest?

*I.* I do not understand thee. Thy questions appear strange to me.

*Spirit.* I will make them more intelligible. Dost thou see thy sight, and feel thy touch, or hast thou yet a higher



sense, through which thou perceivest thy external senses and their determinations ?

*I.* By no means. I know immediately that I see and feel, and what I see and feel ; I know this while it is, and simply because it is, without the intervention of any other sense. Hence it was that thy question seemed strange to me, because it appeared to throw doubt on this immediate consciousness.

*Spirit.* That was not my intention : I desired only to induce thee to make this immediate consciousness clear to thyself. So thou hast an immediate consciousness of thy sight and touch ?

*I.* Yes.

*Spirit.* Of *thy* sight and touch, I said. Thou art, therefore, the subject seeing, feeling, &c. ; and when thou art conscious of the seeing, feeling, &c., thou art conscious of a particular determination or modification of *thyself*.

*I.* Unquestionably.

*Spirit.* Thou hast a consciousness of thy seeing, feeling, &c., and thereby thou perceivest the object. Couldst thou not perceive it without this consciousness ? Canst thou not recognise an object by sight or hearing, without knowing that thou seest or hearest ?

*I.* By no means.

*Spirit.* The immediate consciousness of thyself, and of thy own determinations, is therefore the imperative condition of all other consciousness ; and thou knowest a thing, only in so far as thou knowest that thou knowest it : no element can enter into the latter cognition which is not contained in the former. Thou canst not know anything without knowing that thou knowest it ?

*I.* I think not.

*Spirit.* Therefore thou knowest of the existence of objects only by means of seeing, feeling them, &c. ; and thou knowest that thou seest and feelest, only by means of an immediate consciousness of this knowledge. What thou

dost not perceive *immediately*, thou dost not perceive at all.

*I.* I see that it is so.

*Spirit.* In all perception, thou perceivest in the first place only thyself and thine own condition; whatever is not contained in this perception, is not perceived at all?

*I.* Thou repeatest what I have already admitted.

*Spirit.* I would not weary of repeating it in all its applications, if I thought that thou hadst not thoroughly comprehended it, and indelibly impressed it on thy mind. Canst thou say, I am conscious of external objects?

*I.* By no means, if I speak accurately; for the sight and touch by which I grasp these objects are not consciousness itself, but only that of which I am first and most immediately conscious. Strictly speaking, I can only say, that I am conscious of my seeing and touching of these objects.

*Spirit.* Do not forget, then, what thou hast now clearly understood. *In all perception thou perceivest only thine own condition.*

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I shall, however, continue to speak thy language, since it is most familiar to thee. Thou hast said that thou canst see, hear, and feel objects. How then, — that is, with what properties or attributes,—dost thou see or feel them?

*I.* I see that object red, this blue; when I touch them, I find this smooth, that rough—this cold, that warm.

*Spirit.* Thou knowest then what red, blue, smooth, rough, cold, and warm, really signify?

*I.* Undoubtedly I do.

*Spirit.* Wilt thou not describe it to me then?

*I.* It cannot be described. Look! Turn thine eye towards that object:—what thou becomest conscious of through thy sight, I call red. Touch the surface of this other object:—what thou feelest, I call smooth. In this

way I have arrived at this knowledge, and there is no other way by which it can be acquired.

*Spirit.* But can we not, at least from some of these qualities known by immediate sensation, deduce a knowledge of others differing from them? If, for instance, any one had seen red, green, yellow, but never a blue colour; had tasted sour, sweet, salt, but never bitter,—would he not, by mere reflection and comparison, be able to discover what is meant by blue or bitter, without having ever seen or tasted anything of the kind?

*I.* Certainly not. What is matter of sensation can only be felt, it is not discoverable by thought; it is no deduction, but a direct and immediate perception.

*Spirit.* Strange! Thou boastest of a knowledge respecting which thou art unable to tell how thou hast attained it. For see, thou maintainest that thou canst see one quality in an object, feel another, hear a third; thou must, therefore, be able to distinguish sight from touch, and both from hearing?

*I.* Without doubt.

*Spirit.* Thou maintainest further, that thou seest this object red, that blue; and feelest this smooth, that rough. Thou must therefore be able to distinguish red from blue, smooth from rough?

*I.* Without doubt.

*Spirit.* And thou maintainest that thou hast not discovered this difference by means of reflection and comparison of these sensations in thyself. But perhaps thou hast learnt, by comparing the red or blue colours, the smooth or rough surfaces of *objects out of thyself*, what thou shouldst feel *in thyself* as red or blue, smooth or rough?

*I.* This is impossible; for my perception of objects proceeds from my perception of my own internal condition, and is determined by it,—not the reverse. I first distinguish objects by distinguishing my own states of being.

I can learn that this particular sensation is indicated by the arbitrary sign, red ;—and those by the signs, blue, smooth, rough ; but I cannot learn that the sensations themselves are distinguished, nor how they are distinguished. *That* they are different, I know only by being conscious of my own feelings, and that I feel differently regarding them. *How* they differ, I cannot describe ; but I know that they must differ just as my feeling regarding them differs ; and this difference of feeling is an immediate, and by no means an acquired or inferred distinction.

*Spirit.* Which thou canst make independently of all knowledge of the objects themselves ?

*I.* Which I *must* make independently of such knowledge, for this knowledge is itself dependent on that distinction.

*Spirit.* Which is then given to thee immediately through mere self-consciousness ?

*I.* In no other way.

*Spirit.* But then thou shouldst content thyself with saying,—“I feel myself affected in the manner that I call red, blue, smooth, rough.” Thou shouldst refer these sensations to thyself alone, and not transfer them to an object lying entirely out of thyself, and declare these modifications of thyself to be properties of that object.

Or, tell me, when thou believest that thou seest an object red, or feelest it smooth, dost thou really perceive anything more than that thou art affected in a certain manner ?

*I.* From what has gone before, I clearly see that I do not, in fact, perceive more than what thou sayest ; and this transference of what is in me to something out of myself, from which nevertheless I cannot refrain, now appears very strange to me.

My sensations are in myself, not in the object, for I am myself and not the object ; I am conscious only of myself and of my own state, not of the state of the object. If

there is a consciousness of the object, that consciousness is, certainly, neither sensation nor perception :—so much is clear.

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*Spirit.* Thou formest thy conclusions somewhat precipitately. Let us consider this matter on all sides, so that I may be assured that thou wilt not again retract what thou hast now freely admitted.

Is there then in the object, as thou usually conceivest of it, anything more than its red colour, its smooth surface, and so on ; in short, anything besides those characteristic marks which thou obtainest through immediate sensation ?

*I.* I believe that there is : besides these attributes there is yet the thing itself to which they belong ; the substratum which supports these attributes.

*Spirit.* But through what sense dost thou perceive this substratum of these attributes ? Dost thou see it, feel it, hear it ; or is there perhaps a special sense for its perception ?

*I.* No. I think that I see and feel it.

*Spirit.* Indeed ! Let us examine this more closely. Art thou then ever conscious of thy sight in itself, or at all times only of determinate acts of sight ?

*I.* I have always a determinate sensation of sight.

*Spirit.* And what is this determinate sensation of sight with respect to that object there ?

*I.* That of red colour.

*Spirit.* And this red is something positive, a simple sensation, a specific state of thyself ?

*I.* This I have understood.

*Spirit.* Thou shouldst therefore see the red in itself as simple, as a mathematical point, and thou dost see it only as such. In *thee* at least, as an affection of thyself, it is obviously a simple, determinate state, without connexion with anything else, — which we can only describe as

a mathematical point. Or dost thou find it otherwise?

*I.* I must admit that such is the case.

*Spirit.* But now thou spreadest this simple red over a broad surface, which thou assuredly *dost not see*, since thou seest only a *simple red*. How dost thou obtain this surface?

*I.* It is certainly strange.—Yet, I believe that I have found the explanation. I do not indeed see the surface, but I *feel* it when I pass my hand over it. My sensation of sight remains the same during this process of feeling, and hence I extend the red colour over the whole surface which I feel while I continue to see the same red.

*Spirit.* This might be so, didst thou really feel such a surface. But let us see whether that be possible. Thou dost not feel absolutely; thou feelest only thy feelings, and art only conscious of these?

*I.* By no means. Each sensation is a determinate something. I never merely see, or hear, or feel, in general, but my sensations are always definite;—red, green, blue colours, cold, warmth, smoothness, roughness, the sound of the violin, the voice of man, and the like,—are seen, felt, or heard. Let that be settled between us.

*Spirit.* Willingly.—Thus, when thou saidst that thou didst feel a surface, thou hadst only an immediate consciousness of feeling smooth, rough, or the like?

*I.* Certainly.

*Spirit.* This smooth or rough is, like the red colour, a simple sensation,—a point in thee, the subject in which it abides? And with the same right with which I formerly asked why thou didst spread a simple sensation of sight over an imaginary surface, do I now ask why thou shouldst do the same with a simple sensation of touch?

*I.* This smooth surface is perhaps not equally smooth in all points, but has in each a different degree of smoothness, although I want the capacity of strictly distinguishing these degrees from each other, and language whereby to

retain and express their differences. Yet I do distinguish them, unconsciously, and place them side by side ; and thus I form the conception of a surface.

*Spirit.* But canst thou, in the same undivided moment of time, have sensations of opposite kinds, or be affected at the same time in different ways ?

*I.* By no means.

*Spirit.* Those different degrees of smoothness, which thou wouldst assume in order to explain what thou canst not explain, are therefore, in so far as they are different from each other, mere opposite sensations which succeed each other in thee ?

*I.* I cannot deny this.

*Spirit.* Thou shouldst therefore describe them as thou really findest them,—as successive changes of the same mathematical point, such as thou perceivest in other cases ; and not as adjacent and simultaneous qualities of several points in one surface.

*I.* I see this, and I find that nothing is explained by my assumption. But my hand, with which I touch the object and cover it, is itself a surface ; and by it I perceive the object to be a surface, and a greater one than my hand, since I can extend my hand several times upon it.

*Spirit.* Thy hand a surface ? How dost thou know that ? How dost thou attain a consciousness of thy hand at all ? Is there any other way than either that thou by means of it feelest something else, in which case it is an instrument ; or that thou feelest itself by means of some other part of thy body, in which case it is an object ?

*I.* No, there is no other. With my hand I feel some other definite object, or I feel my hand itself by means of some other part of my body. I have no immediate, absolute consciousness of my hand, any more than of my sight or touch.

*Spirit.* Let us, at present, consider only the case in

which thy hand is an instrument, for this will determine the second case also. In this case there can be nothing more in the immediate perception than what belongs to sensation,—that whereby thou thyself, (and here in particular thy hand,) is conceived of as the subject tasting in the act of taste, feeling in the act of touch. Now, either thy sensation is single; in which case I cannot see why thou shouldst extend this single sensation over a sentient surface, and not content thyself with a single sentient point;—or thy sensation is varied; and in this case, since the differences must succeed each other, I again do not see why thou shouldst not conceive of these feelings as succeeding each other in one and the same point. That thy hand should appear to thee as a surface, is just as inexplicable as thy notion of an external surface in general. Do not make use of the first in order to explain the second, until thou hast explained the first itself. The second case, in which thy hand, or whatever other member of thy body thou wilt, is itself the object of a sensation, may easily be explained by means of the first. Thou perceivest this member by means of another, which is then the sentient one. I ask the same questions concerning this latter member that I asked concerning thy hand, and thou art as little able to answer them as before.

So it is with the surface of thy eyes, and with every other surface of thy body. It may very well be that the consciousness of an extension out of thyself, proceeds from the consciousness of thine own extension as a material body, and is conditioned by it. But then thou must, in the first place, explain this extension of thy material body.

I. It is enough. I now perceive clearly that I neither see nor feel the superficial extension of the properties of bodies, nor apprehend it by any other sense. I see that it is my habitual practice to extend over a surface what nevertheless in sensation is but one point, to represent as



adjacent and simultaneous what I ought to represent as only successive, since in mere sensation there is nothing simultaneous but all is successive. I discover that I proceed in fact exactly as the geometer does in the construction of his figures, extending points to lines and lines to surfaces. I am astonished how I should have done this.

*Spirit.* Thou dost more than this, and what is yet more wonderful. This surface which thou attributest to bodies, thou canst indeed neither see nor feel, nor perceive by any organ ; but it may be said, in a certain sense, that thou canst see the red colour, or feel the smoothness, *upon it*. But thou addest something more even to this surface :—thou extendest it to a solid mathematical figure ; as by thy previous admission thou hast extended the line to a surface. Thou assumest a substantial interior existence of the body behind its surface. Tell me, canst thou then see, feel, or recognise by any sense, the actual presence of anything behind this surface ?

*I.* By no means :—the space behind the surface is impenetrable to my sight, touch, or any of my senses.

*Spirit.* And yet thou dost assume the existence of such an interior substance, which, nevertheless, thou canst not perceive ?

*I.* I confess it, and my astonishment increases.

*Spirit.* What then is this something which thou imaginest to be behind the surface ?

*I.* Well—I suppose something similar to the surface, —something tangible.

*Spirit.* We must ascertain this more distinctly. Canst thou divide the mass of which thou imaginest the body to consist ?

*I.* I can divide it to infinity ;—I do not mean with instruments, but in thought. No possible part is the smallest so that it cannot be again divided.

*Spirit.* And in this division dost thou ever arrive at a portion of which thou canst suppose that it is no longer

perceptible in itself to sight, touch, &c.;—*in itself* I say, besides being imperceptible to thy own particular organs of sense ?

*I.* By no means.

*Spirit.* Visible, perceptible absolutely?—or with certain properties of colour, smoothness, roughness, and the like ?

*I.* In the latter way. Nothing is visible or perceptible absolutely, because there is no absolute sense of sight or touch.

*Spirit.* Then thou dost but spread through the whole mass thy own sensibility, that which is already familiar to thee,—visibility as coloured, tangibility as rough, smooth, or the like ; and after all it is this sensibility itself of which alone thou art sensible ? Or dost thou find it otherwise ?

*I.* By no means : what thou sayest follows from what I have already understood and admitted.

*Spirit.* And yet thou dost perceive nothing behind the surface, and hast perceived nothing there ?

*I.* Were I to break through it, I should perceive something.

*Spirit.* So much therefore thou knowest beforehand. And this infinite divisibility, in which, as thou maintainest, thou canst never arrive at anything absolutely imperceptible, thou hast never carried it out, nor canst thou do so ?

*I.* I cannot carry it out.

*Spirit.* To a sensation, therefore, which thou hast really had, thou addest in imagination another which thou hast not had ?

*I.* I am sensible only of that which I attribute to the surface ; I am not sensible of what lies behind it, and yet I assume the existence of something there which might be perceived. Yes, I must admit what thou sayest.

*Spirit.* And the actual sensation is in part found to correspond with what thou hast thus pre-supposed ?

*I.* When I break through the surface of a body, I do indeed find beneath it something perceptible, as I presupposed. Yes, I must admit this also.

*Spirit.* Partly, however, thou hast maintained that there is something beyond sensation, which cannot become apparent to any *actual* perception.

*I.* I maintain, that were I to divide a corporeal mass to infinity, I could never come to any part which is *in itself* imperceptible; although I admit that I can never make the experiment,—can never practically carry out the division of a corporeal mass to infinity. Yes, I must agree with thee in this also.

*Spirit.* Thus there is nothing remaining of the object but *what is perceptible*,—what is a property or attribute;—this perceptibility thou extendest through a continuous space which is divisible to infinity; and the true substratum or supporter of the attributes of things which thou hast sought, is, therefore, only the space which is thus filled?

*I.* Although I cannot be satisfied with this, but feel that I must still suppose in the object something more than this perceptibility and the space which it fills, yet I cannot point out this something, and I must therefore confess that I have hitherto been unable to discover any substratum but space itself.

*Spirit.* Always confess whatever thou perceivest to be true. The present obscurities will gradually become clear, and the unknown will be made known. Space itself, however, is not perceived; and thou canst not understand how thou hast obtained this conception, or why thou extendest throughout it this property of perceptibility?

*I.* It is so.

*Spirit.* As little dost thou understand how thou hast obtained even this conception of a perceptibility out of thyself, since thou really perceivest only thine own sensation in thyself, not as the property of an external thing, but as an affection of thine own being.

I. So it is. I see clearly that I really perceive only my own state, and not the object ; that I neither see, feel, nor hear this object ; but that, on the contrary, precisely there where the object should be, all seeing, feeling, and so forth, comes to an end.

But I have a presentiment. Sensations, *as affections of myself*, have no extension whatever, but are simple states : in their differences they are not contiguous to each other in space, but successive to each other in time. Nevertheless, I do extend them in space. May it not be by means of this extension, and simultaneously with it, that what is properly only my own feeling or sensation becomes changed for me into a perceptible something out of myself ; and may not this be the precise point at which there arises within me a consciousness of the external object ?

*Spirit.* This conjecture may be confirmed. But could we raise it immediately to a conviction, we should thereby attain to no complete insight, for this higher question would still remain to be answered,—How dost thou first come to extend sensation through space ? Let us then proceed at once to this question ; and let us propound it more generally—I have my reasons for doing so—in the following manner :—How is it, that, with thy consciousness, which is but an immediate consciousness of thyself, thou proceedest out of thyself ; and to the sensation which thou dost perceive, superaddest an object perceived and perceptible which yet thou dost not perceive ?

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I. Sweet or bitter, fragrant or ill-scented, rough or smooth, cold or warm,—these qualities, when applied to things, signify whatever excites in me this or that taste, smell, or other sensation. It is the same with respect to sounds. A relation to myself is always indicated, and it

never occurs to me that the sweet or bitter taste, the pleasant or unpleasant smell, lies in the thing itself,—it lies in me, and it appears only to be excited by the object. It seems indeed to be otherwise with the sensations of sight,—with colours, for example, which may not be pure sensations but a sort of intermediate affections; yet, when we consider it strictly, red and the others mean nothing more than what produce in me certain sensations of sight. This leads me to understand how it is that I attain to a knowledge of things out of myself. I am affected in a particular manner—this I know absolutely;—this affection must have a foundation; this foundation is not in myself, and therefore must be out of myself;—thus I reason rapidly and unconsciously, and forthwith assume the existence of such a foundation,—namely, the object. This foundation must be one by which the particular affection in question may be explained;—I am affected in the manner which I call a sweet taste, the object must therefore be of a kind to excite a sweet taste, or more briefly, must itself be *sweet*. In this way I determine the character of the object.

*Spirit.* There may be some truth in what thou sayest, although it is not the whole truth which might be said upon the subject. How this stands we shall undoubtedly discover in due time. Since, however, it cannot be denied that in other cases thou dost discover some truth by means of this principle of causality,—so I term the doctrine which thou hast just asserted, that everything (in this case thy affection) must have a foundation or cause—since this, I say, cannot be denied, it may not be superfluous to learn strictly to understand this procedure, and to make it perfectly clear to ourselves what it is thou really dost when thou adoptest it. Let us suppose, in the meantime, that thy statement is perfectly correct, that it is by an unconscious act of reasoning, from the effect to the cause, that thou first comest to assume the existence

of an outward object ;— what then was it which thou wert here conscious of perceiving ?

*I.* That I was affected in a certain manner.

*Spirit.* But of an object, affecting thee in a certain manner, thou wert not conscious, at least not as a perception ?

*I.* By no means. I have already admitted this.

*Spirit.* Then, by this principle of causality thou addest to a knowledge which thou hast another which thou hast not ?

*I.* Thy words are strange.

*Spirit.* Perhaps I may succeed in removing this strangeness. But let my words appear to thee as they may. They ought only to lead thee to produce in thine own mind the same thought that I have produced in mine ; not serve thee as a text-book which thou hast only to repeat. When thou hast the thought itself firmly and clearly in thy grasp, then express it as thou wilt, and with as much variety as thou wilt, and be sure that thou wilt always express it well.

How, and by what means, knowest thou of this affection of thyself ?

*I.* It would be difficult to answer thee in words :— Because my consciousness, as a subjective attribute, as the determination of my being in so far as I am an intelligence, proceeds directly upon the existence of this affection as its object, as that of which I am conscious, and is inseparable from it ;—because I am possessed of consciousness at all only in so far as I am cognisant of such an affection—cognisant of it absolutely, just as I am a cognisant of my own existence.

*Spirit.* Thou hast therefore an organ,—consciousness itself,—whereby thou perceivest such an affection of thyself ?

*I.* Yes.

*Spirit.* But an organ whereby thou perceivest the object itself thou hast not ?

*I.* Since thou hast convinced me that I neither see nor feel the object itself, nor apprehend it by any external sense, I find myself compelled to confess that I have no such organ.

*Spirit.* Bethink thee well of this. It may be turned against thee that thou hast made me this admission. What then is thy external sense at all, and how canst thou call it external, if it have no reference to any external object, and be not the organ whereby thou hast any knowledge of such ?

*I.* I desire truth, and trouble myself little about what may be turned against me. I distinguish absolutely because I do distinguish them, green, sweet, red, smooth, bitter, fragrant, rough, ill-scented, the sound of a violin and of a trumpet. Among these sensations I place some in a certain relation of likeness to each other, although in other respects I distinguish them from each other ; thus I find green and red, sweet and bitter, rough and smooth, &c., to have a certain relation of similarity to each other, and this similarity I feel to be respectively one of sight, taste, touch, &c. Sight, taste, and so forth, are not indeed in themselves actual sensations, for I never see or feel absolutely, as thou hast previously remarked, but always see red or green, taste sweet or bitter, &c. Sight, taste, and the like, are only more comprehensive definitions of actual sensations ; they are classes to which I refer these latter, not by arbitrary arrangement, but guided by the immediate sensation itself. I see in them therefore not external senses, but only particular definitions of the objects of the inward sense, of my own states or affections. How they become external senses, or, more strictly speaking, how I come to regard them as such, and so to name them, is now the question. I do not take back my admission that I have no organ for the object itself.

*Spirit.* Yet thou speakest of objects as if thou didst

really know of their existence, and hadst an organ for such knowledge?

I. Yes.

*Spirit.* And this thou dost, according to thy previous assumption, in consequence of the knowledge which thou dost really possess, and for which thou hast an organ, and on account of this knowledge?

I. It is so.

*Spirit.* Thy real knowledge, that of thy sensations or affections, is to thee like an imperfect knowledge, which, as thou sayest, requires to be completed by another. This other new knowledge thou conceivest and describest to thyself,—not as something which thou hast, for thou hast it not—but as something which thou shouldst have, over and above thy actual knowledge, if thou hadst an organ wherewith to apprehend it. “I know nothing indeed,” thou seemest to say, “of things in themselves, but such things there must be; they are to be found, if I could but find them.” Thou supposest another organ, which indeed is not thine, and this thou employest upon them, and thereby apprehendest them,—of course in thought only. Strictly speaking, thou hast no *consciousness of things*, but only a *consciousness* (produced by a passage out of thy actual consciousness by means of the principle of causality) of a *consciousness of things* (such as ought to be, such as of necessity must be, although not accessible to thee); and now thou wilt perceive that, in the supposition thou hast made, thou hast added to a knowledge which thou hast another which thou hast not.

I. I must admit this.

*Spirit.* Henceforward let us call this second knowledge, obtained by means of another, *mediate*, and the first *immediate* knowledge. A certain school has called this procedure which we have to some extent described above, a *synthesis*; by which we are, here at least, to understand not a *con-nexion* established between two elements pre-



viously existing, but an *an-nexion*, and an addition of a wholly new element arising through this *an-nexion* to another element previously existing independently of such addition.

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Thus the *first* consciousness appears as soon as thou discoverest thy own existence, and the latter is not discovered without the former; the *second* consciousness is produced in thee by means of the first.

*I.* But not successive to it in time; for I am conscious of external things at the very same undivided moment in which I become conscious of myself.

*Spirit.* I did not speak of such a succession in time at all; but I think that when thou reflectest upon that undivided consciousness of thyself and of the external object, distinguishest between them, and inquirest into their connexion, thou wilt find that the latter can be conceived of only as conditioned by the former, and as only possible on the supposition of its existence; but not *vice versa*.

*I.* So I find it to be; and if that be all thou wouldst say, I admit thy assertion and have already admitted it.

*Spirit.* Thou createst, I say, this second consciousness; producest it by a real act of thy mind. Or dost thou find it otherwise?

*I.* I have virtually admitted this already. I add to the consciousness which is simultaneous with that of my existence, another which I do not find in myself; I thus complete and double my actual consciousness, and this is certainly an act. But I am tempted to take back either my admission, or else the whole supposition. I am perfectly conscious of the act of my mind when I form a general conception, or when in cases of doubt I choose one of the many possible modes of action which lie before me; but of the act through which, according to thy assertion, I must produce the presentation of an object out of myself, I am not conscious at all.

*Spirit.* Do not be deceived. Of an act of thy mind thou canst become conscious only in so far as thou dost pass through a state of indetermination and indecision, of which thou wert likewise conscious, and to which this act puts an end. There is no such state of indecision in the case we have supposed; the mind has no need to deliberate what object it shall superadd to its particular sensations,—it is done at once. We even find this distinction in philosophical phraseology. An act of the mind of which we are conscious as such is called *freedom*. An act without consciousness of action is called *spontaneity*. Remember that I by no means attribute to thee an immediate consciousness of the act as such, but only that on subsequent reflection thou shouldst discover that there must have been an act. The higher question, what it is that prevents any such state of indecision, or any consciousness of our act, will undoubtedly be afterwards solved.

This act of the mind is called thought; a word which I have hitherto employed with thy concurrence; and it is said that thought takes place with spontaneity, in opposition to sensation which is mere receptivity. How is it then, that, in thy previous supposition, thou addest in thought to the sensation which thou certainly hast, an object of which thou knowest nothing?

*I.* I assume that my sensation must have a cause, and then proceed further,—

*Spirit.* Wilt thou not, in the first place, explain to me what is a cause?

*I.* I find a thing determined this way or that. I cannot rest satisfied with knowing that *so it is*;—I assume that it has *become so*, and that not by itself, but by means of a foreign power. This foreign power, that made it what it is, *contains the cause*; and the manifestation of that power, which did actually make it so, *is the cause* of this particular determination of the thing. That my sensation must have a cause, means that it is produced within me by a foreign power.

*Spirit.* This foreign power thou now addest in thought to the sensation of which thou art immediately conscious, and thus there arises in thee the presentation of an object ? Well,—let it be so.

Now observe : *If* sensation must have a cause, then I admit the correctness of thy inference ; and I see with what perfect right thou assumest the existence of objects out of thyself, notwithstanding that thou neither knowest nor canst know aught of them. But how then dost thou know, and how dost thou propose to prove, *that* sensation must have a cause ? Or, in the general manner in which thou hast stated the proposition, why canst thou not rest satisfied to know that something *is* ? why must thou assume that it has *become so*, or that it has become so by means of a foreign power ? I note that thou hast always only assumed this.

*I.* I confess it. But I cannot do otherwise than think so. It seems as if I knew it immediately.

*Spirit.* What this answer, “I know it immediately,” may signify, we shall see should we be brought back to it as the only possible one. We will however first try all other possible methods of ascertaining the grounds of the assertion that everything must have a cause.

Dost thou know this by immediate perception ?

*I.* How could I ? since perception only declares that in me something *is*, according as I am determined this way or that, but never that it has *become so* ; still less that it has become so by means of a foreign power lying beyond all perception.

*Spirit.* Or dost thou obtain this principle by generalisation of thy observation of external things, the cause of which thou hast always discovered out of themselves ; an observation which thou now appliest to thyself and to thine own condition ?

*I.* Do not treat me like a child, and ascribe to me palpable absurdities. By the principle of causality I first

arrive at a knowledge of things out of myself; how then can I again, by observation of these things, arrive at this principle itself. Shall the earth rest on the great elephant, and the great elephant again upon the earth?

*Spirit.* Or is this principle a deduction from some other general truth?

*I.* Which again could be founded neither on immediate perception, nor on the observation of external things, and concerning the origin of which thou wouldst still raise other questions! I could only possess this previous fundamental truth by immediate knowledge. Better to say this at once of the principle of causality and so put thy conjectures aside.

*Spirit.* Let it be so;—we then obtain, besides the first immediate knowledge of our own states through sensible perception, a second immediate knowledge concerning a general truth?

*I.* So it appears.

*Spirit.* The particular knowledge now in question, namely, that thy affections or states must have a cause, is entirely independent of the knowledge of things?

*I.* Certainly, for the latter is obtained only by means of it.

*Spirit.* And thou hast it absolutely in thyself?

*I.* Absolutely, for only by means of it do I first proceed out of myself.

*Spirit.* Out of thyself therefore, and through thyself, and through thine own immediate knowledge, thou prescribe laws to being and its relations?

*I.* Rightly considered, I prescribe laws only to my own presentations of being and its relations, and it will be more correct to make use of this expression.

*Spirit.* Be it so. Art thou then conscious of these laws in any other way than by acting in accordance with them?

*I.* My consciousness begins with the perception of my

own state ; I connect directly therewith the presentation of an object according to the principle of causality ;—both of these, the consciousness of my own state, and the presentation of an object, are inseparably united, there is no intervening consciousness between them, and this one undivided consciousness is preceded by no other. No, it is impossible that I should be conscious of this law before acting in accordance with it, or in any other way than by so acting.

*Spirit.* Thou actest upon this law therefore without being conscious of it ; thou actest upon it immediately and absolutely. Yet thou didst but now declare thyself conscious of it, and expressed it as a general proposition. How hast thou arrived at this latter consciousness ?

*I.* Doubtless thus. I observe myself subsequently, and perceive that I have thus acted, and turn this common experience into a general law.

*Spirit.* Thou canst therefore become conscious of this experience ?

*I.* Unquestionably,—I guess the object of these questions. This is the above-mentioned second kind of immediate consciousness, that of my activity ; as the first is sensation, or the consciousness of my passivity.

*Spirit.* Right. Thou *mayest* subsequently become conscious of thine own acts, by free observation of thyself and by reflection ; but it *is not necessary* that thou shouldst become so ;—thou art not immediately conscious of them at the moment of thy internal act.

*I.* Yet I must be originally conscious of them, for I am immediately conscious of my presentation of the object at the same moment that I am conscious of the sensation.—I have found the solution ; I am immediately conscious of my act, only not *as such* ; but it moves before me as *an objective reality*. This consciousness is a consciousness of the object. Subsequently by free reflection I may also become conscious of it as an act of my own mind.

My immediate consciousness is composed of two elements :—the consciousness of my passivity, *i. e.* sensation ;—and that of my activity, in the creation of an object according to the law of causality ;—the latter consciousness connecting itself immediately with the former. My consciousness of the object is only a yet unrecognised *consciousness of my creation of a presentation of an object.* I am cognisant of this creation only because I myself am the creator. And thus all consciousness is immediate, is but a consciousness of myself, and therefore perfectly comprehensible. Am I right ?

*Spirit.* Perfectly so ; but whence then the necessity and universality thou hast ascribed to thy principles ;—in this case to the principle of causality ?

*I.* From the immediate feeling that I cannot act otherwise so surely as I have reason ; and that no other reasonable being can act otherwise so surely as it is a reasonable being. That every thing fortuitous, such as in this case my sensation, must have a cause,—means : “ *I have at all times pre-supposed a cause, and every one who thinks will likewise be constrained to pre-suppose a cause.* ”

*Spirit.* Thou perceivest then that all knowledge is merely a knowledge of thyself ; that thy consciousness never goes beyond thyself ; and that what thou assumest to be a consciousness of the object is nothing but a consciousness of thine own supposition of an object, which, according to an inward law of thy thought, thou dost necessarily make simultaneously with the sensation itself.

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*I.* Proceed boldly with thy inferences ;—I have not interrupted thee, I have even helped thee in the development of these conclusions. But now, seriously, I retract my whole previous position, that by means of the principle of causality I arrive at the knowledge of external things ;

and I did indeed inwardly retract it as soon as it led us into serious error.

In this way I could become conscious only of a mere *power* out of myself, and of this only as a conception of my own mind, just as for the explanation of magnetic phenomena, I suppose a magnetic—or for the explanation of electrical phenomena, an electrical—power in Nature.

But the world does not appear to me such a mere thought,—the thought of a mere power. It is something extended, something thoroughly accessible, not, like a mere power, through its manifestations, but in itself;—it does not, like this, merely *produce*, it *has* qualities;—I am inwardly conscious of my apprehension of it, in a manner quite different from my consciousness of mere thought;—it appears to me as perception, notwithstanding that it has been proved that it cannot be such, and that it would be difficult for me to describe this kind of consciousness, and to distinguish it from the other kinds of which we have spoken.

*Spirit.* Thou must nevertheless attempt such a description, otherwise I shall not understand thee, and we shall never arrive at clearness.

*I.* I will attempt to open a way towards it. I beseech thee, O Spirit! if thy organ of sight be like mine, to fix thine eye on the red object before us, to surrender thyself unreservedly to the impression produced by it, and to forget meanwhile thy previous conclusions:—and now tell me candidly what takes place in thy mind.

*Spirit.* I can completely place myself in thy position; and it is no purpose of mine to disown any impression which has an actual existence. But tell me, what is the effect you anticipate?

*I.* Dost thou not perceive and apprehend at a single glance, the surface?—I say *the surface*,—does it not stand there present before thee, entire and at once?—art thou conscious, even in the most distant and obscure way, of

this extension of a simple red point to a line, and of this line to a surface, of which thou hast spoken? It is an after-thought to divide this surface, and conceive of its points and lines. Wouldst thou not, and would not every one who impartially observes himself, maintain and insist, notwithstanding thy former conclusions, that he really *saw* a surface of such or such a colour?

*Spirit.* I admit all this; and on examining myself, I find that it is exactly so as thou hast described.

But, in the first place, hast thou forgotten that it is not our object to relate to each other what presents itself in consciousness, as in a journal of the human mind, but to consider its various phenomena in their connexion, and to explain them by, and deduce them from, each other; and that consequently none of thy observations, which certainly cannot be denied, but which must be explained, can overturn any one of my just conclusions.

*I.* I shall never lose sight of this.

*Spirit.* Then do not, in the remarkable resemblance of this consciousness of bodies out of thyself, which yet thou canst not describe, to real perception, overlook the great difference nevertheless existing between them.

*I.* I was about to mention this difference. Each indeed appears as an immediate, not as an acquired or produced consciousness. But sensation is consciousness of my own state. Not so the consciousness of the object itself, which has absolutely no reference to me. I know that it *is*, and this is all; it does not concern me. If, in the first case, I seem like a piece of soft clay, pressed and moulded now in this way, now in that; in the second I appear like a mirror before which objects pass without producing the slightest change in it.

This distinction however is in my favour. Just so much the more do I seem to have a distinct consciousness of an existence out of myself, entirely independent of the sense of my own state of being;—of an existence out of myself,



I say—for this differs altogether in kind from the consciousness of my own internal states.

*Spirit.* Thou observest well—but do not rush too hastily to a conclusion. If that whereon we have already agreed remains true, and thou canst be immediately conscious of thyself only; if the consciousness now in question be not a consciousness of thine own passivity, and still less a consciousness of thine own activity;—may it not then be an *unrecognised* consciousness of thine own being?—of thy being in so far as thou art a *knowing* being,—an Intelligence?

*I.* I do not understand thee; but help me once more, for I wish to understand thee.

*Spirit.* I must then demand thy whole attention, for I am here compelled to go deeper, and expatiate more widely, than ever.—What art thou?

*I.* To answer thy question in the most general way—I am I, myself.

*Spirit.* I am well satisfied with this answer. What dost thou mean when thou sayest “I”;—what lies in this conception,—and how dost thou attain it?

*I.* On this point I can make myself understood only by contrast. External existence—*the thing*, is something out of me, the cognitive being. I am *myself* the cognitive being, one with the object of my cognition. As to my consciousness of the former, there arises the question,—Since the thing cannot know itself, how can a knowledge of it arise?—how can a consciousness of the thing arise *in me*, since I myself am not the thing, nor any of its modes or forms, and all these modes and forms lie within the circle of its own being, and by no means in mine? How does the thing reach me? What is the tie between me, the subject, and the thing which is the object of my knowledge? But as to my consciousness of *myself*, there can be no such question. In this case, I have my knowledge within myself, for I am intelligence. What I am, I know

because I am it; and that whereof I know immediately that I am it, that I am because I immediately know it. There is here no need of any tie between subject and object; my own nature is this tie. I am subject and object:—and this *subject-objectivity*, this return of knowledge upon itself, is what I mean by the term “I,” when I deliberately attach a definite meaning to it.

*Spirit.* Thus it is in the identity of subject and object that thy nature as an intelligence consists?

*I.* Yes.

*Spirit.* Canst thou then comprehend the possibility of thy becoming conscious of this identity, which is neither subject nor object, but which lies at the foundation of both, and out of which both arise?

*I.* By no means. It is the condition of all my consciousness, that the conscious being, and what he is conscious of, appear distinct and separate. I cannot even conceive of any other consciousness. In the very act of recognising myself, I recognise myself as subject and object, both however being immediately bound up with each other.

*Spirit.* Canst thou become conscious of the moment in which this inconceivable one separated itself into these two?

*I.* How can I, since my consciousness first becomes possible in and through their separation,—since it is my consciousness itself that thus separates them? Beyond consciousness itself there is no consciousness.

*Spirit.* It is this separation, then, that thou necessarily recognisest in becoming conscious of thyself? In this thy very original being consists?

*I.* So it is.

*Spirit.* And on what then is it founded?

*I.* I am intelligence, and have consciousness in myself. This separation is the condition and result of consciousness. It has its foundation, therefore, in myself, like consciousness.

*Spirit.* Thou art intelligence, thou sayest, at least this is all that is now in question, and as such thou becomest an object to thyself. Thy knowledge therefore, *as objective*, presents itself before thyself, *i. e.* before thy knowledge, *as subjective*, and floats before it; but without thou thyself being conscious of such a presentation?

*I.* So it is.

*Spirit.* Canst thou not then adduce some more exact characteristics of the subjective and objective elements as they appear in consciousness?

*I.* The subjective appears to contain within itself the foundation of consciousness as regards its form, but not as regards its substance. That there is a consciousness, an inward perception and conception,—of this the foundation lies in itself; but that precisely this or that is conceived,—the consciousness of this is dependent on the objective, with which it is conjoined, and with which it, as it were, passes away. The objective, on the contrary, contains the foundation of its being within itself; it is in and for itself,—it is, as it is, because it is so. The subjective appears as the still and passive mirror of the objective; the latter floats before it. That the former should reflect images generally, lies in itself. That precisely this image and none other should be reflected, depends on the latter.

*Spirit.* The subjective, then, according to its essential nature, is precisely so constituted as thou hast previously described thy consciousness of an existence out of thyself to be?

*I.* It is true, and this agreement is remarkable. I begin to believe it half credible, that out of the internal laws of my own consciousness may proceed even the presentation of an existence out of myself, and independent of me; and that this presentation may at bottom be nothing more than the presentation of these laws themselves.

*Spirit.* And why only half credible?

*I.* Because I do not yet see why precisely such a pre-

sensation—a presentation of a mass extended through space—should arise.

*Spirit.* Thou hast already seen that it is only thine own sensation which thou extendest through space; and thou hast had some forebodings that it is by this extension in space alone that thy sensation becomes transformed for thee into something sensible. We have therefore to do at present only with space itself, and to explain its origin in consciousness.

*I.* So it is.

*Spirit.* Let us then make the attempt. I know that thou canst not become conscious of thy intelligent activity as such, in so far as it remains in its original and unchangeable unity;—*i.e.* in the condition which begins with its very being, and can never be destroyed without at the same time destroying that being;—and such a consciousness therefore I do not ascribe to thee. But thou canst become conscious of it in so far as it passes from one state of transition to another within the limits of this unchangeable unity. When thou dost represent it to thyself in the performance of this function, how does it appear to thee—this internal spiritual activity?

*I.* My spiritual faculty appears as if in a state of internal motion, swiftly passing from one point to another;—in short, as an extended line. A definite thought makes a point in this line.

*Spirit.* And why as an extended line?

*I.* Can I give a reason for that beyond the circle of which I cannot go without at the same time overstepping the limits of my own existence? It is so, absolutely.

*Spirit.* Thus, then, does a particular act of thy consciousness appear to thee. But what shape then is assumed, not by thy produced, but by thy inherited, knowledge, of which all specific thought is but the revival and further definition?—how does this present itself to thee?

*I.* Evidently as something in which one may draw

lines and make points in all directions, namely, *as space*.

*Spirit.* Now then, it will be entirely clear to thee, how that, which really proceeds from thyself, may nevertheless appear to thee as an existence external to thyself,—nay, must necessarily appear so.

Thou hast penetrated to the true source of the presentation of things out of thyself. This presentation is not perception, for thou perceivest thyself only ;—as little is it thought, for things do not appear to thee as mere results of thought. It is an actual, and indeed absolute and immediate consciousness of an existence out of thyself, just as perception is an immediate consciousness of thine own condition. Do not permit thyself to be perplexed by sophists and half-philosophers ; things do not appear to thee through any representation ;—of the thing that exists, and that can exist, thou art immediately conscious ;—and there is no other thing than that of which thou art conscious. Thou thyself art the thing ; thou thyself, by virtue of thy finitude—the innermost law of thy being—art thus presented before thyself, and projected out of thyself ; and all that thou perceivest out of thyself is still—thyself only. This consciousness has been well named INTUITION. In all consciousness I contemplate myself, for I am myself :—to the subjective, conscious being, consciousness is self-contemplation. And the objective, that which is contemplated and of which I am conscious, is also myself,—the same self which contemplates, but now floating as an objective presentation before the subjective. In this respect, consciousness is an active retrospect of my own intuitions ; an observation of myself from my own position ; a projection of myself out of myself by means of the only mode of action which is properly mine, —perception. I am a living faculty of vision. I see (*consciousness*) my own vision (*the thing of which I am conscious.*)

Hence this object is also thoroughly transparent to thy

mind's eye, because it is thy mind itself. Thou dividest, limitest, determinest, the possible forms of things, and the relations of these forms, previous to all perception. No wonder,—for in so doing thou dividest, limitest, and determinest thine own knowledge, which undoubtedly is sufficiently known to thee. Thus does a knowledge of things become possible ; it is not in the things, and cannot proceed out of them. It proceeds from thee, and is indeed thine own nature.

There is no outward sense, for there is no outward perception. There is, however, an outward intuition ;—not of things, but this outward intuition—this knowledge apparently external to the subjective being, and hovering before it,—is itself the thing, and there is no other. By means of this outward intuition are perception and sense regarded as external. It remains eternally true, for it is proved,—that I see or feel a surface,—my sight or feeling takes the shape of the sight or feeling of a surface. Space,—illuminated, transparent, palpable, penetrable space,—the purest image of my knowledge, is not seen, but is an intuitive possession of my own mind ; in it even my faculty of vision itself is contained. The light is not out of, but in me, and I myself am the light. Thou hast already answered my question, “ How dost thou know of thy sensations, of thy seeing, feeling, &c. ? ” by saying that thou hast an immediate knowledge or consciousness of them. Now, perhaps, thou wilt be able to define more exactly this immediate consciousness of sensation.

*I.* It must be a two-fold consciousness. Sensation is itself an immediate consciousness ; for I am sensible of my own sensation. But from this there arises no knowledge of outward existence, but only the feeling of my own state. I am however, originally, not merely a sensitive, but also an intuitive being ; not merely a practical being, but also an intelligence. I intuitively contemplate my sensation itself, and thus there arises from myself and my own na-

ture, the *cognition of an existence*. Sensation becomes transformed into its own object; my affections, as red, smooth, and the like, into a *something* red, smooth, &c. out of myself; and this something, and my relative sensation, I intuitively contemplate in space, because the intuition itself is space. Thus does it become clear why I believe that I see or feel surfaces, which, in fact, I neither see nor feel. I intuitively regard my own sensation of sight or touch, as the sight or touch of a surface.

*Spirit.* Thou hast well understood me, or rather thyself.

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*I.* But now it is not by means of any inference, either recognised or unrecognised, from the principle of causality, that things are originated for me; they float immediately before me, and are presented to my consciousness without any process of reasoning. I cannot say, as I have formerly said, that perception becomes transformed into something perceivable, for the perceivable, as such, has precedence in consciousness. It is not with an affection of myself, as red, smooth, or the like, that consciousness begins, but with a red, smooth object out of myself.

*Spirit.* If, however, thou wert obliged to explain what is red, smooth, and the like, couldst thou possibly make any other reply than that it was that by which thou wert affected in a certain manner that thou namest red, smooth, &c.?

*I.* Certainly not,—if you were to ask me, and I were to enter upon the question and attempt an explanation. But originally no one asks me the question, nor do I ask it of myself. I forget myself entirely, and lose myself in my intuition of the object; become conscious, not of my own state, but only of an existence out of myself. Red, green, and the like, are properties of the thing; it is red or green, and this is all. There can be no further explanation, any more than there can be a further explana-

tion of these affections in me: on this we have already agreed. This is most obvious in the sensation of sight. Colour appears as something out of myself; and the common understanding of man, if left to itself, and without farther reflection, would scarcely be persuaded to describe red, green, &c. as that which excited within him a specific affection.

*Spirit.* But, doubtless, it might so describe sweet or sour. It is not our business at present to inquire whether the impression made by means of sight be a pure sensation, or whether it may not rather be a middle term between sensation and intuition, and the bond by which they are united in our minds. But I admit thy assertion, and it is extremely welcome to me. Thou canst, indeed, lose thyself in the intuition; and unless thou directest particular attention to thyself, or takest an interest in some external action, thou dost so, naturally and necessarily. This is the remark to which the defenders of a groundless consciousness of external things appeal, when it is shown that the principle of causality, by which the existence of such things might be inferred, exists only in ourselves; they deny that any such inference is made, and, in so far as they refer to actual consciousness in particular cases, this cannot be disputed. These same defenders, when the nature of intuition is explained to them from the laws of intelligence itself, themselves draw this inference anew, and never weary of repeating that there must be something external to us which compels us to this belief.

*I* Do not trouble thyself about them at present, but instruct me. I have no preconceived opinion, but seek for truth only.

*Spirit.* Nevertheless, intuition necessarily proceeds from the perception of thine own state, although thou art not always clearly conscious of this perception, as thou hast already seen. Even in that consciousness in which



thou lovest thyself in the object, there is always something which is only possible by means of an unrecognised reference to thyself, and close observation of thine own state.

*I.* Consequently, at all times and places the consciousness of existence out of myself must be accompanied by an unobserved consciousness of myself ?

*Spirit.* Just so.

*I.* The former being determined through the latter,—so determined as it actually is ?

*Spirit.* That is my meaning.

*I.* Prove this to me, and I shall be satisfied.

*Spirit.* Dost thou imagine only things in general as placed in space, or each of them individually as occupying a certain portion of space ?

*I.* The latter,—each thing has its determinate bulk.

*Spirit.* And do different things occupy the same part of space ?

*I.* By no means ; they exclude each other. They are beside, over or under, behind or before, each other ;—nearer to me or farther from me.

*Spirit.* And how dost thou come to this measurement and arrangement of them in space ? Is it by sensation ?

*I.* How could that be, since space itself is no sensation ?

*Spirit.* Or intuition ?

*I.* This cannot be. Intuition is immediate and infallible. What is contained in it does not appear as produced, and cannot deceive. But I must train myself to estimate, measure and deliberate upon, the size of an object, its distance from me, its position with respect to other objects. It is a truth known to every beginner, that we originally see all objects in the same line ; that we learn to estimate their greater or lesser distances ; that the child attempts to grasp distant objects as if they lay immediately before his eyes ; and that one born blind

who should suddenly receive sight would do the same. This conception of distances is therefore a judgment ;—no intuition, but an arrangement of my different intuitions by means of the understanding. I may err in my estimate of the size, distance, &c., of an object ; and the so-called optical deceptions are not deceptions of sight, but erroneous judgments formed concerning the size of the object, concerning the size of its different parts in relation to each other, and consequently concerning its true figure and its distance from me and from other objects. But it does really exist in space, as I contemplate it, and the colours which I see in it are likewise really seen by me ;—and here there is no deception.

*Spirit.* And what then is the principle of this judgment,—to take the most distinct and easy case,—thy judgment of the proximity or distance of objects,—how dost thou estimate this distance ?

*I.* Doubtless by the greater strength or weakness of impressions otherwise equal. I see before me two objects of the same red colour. The one whose colour I see more vividly, I regard as the nearer : that whose colour seems to me fainter, as the more distant, and as so much the more distant as the colour seems fainter.

*Spirit.* Thus thou dost estimate the distance according to the degree of strength or weakness in the sensation ; and this strength or weakness itself,—dost thou also estimate it ?

*I.* Obviously only in so far as I take note of my own affections, and even of very slight differences in these.—Thou hast conquered ! All consciousness of objects out of myself is determined by the clearness and exactitude of my consciousness of my own states, and in this consciousness there is always a conclusion drawn from the effect in myself to a cause out of myself.

*Spirit.* Thou art quickly vanquished ; and I must now myself carry forward, in thy place, the controversy against

myself. My argument can only apply to those cases in which an actual and deliberate estimate of the size, distance, and position, of objects takes place, and in which thou art conscious of making such an estimate. Thou wilt however admit that this is by no means the common case, and that for the most part thou rather becomest conscious of the size, distance, &c., of an object, at the very same undivided moment in which thou becomest conscious of the object itself.

*I.* When once we learn to estimate the distances of objects by the strength of the impression, the rapidity of this judgment is merely the consequence of its frequent exercise. I have learnt, by a lifelong experience, rapidly to observe the strength of the impression and thereby to estimate the distance. My present conception is founded upon a combination, formerly made, of sensation, intuition, and previous judgments; although at the moment I am conscious only of the present conception. I no longer apprehend *generally* red, green, or the like, out of myself, but a red or a green *at this, that, or the other distance*; but this last addition is merely a renewal of a judgment formerly arrived at by deliberate reflection.

*Spirit.* Has it not then, at length, become clear to thee whether thou discoverest the existence of things out of thyself by intuition, or by reasoning, or both,—and in how far by each of these?

*I.* Perfectly; and I believe that I have now attained the fullest insight into the origin of my conceptions of objects out of myself.

1. I am absolutely conscious of myself, because I am this *I*,—myself; and that partly as a practical being, partly as an intelligence. The first consciousness is Sensation, the second Intuition—unlimited space.

2. I cannot comprehend the unlimited, for I am finite. I therefore set apart, in thought, a certain portion

of universal space, and place this portion in a certain relation to the whole.

3. The measure of this limited portion of space is the extent of my own sensibility, according to a principle which may be thus expressed:—Whatever affects me in such or such a manner is to be placed, in space, in such or such relations to the other things which affect me.

The properties or attributes of the object proceed from the perception of my own internal state; the space which it fills, from intuitive contemplation. By a process of thought, both are conjoined; the former being added to the latter. It is so, assuredly, as we have said before:—that which is merely a state or affection of myself, by being transferred or projected into space becomes an attribute of the object; but it is so projected into space, not by intuition, but by thought, by measuring, regulating thought. Not that this act is to be regarded as an intellectual discovery or creation; but only as a more exact definition, by means of thought, of something which is already given in sensation and intuition, independent of all thought.

*Spirit.* Whatever affects me in such or such a manner is to be placed in such or such relations:—thus dost thou reason in defining and arranging objects in space. But does not the declaration that a thing affects thee in a certain manner, include the assumption that it affects thee generally?

*I.* Undoubtedly.

*Spirit.* And is any presentation of an external object possible, which is not in this manner limited and defined in space?

*I.* No; for no object exists in space generally, but each one in a determinate portion of space.

*Spirit.* So that in fact, whether thou art conscious of it or not, every external object is assumed by thee as

affecting thyself, as certainly as it is assumed as filling a determinate portion of space ?

*I.* That follows, certainly.

*Spirit.* And what kind of presentation is that of an object affecting thyself ?

*I.* Evidently a thought ; and indeed a thought founded on the principle of causality already mentioned. I see now, still more clearly, that the consciousness of the object is engrafted on my self-consciousness in two ways,—partly by intuition, and partly by thought founded on the principle of causality. The object, however strange this may seem, is at once the immediate object of my consciousness, and the result of deliberate thought.

*Spirit.* In different respects, however. Thou must be capable of being conscious of this thought of the object ?

*I.* Doubtless ; although usually I am not so.

*Spirit.* Therefore to thy passive state, thy affection, thou dost superadd in thought an activity out of thyself, such as thou hast before described in the case of thy thought according to the principle of causality ?

*I.* Yes.

*Spirit.* And with the same meaning and the same validity as thou didst describe it before. Thou thinkest so once for all, and must think so ; thou canst not alter it, and canst know nothing more than that thou dost think so ?

*I.* Nothing more. We have already investigated all this thoroughly.

*Spirit.* I said, thou dost assume an object :—in so far as it is so assumed, it is a product of thy own thought only ?

*I.* Certainly : this follows from the former.

*Spirit.* And what now is this object which is thus assumed according to the principle of causality ?

*I.* A power out of myself.

*Spirit.* Which is neither revealed to thee by sensation nor by intuition ?

*I.* No; I always remain perfectly conscious that I do not perceive it immediately, but only by means of its manifestations; although I ascribe to it an existence independent of myself. I am affected, there must therefore be something that affects me,—such is my thought.

*Spirit.* The object which is revealed to thee in intuition, and that which thou assumest by reasoning, are thus very different things. That which is actually and immediately present before thee, spread out in space, is the object of intuition; the internal force within it, which is not present before thee, but whose existence thou art led to assert only by a process of inference, is the object of the reason.

*I.* The internal force within it, saidst thou?—and now I bethink me, thou art right. I place this force also in space, and superadd it to the mass which I regard as occupying space.

*Spirit.* And what then, according to thy view, is the nature of the relation subsisting between this force and the mass?

*I.* The mass, with its properties, is itself the result and manifestation of the inward force. This force has two modes of operation:—one whereby it maintains itself, and assumes this particular form in which it appears; another upon me, by which it affects me in a particular manner.

*Spirit.* Formerly thou soughtest another substratum for sensible attributes or qualities than the space which contains them; something besides this space, permanent amid the vicissitudes of perpetual change?

*I.* Yes, and this permanent substratum is found. It is force itself. This remains for ever the same amid all change, and it is this which assumes and supports all sensible attributes or qualities.

*Spirit.* Let us cast a glance back on all that we have now established. Thou feelest thyself in a certain state, affected in a certain manner, which thou callest red,

smooth, sweet, and so on. Of this thou knowest nothing, but simply that thou feelest, and feelest in this particular manner. Or dost thou know more than this? Is there in mere sensation anything more than mere sensation?

*I.* No.

*Spirit.* Further, it is by thine own nature as an intelligence that there is space spread out before thee;—or dost thou know anything more than this concerning space?

*I.* By no means.

*Spirit.* Between that state of simple sensation, and this space which is spread out before thee, there is not the smallest connexion except that they are both present in thy consciousness. Or dost thou perceive any other connexion between them?

*I.* I see none.

*Spirit.* But thou art a thinking, as well as a sensitive and intuitive, being; and yet neither dost thou *know* anything more of this matter, than that so thou art. Thou dost not merely feel thy sensible state,—thou canst also conceive of it in thought; but it affords thee no complete thought; thou art compelled to add something to it, an external foundation, a foreign power. Or dost thou know more of it than that thou dost so think, and that thou art compelled so to think?

*I.* I can know nothing more respecting it. I cannot proceed beyond my thought; for, simply because I think it, does it become my thought and fall under the inevitable laws of my being.

*Spirit.* Through this thought of thine, there first arises a connexion between thy own state which thou feelest, and the space which thou dost intuitively contemplate; thou supposest the one the foundation of the other. Is it not so?

*I.* It is so. Thou hast clearly proved that I produce this connexion in my consciousness by my own thought only, and that such a connexion is neither directly felt, nor intuitively perceived. But of any connexion beyond the

limits of my consciousness I cannot speak ; I cannot even describe such a connexion in any manner of way ; for even in speaking of it I must be conscious of it ; and, since this consciousness can only be a thought, the connexion itself could be nothing more than a thought ; and this is precisely the same connexion which occurs in my ordinary natural consciousness, and no other. I cannot proceed a hair's-breadth beyond this consciousness, any more than I can spring out of myself. All attempts to conceive of an absolute connexion between things *in themselves*, and the *I in itself*, are but attempts to ignore our own thought,—a strange forgetfulness of the undeniable fact that we can have no thought without having—thought it. That there is a thing *in itself* is itself a thought ;—this, namely, that there is a great thought which yet no man has ever thought out.

*Spirit.* From thee then I need fear no objection to the principle now established :—*that our consciousness of things out of ourselves is absolutely nothing more than the product of our own presentative faculty*, and that, with regard to external things we know nothing more than what is produced through our consciousness itself, and through a determinate consciousness subject to such and such laws.

*I.* I cannot refute this. It is so.

*Spirit.* Thou canst not then object to the bolder statement of the same proposition ; that in that which we call knowledge and observation of outward things, we at all times recognise and observe ourselves only ; and that in all our consciousness we know of nothing whatever but of ourselves and of our own determinate states.

I say, thou wilt not be able to advance aught against this proposition ; for if the external world *generally* arises for us only through our own consciousness, what is particular and multiform in this external world can arise in no other way ; and if the connexion between what is external to us and ourselves is merely a connexion in our



own thought, then is the connexion of the multifarious objects of the external world among themselves undoubtedly this and no other. As clearly as I have now pointed out to thee the origin of this system of objects beyond thyself and their relation to thee, could I also show thee the law according to which there arises an infinite multiplicity of such objects, mutually connected, reciprocally determining each other with rigid necessity, and thus forming a complete world-system, as thou thyself hast well described it; and I only spare myself this task because I find that thou hast already admitted the conclusion for the sake of which alone I should have undertaken it.

I. I see it all, and must assent to it.

*Spirit.* And with this insight, mortal, be free, and for ever released from the fear which has degraded and tormented thee! Thou wilt no longer tremble at a necessity which exists only in thine own thought; no longer fear to be crushed by things which are the product of thine own mind; no longer place thyself, the thinking being, in the same class with the thoughts which proceed from thee. As long as thou couldst believe that a system of things, such as thou hast described, really existed out of, and independently of, thee, and that thou thyself mightst be but a link in this chain, such a fear was well grounded. Now, when thou hast seen that all this exists only in and through thyself, thou wilt doubtless no longer fear that which thou dost now recognise as thine own creation.

It was from this fear that I wished to set thee free. Thou art delivered from it, and I now leave thee to thyself.\*

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\* For an acute and exhaustive criticism of the grounds and limits of human knowledge, with special reference to the claims of physical science in its more recent developments, and to the works of Helmholtz, Huxley, Tyndal and others, see "Modern Realism examined, by Thomas Martin Herbert, M.A.—London, 1886." [Tr. 1888.]

*I.* Stay, deceitful Spirit ! Is this all the wisdom towards which thou hast directed my hopes, and dost thou boast that thou hast set me free ? Thou hast set me free, it is true :—thou hast absolved me from all dependence ; for thou hast transformed myself, and everything around me on which I could possibly be dependent, into nothing. Thou hast abolished necessity by annihilating all existence.

*Spirit.* Is the danger so great ?

*I.* And thou canst jest !—According to thy system—

*Spirit.* My system ? Whatever we have agreed upon, we have produced in common ; we have laboured together, and thou hast understood everything as well as I myself. But it would still be difficult for thee at present even to guess at my true and perfect mode of thought.

*I.* Call thy thoughts by what name thou wilt ; by all that thou hast hitherto said, there is nothing, absolutely nothing but presentations,—modes of consciousness, and of consciousness only. But a presentation is to me only the picture, the shadow, of a reality ; in itself it cannot satisfy me, and has not the smallest worth. I might be content that this material world beyond me should vanish into a mere picture, or be dissolved into a shadow ; I am not dependent on it :—but according to thy previous reasoning, I myself disappear no less than it ; I myself am transformed into a mere presentation, without meaning and without purpose. Or tell me, is it otherwise ?

*Spirit.* I say nothing in my own name. Examine, —help thyself !

*I.* I appear to myself as a body existing in space, with organs of sense and of action, as a physical force governed by a will. Of all this thou wilt say, as thou hast before said of objects out of myself, the thinking being, that it is a product of sensation, intuition, and thought combined.

*Spirit.* Undoubtedly. I will even show thee, step by step, if thou desirest it, the laws according to which thou

appearest to thyself in consciousness as an organic body, with such and such senses,—as a physical force, &c., and thou wilt be compelled to admit the truth of what I show thee.

*I.* I foresee that result. As I have been compelled to admit that what I call sweet, red, hard, and so on, is nothing more than my own affection; and that only by intuition and thought it is transposed out of myself into space, and regarded as the property of something existing independently of me; so shall I also be compelled to admit that this body, with all its organs, is nothing but a sensible manifestation, in a determinate portion of space, of myself the inward thinking being;—that *I*, the spiritual entity, the pure intelligence, and *I*, the bodily frame in the physical world, are one and the same, merely viewed from two different sides, and conceived of by two different faculties;—the first by pure thought, the second by external intuition.

*Spirit.* This would certainly be the result of any inquiry that might be instituted.

*I.* And this thinking, spiritual entity, this intelligence which by intuition is transformed into a material body,—what can even it be, according to these principles, but a product of my own thought, something merely conceived of by me because I am compelled to imagine its existence by virtue of a law to me wholly incomprehensible, proceeding from nothing and tending to nothing?

*Spirit.* It is possible.

*I.* Thou becomest hesitating and monosyllabic. It is not possible only: it is necessary, according to these principles.

This perceiving, thinking, willing, intelligent entity, or whatever else thou mayest name that which possesses the faculties of perception, thought, and so forth;—that in which these faculties inhere, or in whatever other way thou mayest express this thought;—how do I attain a

knowledge of it? Am I immediately conscious of it? How can I be? It is only of actual and specific *acts* of perception, thought, will, &c., as of particular occurrences, that I am immediately conscious; not of the capacities through which they are performed, and still less of a being in whom these capacities inhere. I perceive, directly and intuitively, this specific thought which occupies me during the present moment, and other specific thoughts in other moments; and here this inward intellectual intuition, this immediate consciousness, ends. This inward intuitive thought now becomes itself an object of thought; but according to the laws under which alone I can think, it seems to me imperfect and incomplete, just as formerly the thought of my sensible states was but an imperfect thought. As formerly to mere passivity I unconsciously superadded in thought an active element, so here to my determinate state (*my actual thought or will*) I superadd a determinable element (*an infinite, possible thought or will*) simply because *I must* do so, and for the same reason, but without being conscious of this mental justification of my instinctive act. This manifold possible thought I further comprehend as one definite whole;—once more because I must do so, since I am unable to comprehend anything indefinite,—and thus I obtain the idea of a *finite capacity of thought*, and—since this idea carries with it the notion of a something independent of the thought itself—of a being or entity which possesses this capacity.

But, on higher principles it becomes still more conceivable how this thinking being is produced by its own thought. Thought in itself is genetic, assuming the previous creation of an object immediately revealed, and occupying itself with the description of this object. Intuition gives the naked fact, and nothing more. Thought explains this fact, and unites it to another, not found in intuition, but produced purely by thought itself, from

which it, the fact, proceeds. So here. I am conscious of a determinate thought; thus far, and no farther, does intuitive consciousness carry me. I think this determinate thought, that is, I bring it forth from an indeterminate, but determinable, possibility of thought. In this way I proceed with everything determinate which is presented in immediate consciousness, and thus arise for me all those series of capacities, and of beings possessing these capacities, whose existence I assume.

*Spirit.* Even with respect to thyself, therefore, thou art conscious only that thou feelest, perceivest, or thinkest, in this or that determinate manner?

*I.* That *I* feel, *I* perceive, *I* think?—that *I*, as the efficient principle, produce the sensation, the intuition, the thought? By no means! Not even so much as this have thy principles left me.

*Spirit.* Possibly.

*I.* Necessarily;—for see: All that I know is my consciousness itself. All consciousness is either an immediate or a mediate consciousness. The first is self-consciousness; the second, consciousness of that which is not myself. What I call *I*, is therefore absolutely nothing more than a certain modification of consciousness, which is called *I*, just because it is immediate, returning into itself, and not directed outward. Since all other consciousness is possible only under the condition of this immediate consciousness, it is obvious that this consciousness which is called *I* must accompany all my other conceptions, be necessarily contained in them, although not always clearly perceived by me, and that in each moment of my consciousness I must refer everything to this *I*, and not to the particular thing out of myself thought of at the moment. In this way the *I* would at every moment vanish and reappear; and for every new conception a new *I* would arise, and this *I* would never signify anything more than—*not the thing*.

This scattered self-consciousness is now combined by

thought,—by mere thought, I say—and presented in the unity of a supposed capacity of thought. According to this supposition, all conceptions which are accompanied by the immediate consciousness already spoken of, must proceed from one and the same capacity, which inheres in one and the same entity ; and thus there arises for me the notion of the identity and personality of my *I*, and of an efficient and real power in this person,—necessarily a mere fiction, since this capacity and this entity are themselves only suppositions.

*Spirit.* Thou reasonest correctly.

*I.* And thou hast pleasure in this ! I may then indeed say “it is thought,”—and yet I can scarcely say even this ;—rather, strictly speaking, I ought to say “the thought appears that I feel, perceive, think,”—but by no means “that I feel, perceive, think.” The first only is fact ; the second is an imaginary addition to the fact.

*Spirit.* It is well expressed.

*I.* There is nothing enduring, either out of me, or in me, but only ceaseless change. I know of no being, not even of my own. There is no being. I myself absolutely know not, and am not. Pictures are :—they are the only things which exist, and they know of themselves after the fashion of pictures :—pictures which float past without there being anything past which they float ; which, by means of like pictures, are connected with each other :—pictures without anything which is pictured in them, without significance and without aim. I myself am one of these pictures ;—nay, I am not even this, but merely a confused picture of the pictures. All reality is transformed into a strange dream, without a life which is dreamed of, and without a mind which dreams it ;—into a dream which is woven together in a dream of itself. Intuition is the dream ; thought,—the source of all the being and all the reality which I imagine, of my own being, my own powers, and my own purposes,—is the dream of that dream.

*Spirit.* Thou hast well understood it all. Employ the sharpest expressions to make this result hateful, since thou must submit to it. And this thou must do. Thou hast clearly seen that it cannot be otherwise. Or wilt thou now retract thy admissions, and justify thy retraction on principle ?

*I.* By no means. I have seen, and now see clearly, that it is so ;—yet I cannot believe it.

*Spirit.* Thou seest it clearly, and yet canst not believe it ? That is a different matter.

*I.* Thou art a profligate spirit : thy knowledge itself is profligacy, and springs from profligacy ; and I cannot thank thee for having led me on this path !

*Spirit.* Short-sighted mortal ! When men venture to look into being, and see as far as themselves, and a little farther,—such as thou art call it profligacy. I have allowed thee to deduce the results of our inquiry in thine own way, to analyze them, and to clothe them in hateful expressions. Didst thou then think that these results were less known to me than to thyself,—that I did not understand, as well as thou, how by these principles all reality was thoroughly annihilated, and transformed into a dream ? Didst thou then take me for a blind admirer and advocate of this system, as a complete system of the human mind ?

Thou didst desire to *know*, and thou hadst taken a wrong road. Thou didst seek knowledge where no knowledge can reach, and hadst even persuaded thyself that thou hadst obtained an insight into something which is opposed to the very nature of all insight. I found thee in this condition. I wished to free thee from thy false knowledge ; but by no means to bring thee the true.

Thou didst desire to know of thy knowledge. Art thou surprised that in this way thou didst discover nothing

more than that of which thou desiredst to know,—thy knowledge itself; and wouldst thou have had it otherwise? What has its origin in and through knowledge, is merely knowledge. But all knowledge is only pictures, representations; and there is always something wanting in it,—that which corresponds to the representation. This want cannot be supplied by knowledge; a system of knowledge is necessarily a system of mere pictures, wholly without reality, significance, or aim. Didst thou expect anything else? Wouldst thou change the very nature of thy mind, and desire thy knowledge to be something more than knowledge?

The reality, in which thou didst formerly believe,—a material world existing independently of thee, of which thou didst fear to become the slave,—has vanished; for this whole material world arises only through knowledge, and is itself our knowledge; but knowledge is not reality, just because it is knowledge. Thou hast seen through the illusion; and without belying thy better insight, thou canst never again give thyself up to it. This is the sole merit which I claim for the system which we have together discovered;—it destroys and annihilates error. It cannot give us truth, for in itself it is absolutely empty. Thou dost now seek, and with good right as I well know, something real lying beyond mere appearance, another reality than that which has thus been annihilated. But in vain wouldst thou labour to create this reality by means of thy knowledge, or out of thy knowledge; or to embrace it by thy understanding. If thou hast no other organ by which to apprehend it, thou wilt never find it.

But thou hast such an organ. Arouse and animate it, and thou wilt attain to perfect tranquillity. I leave thee alone with thyself.

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## BOOK III.

## FAITH.

TERRIBLE Spirit, thy discourse has smitten me to the ground. But thou hast referred me to myself, and what were I could anything out of myself irrecoverably cast me down ? I will,—yes, surely I will follow thy counsel.

What seekest thou, then, my complaining heart ? What is it that causes thee to rebel against a system to which my understanding cannot raise the slightest objection ?

This it is :—I demand something beyond a mere presentation or conception ; something that is, has been, and will be, even if the presentation were not ; and which the presentation only records, without producing it, or in the smallest degree changing it. A mere presentation I now see to be a deceptive show ; my presentations must have a meaning beneath them, and if all my knowledge revealed to me nothing but knowledge, I would be defrauded of my whole life. That there is nothing whatever but my presentations or conceptions, is, to the natural sense of mankind, a silly and ridiculous conceit which no man can seriously entertain, and which requires no refutation. To the better-informed judgment, which knows the deep, and, *by mere reasoning*, irrefragable grounds for this assertion, it is a prostrating, annihilating thought.

And what, then, is this something lying beyond all presentation, towards which I stretch forward with such ardent longing? What is the power with which it draws me towards it? What is the central point in my soul with which it is so intimately bound up that only with my being itself can it be extinguished?

"Not merely TO KNOW, but according to thy knowledge TO DO, is thy vocation:"—thus is it loudly proclaimed in the innermost depths of my soul, as soon as I recollect myself for a moment, and turn my observation inward upon myself. "Not for idle contemplation of thyself, not for brooding over devout sensations;—no, for action art thou here; thine action, and thine action alone, determines thy worth."

This voice leads me out from presentation, from mere cognition, to something that is beyond it and opposed to it; to something that is greater and higher than all knowledge, and that contains within itself the end and object of all knowledge. When I act, I doubtless know that I act, and how I act; nevertheless this knowledge is not the act itself, but only the observation of it. This voice thus announces to me precisely that which I sought; a something lying beyond mere knowledge, and, in its nature, wholly independent of knowledge.

Thus it is, I know it immediately. But, having entered within the domain of speculation, the doubt which has been awakened within me will secretly endure and continue to disturb me. Since I have placed myself in this position, I can obtain no complete satisfaction until everything which I accept is justified before the tribunal of speculation. I have thus to ask myself,—how is it thus? Whence arises that voice in my soul which directs me to something beyond mere presentation and knowledge?

There is within me an impulse to absolute, independent self-activity. Nothing is more insupportable to me than to be merely by another, for another, and through

another ; I must be something for myself and by myself alone. This impulse I feel along with the perception of my own existence, it is inseparably united to my consciousness of myself.

I explain this feeling to myself by reflection ; and, as it were, endow this blind impulse with the gift of insight by the power of thought. According to this impulse I must act as an absolutely independent being :—thus I understand and translate the impulse. I must be independent. Who am I ? Subject and object in one,—the conscious being and that of which I am conscious, gifted with intuitive knowledge and myself revealed in that intuition, the thinking mind and myself the object of the thought—inseparable and ever present to each other. As both, must I be what I am, absolutely by myself alone ;—by myself originate conceptions,—by myself produce a condition of things lying beyond these conceptions. But how is the latter possible ? With nothing I cannot connect any being whatsoever ; from nothing there can never arise something ; my objective thought is necessarily mediative only. But any being that is connected with another being becomes thereby dependent ;—it is no longer a primary, original, and genetic, but only a secondary and derived, being. I am constrained to connect myself with something ;—with another being I cannot connect myself without losing that independence which is the condition of my own existence.

My conception and origination of *a purpose*, however, is, by its very nature, absolutely free,—producing something out of nothing. With such a conception I must connect my activity, in order that it may be possible to regard it as free, and as proceeding absolutely from myself alone.

In the following manner, therefore, do I conceive of my independence as *I*. I ascribe to myself the power of originating a conception simply because I originate it,

of originating *this* conception simply because I originate *this* one,—by the absolute sovereignty of myself as an intelligence. I further ascribe to myself the power of manifesting this conception beyond itself by means of an action;—ascribe to myself a real, active power, capable of producing something beyond itself,—a power which is entirely different from the mere power of conception. These conceptions, which are called conceptions of design, or purposes, are not, like the conceptions of mere knowledge, copies of something already existing, but rather types of something yet to be; the real power lies beyond them, and is *in itself* independent of them;—it only receives from them its immediate determinations, which are apprehended by knowledge. Such an independent power it is that, in consequence of this impulse, I ascribe to myself.

Here then, it appears, is the point at which consciousness connects itself with reality;—the real efficiency of my conception, and the real power of action which, in consequence of it, I am compelled to ascribe to myself, is this point. Let it be as it may with the reality of a sensible world beyond me; I possess reality and comprehend it,—it lies within my own being, it is native to myself.

I conceive this, my real power of action, in thought, but I do not create it by thought. The immediate feeling of my impulse to independent activity lies at the foundation of this thought; the thought does no more than pourtray this feeling, and accept it in its own form,—the form of thought. This procedure may, I think, be vindicated before the tribunal of speculation.

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What! Shall I, once more, knowingly and intentionally deceive myself? This procedure can by no means be justified before that strict tribunal.

I feel within me an impulse and an effort towards out-

ward activity ; this appears to be true, and to be the only truth belonging to the matter. Since it is I who feel this impulse, and since I cannot pass beyond myself, either with my whole consciousness, or in particular with my capacity of sensation ; since this *I* itself is the last point at which I am conscious of this impulse, it certainly appears to me as an impulse founded in myself, to an activity also founded in myself. But may it not be that this impulse is, unknown to me, in reality the impulse of a foreign power invisible to me, and that notion of independence merely a delusion arising from my sphere of vision being limited to myself alone ? I have no reason to assume this, but just as little reason to deny it. I must confess that I absolutely know nothing, and can know nothing, about it.

Do I then indeed feel that real *power* of free action which, strangely enough, I ascribe to myself without knowing anything of it ? By no means ;—it is merely the assumed *determinable* element which, by the well-known laws of thought whereby all capacities and all powers arise, we are compelled to add to the *determinate* element—the real action—which itself is, in like manner, only an assumption.

Is that procession, from the mere conception to an imaginary realization of it, anything more than the usual and well-known procedure of all objective thought, which seeks to shape itself, not as mere thought, but as something more ? By what sophistry can this procedure be made of more value here than in any other case ?—can it possess any deeper significance, when to the conception of a thought it adds a realization of this thought, than when to the conception of this table it adds an actual and present table ? “The conception of a purpose, a particular determination of events in me, appears in a double shape,—partly as *subjective*—a Thought ; partly as *objective*—an Action.” What reason, which would not itself

stand in need of a genetic deduction, could I adduce against this explanation ?

I say that I feel this impulse :—it is therefore I myself who say so, and think so while I say it. Do I then really feel, or only think that I feel ? Is not all that I call feeling only a presentation produced by my objective process of thought, and indeed the first transition-point of all objectivity ? And then again, do I really think, or do I merely think that I think ? And do I think that I really think, or merely that I possess the idea of thinking ? What can hinder speculation from raising such questions, and continuing to raise them without end ? What can I answer, and where is there a point at which I can command such questionings to cease ? I know, and must admit, that each definite act of consciousness may be made the subject of reflection, and a new consciousness of the first consciousness may thus be created ; and that thereby the immediate consciousness is raised a step higher, and the first consciousness darkened and made doubtful ; and that to this ladder there is no highest step. I know that all scepticism rests upon this process, and that the system which has so violently prostrated me is founded on the adoption and the clear consciousness of this process.

I know that if I am not merely to play another perplexing game with this system, but intend really and practically to adopt it, I must refuse obedience to that voice within me. I cannot *will* to act, for according to that system I cannot *know* whether I can really act or not. I can never believe that I truly act ;—that which seems to be my action must appear to me as entirely without meaning, as a mere delusive picture. All earnestness and all reality are banished from my life ; and life, as well as thought, is transformed into a mere play which proceeds from nothing and tends to nothing.

Shall I then refuse obedience to that inward voice ? I

will not do so. I will freely accept the vocation which this impulse assigns to me, and in this resolution I will lay hold at once of thought, in all its reality and truthfulness, and on the reality of all things which are pre-supposed therein. I will restrict myself to the position of natural thought in which this impulse places me, and cast from me all those over-refined and sophistical inquiries which alone could make me doubtful of its truth.

I understand thee now, sublime Spirit ! I have found the organ by which to apprehend this reality and, with this, probably all other reality. Knowledge is not this organ :—no knowledge can be its own foundation, its own proof ; every knowledge pre-supposes another higher knowledge on which it is founded, and to this ascent there is no end. It is FAITH, that voluntary acquiescence in the view which is naturally presented to us, because only through this view can we fulfil our vocation ;—this it is, which first lends a sanction to knowledge, and raises to certainty and conviction that which without it might be mere delusion. It is not knowledge, but a resolution of the will to admit the validity of knowledge.

Let me hold fast for ever by this doctrine, which is no mere verbal distinction, but a true and deep one, bearing with it the most important consequences for my whole existence and character. All my conviction is but faith ; and it proceeds from feeling, not from the understanding. Knowing this, I will enter upon no subtle disputation, because I foresee that thereby nothing can be gained ; I will not suffer myself to be perplexed by it, for the source of my conviction lies higher than all disputation ; I will not suffer myself to entertain the desire of pressing this conviction on others by reasoning, and I will not be surprised if such an undertaking should fail. I have adopted my mode of thinking first of all for myself, not for others, and before myself only will I justify it. He who possesses

the honest, upright purpose of which I am conscious will also attain a similar conviction ;—without that, such a conviction can in no way be attained. Now that I know this, I also know from what point all culture of myself and others must proceed ; from the will, not from the understanding. If the former be only fixedly and honestly directed towards the Good, the latter will of itself apprehend the True. Should the latter only be exercised whilst the former remains neglected, there can arise nothing whatever but a dexterity in groping after vain and empty refinements throughout the absolute void inane. Now that I know this, I am able to confute all false knowledge that may rise in opposition to my faith. I know that every pretended truth, produced by mere speculative thought, and not founded upon faith, is assuredly false and surreptitious ; for mere knowledge, thus produced, leads only to the conviction that we can know nothing. I know that such false knowledge never can discover anything but what it has previously placed in its premises through faith, from which it probably draws conclusions which are wholly false. Now that I know this, I possess the touchstone of all truth and of all conviction. Conscience alone is the root of all truth : whatever is opposed to conscience, or stands in the way of the fulfilment of her behests, is assuredly false ; and it is impossible for me to arrive at a conviction of its truth, even if I should be unable to discover the fallacies by which it is produced.

So has it been with all men who have ever seen the light of this world. Without being conscious of it they apprehend, through faith alone, all the reality which has an existence for them ; and this faith forces itself on them simultaneously with their existence ;—it is born with them. How could it be otherwise ? If in mere knowledge, in mere perception and reflection, there is no ground for regarding our mental presentations as more than mere pictures which necessarily pass before our view, why do



we yet regard them as more than this, and assume, as their foundation, something which exists independently of all presentation? If we all possess the capacity and the instinct to go beyond our first natural view of things, why do so few actually go beyond it, and why do we defend ourselves, even with a sort of bitterness, from every attempt to persuade us to this course? What is it which holds us within the power of this first natural belief? Not inferences of reason, for there are none such; it is our interest in a reality which we desire to produce;—the good, absolutely for its own sake,—the common and sensuous, for the sake of the enjoyment they afford. No one who lives can divest himself of this interest, and just as little can he cast off the faith which this interest brings with it. We are all born in faith;—he who is blind, follows blindly the secret and irresistible impulse; he who sees, follows by sight, and believes because he resolves to believe.

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What unity and completeness does this view present!—what dignity does it confer on human nature! Our thought is not founded on itself alone, independently of our impulses and affections;—man does not consist of two independent and separate elements; he is absolutely one. All our thought is founded on our impulses;—as a man's affections are so is his knowledge. These impulses compel us to a certain mode of thought only so long as we do not perceive the constraint; the constraint vanishes the moment it is perceived; and it is then no longer the unconscious impulse, but we ourselves who form our own system of thought in accordance with it.

But I shall open my eyes; shall learn thoroughly to know myself; I shall recognise that constraint;—this is my vocation. I shall thus, and under that supposition I shall necessarily, myself form my own mode of thought. Then shall I stand absolutely independent, thoroughly equipt

and perfected through my own act and deed. The source of all my other thought and even of my life itself, that from which everything proceeds which can have an existence in me, for me, or through me, the innermost spirit of my spirit,—is no longer a foreign power ;—it is, in the strictest possible sense, my own reasonable act. I am wholly my own creation. I might have followed blindly the leading of my spiritual nature. But I would be a work not of Nature but of myself, and I have become so even by means of this resolution. By endless subtilties I might have made the natural conviction of my own mind dark and doubtful. But I have accepted it with freedom, simply because I resolved to accept it. I have chosen the system which I have now adopted with settled purpose and deliberation from among other possible modes of thought, because I have recognised in it the only one consistent with my dignity and my vocation. With freedom and consciousness I have returned to the point at which Nature had left me. I accept that which she announces ;—but I do not accept it because I must ; I believe it because I will.

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The true dignity of my understanding fills me with reverence. It is no longer the deceptive mirror which reflects a series of empty pictures, proceeding from nothing and tending to nothing ; it is bestowed upon me for a great purpose. Its cultivation for this purpose is entrusted to me ; it is placed in my hands, and at my hands it will be required. It is placed in my hands. I know immediately—and here my faith accepts the testimony of my consciousness without farther criticism—I know that I am not under the necessity of allowing my thoughts to float about without direction or purpose, but that I can voluntarily arouse and direct my attention to one object, or turn it towards another ;—know that I am free continuously to

investigate any object until I thoroughly understand it and feel quite satisfied about it;—know that it is neither a blind necessity which compels me to a certain mode of thought, nor an empty chance which runs riot with my thoughts; but that it is I who think, and that I can think of that whereof I choose to think. Thus by reflection I have discovered something more; I have discovered that I myself, by my own act alone, determine my whole mode of thought, and the particular view which I take of truth in general; since it remains with me either by over-refinement to deprive myself of all sense of truth, or to yield myself to it with faithful obedience. My whole mode of thought, and the cultivation which my understanding receives, as well as the objects to which I direct it, depend entirely on myself. True insight is merit;—the perversion of my capacity for knowledge, thoughtlessness, obscurity, error, and unbelief, are guilt.

There is but one point towards which I have unceasingly to direct all my attention,—namely, what I ought to do, and how I may best fulfil the obligation. All my thoughts must have a bearing on my actions, and must be capable of being considered as means, however remote, to this end; otherwise they are an idle and aimless show, a mere waste of time and strength, the perversion of a noble power which is entrusted to me for a very different end.

I dare hope, I dare surely promise myself, to follow out this undertaking with good results. The Nature on which I have to act is not a foreign element, called into existence without reference to me, into which I cannot penetrate. It is moulded by my own laws of thought, and must be in harmony with them; it must be thoroughly transparent, knowable and penetrable to me, even to its inmost recesses. In all its phenomena it expresses nothing but the connexions and relations of my own being to myself; and as surely as I may hope to know myself, so surely may I expect to comprehend it. Let me seek only that which I

ought to seek, and I shall find; let me ask only that which I ought to ask, and I shall receive an answer.

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## I

That voice within my soul in which I believe, and on account of which I believe in every other thing to which I attach credence, does not command me merely to act *in general*. This is impossible; all these general principles are formed only through my own voluntary observation and reflection applied to many individual facts; but never in themselves express any fact whatever. This voice of my conscience announces to me precisely what I ought to do, and what leave undone, in every particular situation of life; it accompanies me, if I will but listen to it with attention, through all the events of my life, and never refuses me its reward where I am called upon to act. It carries with it immediate conviction, and irresistibly compels my assent to its behests:—it is impossible for me to contend against it.

To listen to it, to obey it honestly and unreservedly, without fear or equivocation,—this is my true vocation, the whole end and purpose of my existence. My life ceases to be an empty play without truth or significance. There is something that must absolutely be done for its own sake alone;—that which conscience demands of me in this particular situation of life it is mine to do, for this only am I here;—to know it, I have understanding; to perform it, I have power.

Through this edict of conscience alone, truth and reality are introduced into my conceptions. I cannot refuse them my attention and my obedience without thereby surrendering the very purpose of my existence.

Hence I cannot withhold my belief from the reality which they announce, without at the same time renounc-

ing my vocation. It is absolutely true, without farther proof or confirmation,—nay, it is the first truth, and the foundation of all other truth and certainty, that this voice must be obeyed ; and therefore everything becomes to me true and certain the truth and certainty of which is assumed in the possibility of such obedience.

There appear before me in space certain phenomena to ✓ which I transfer the idea of myself ;—I conceive of them as beings like myself. Speculation, when carried out to its last results, has indeed taught me, or would teach me, that these supposed rational beings out of myself are but the products of my own presentative power ; that, according to certain laws of my thought, I am compelled to represent out of myself my conception of myself ; and that, according to the same laws, I can transfer this conception only to certain definite objects. But the voice of my conscience thus speaks:—"Whatever these beings may be in and for themselves, thou shalt act towards them as self-existent, free, substantive beings, wholly independent of thee. Assume it, as already known, that they can give a purpose to their own being wholly by themselves, and quite independently of thee ;—never interrupt the accomplishment of this purpose, but rather further it to the utmost of thy power. Honour their freedom, lovingly take up their purposes as if they were thine own." Thus ought I to act :—by this course of action *ought* all my thought to be guided,—nay, it *shall* and *must* necessarily be so, if I have resolved to obey the voice of my conscience. Hence I shall always regard these beings as in possession of an existence for themselves wholly independent of mine, as capable of forming and carrying out their own purposes ;—from this point of view, I shall never be able to conceive of them otherwise, and my previous speculations regarding them shall vanish like an empty dream.—I *think* of them as beings like myself, I have said ; but strictly speaking, it is not by mere thought that they are

first presented to me as such. It is by the voice of my conscience,—by the command:—"Here set a limit to thy freedom; here recognise and reverence purposes which are not thine own." This it is which is first translated into the thought, "Here, certainly and truly, are beings like myself, free and independent." To view them otherwise, I must in action renounce, and in speculation disregard, the voice of my own conscience.

Other phenomena present themselves before me which I do not regard as beings like myself, but as things irrational. Speculation finds no difficulty in showing how the conception of such things is developed solely from my own presentative faculty and its necessary modes of activity. But I apprehend these things, also, through want, desire, and enjoyment. Not by the mental conception, but by hunger, thirst, and their satisfaction, does anything become for me food and drink. I am necessitated to believe in the reality of that which threatens my sensuous existence, or in that which alone is able to maintain it. Conscience enters the field in order that it may at once sanctify and restrain this natural impulse. "Thou shalt maintain, exercise, and strengthen thyself and thy physical powers, for they have been taken account of in the plans of reason. But thou canst maintain them only by legitimate use, conformable to their nature. There are also, besides thee, many other beings like thyself, whose powers have been counted upon like thine own, and can be maintained only in the same way as thine own. Concede to them the same privilege that has been allowed to thee. Respect what belongs to them as their possession;—use what belongs to thee legitimately as thine own." Thus ought I to act, —according to this course of action must I think. I am compelled to regard these things as standing under their own natural laws, independent of, though perceivable by, me; and therefore to ascribe to them an independent existence. I am compelled to believe in such laws; the

task of investigating them is set before me, and that empty speculation vanishes like a mist when the genial sun appears.

In short, there is for me absolutely no such thing as an existence which has no relation to myself, and which I contemplate merely for the sake of contemplating it ;—whatever has an existence for me, has it only through its relation to my own being. But there is, in the highest sense, only one relation to me possible, all others are but subordinate forms of this :—my vocation to moral activity. My world is the object and sphere of my duties, and absolutely nothing more ; there is no other world for me, and no other qualities of my world than what are implied in this ;—my whole united capacity, all finite capacity, is insufficient to comprehend any other. Whatever possesses an existence for me can bring its existence and reality into contact with me only through this relation, and only through this relation do I comprehend it :—for any other existence than this I have no organ whatever.

To the question, whether, in deed and in fact, such a world exists as that which I represent to myself, I can give no answer more fundamental, more raised above all doubt, than this :—I have, most certainly and truly, these determinate duties, which announce themselves to me as duties towards certain objects, to be fulfilled by means of certain materials ;—duties which I cannot otherwise conceive of, and cannot otherwise fulfil, than within such a world as I represent to myself. Even to one who had never meditated on his own moral vocation, if there could be such a one, or who, if he had given it some general consideration, had, at least, never entertained the slightest purpose of fulfilling it at any time within an indefinite futurity,—even for him, his sensuous world, and his belief in its reality, arises in no other manner than from his ideas of a moral world. If he do not apprehend it by the thought of his duties, he certainly does so by the demand

for his rights. What he perhaps never requires of himself, he does certainly exact from others in their conduct towards him,—that they should treat him with propriety, consideration, and respect, not as an irrational thing, but as a free and independent being ;—and thus, by supposing in them an ability to comply with his own demands, he is compelled also to regard them as themselves considerate, free, and independent of the dominion of mere natural power. Even should he never propose to himself any other purpose in his use and enjoyment of surrounding objects but simply that of enjoying them, he at least demands this enjoyment as a right, in the possession of which he claims to be left undisturbed by others ; and thus he apprehends even the irrational world of sense by means of a moral idea. These claims of respect for his rationality, independence, and preservation, no one can resign who possesses a conscious existence ; and with these claims, at least, there is united in his soul, earnestness, renunciation of doubt, and faith in a reality, even if they be not associated with the recognition of a moral law within him. Take the man who denies his own moral vocation, and thy existence, and the existence of a material world, except as a mere futile speculation,—approach him practically, apply his own principles to life, and act as if either he had no existence at all, or were merely a portion of rude matter,—he will soon lay aside his scornful indifference, —indignantly complain of thee, earnestly call thy attention to thy conduct towards him, maintain that thou oughtst not and darest not so to act, and thus prove to thee, by deeds, that thou art assuredly capable of acting upon him ; that *he is*, and that *thou art*,—that there is a medium through which thou canst influence him, and that thou, at least, hast duties to perform towards him.

✓ Thus, it is not the operation of supposed external objects, which indeed exist for us, and we for them, only in so far as we already know of them ; and just as little an empty



vision evoked by our own imagination and thought, the products of which must, like itself, be mere empty pictures;—it is not these, but the necessary faith in our own freedom and power, in our own real activity, and in the definite laws of human action, which lies at the root of all our consciousness of a reality external to ourselves;—a consciousness which is itself but faith, since it is founded on another faith, of which however it is a necessary consequence. We are compelled to believe that we act, and that we ought to act in a certain manner; we are compelled to assume a certain sphere for this action; this sphere is the real, actually present world, such as we find it;—and on the other hand, the world is absolutely nothing more than, and cannot in any way extend itself beyond, this sphere. From this necessity of action proceeds the consciousness of the actual world; and not the reverse way, from the consciousness of the actual world the necessity of action:—this, not that, is the first; the former is derived from the latter. We do not act because we know, but we know because we are called upon to act:—the practical reason is the root of all reason. The laws of action for rational beings are *immediately certain*; their world is certain only through that previous certainty. We cannot deny these laws without plunging the world, and ourselves with it, into absolute annihilation;—we raise ourselves from this abyss, and maintain ourselves above it, solely by our moral activity.

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## II.

There is something which I am called upon to do, simply in order that it may be done; something to avoid doing, solely that it may be left undone. But can I act without having an end in view beyond the action itself, without directing my intention towards something which can become possible by means of my action, and only by means

of it ? Can I will without having something which I will ? No ;—this would be contradictory to the very nature of my mind. To every action there is united in my thought, immediately and by the laws of thought itself, a condition of things placed in futurity, to which my action is related as the efficient cause to the effect produced. But this purpose or end of my action must not be proposed to me for its own sake,—perhaps through some necessity of Nature,—and my course of action be then determined according to this end ; I must not have an end assigned to me, and then inquire how I must act in order to attain this end ; my action must not be dependent on the end : I must act in a certain manner, simply because I ought so to act ;—this is the first point. That a result will follow from this course of action is proclaimed by the voice within me. This result necessarily becomes an end to me, since I am bound to perform the action that brings it, and it alone, to pass. I will that something shall come to pass, because I must act so that it may come to pass ;—just as I do not hunger because food is before me but a thing becomes food for me because I hunger, so I do not act as I do because a certain end is to be attained, but the end becomes an end to me because I am bound to act in the manner by which it may be attained. I have not first in view the point towards which I am to draw my line, and then, by its position, determine the direction of my line and the angle it shall make ; but I draw my line absolutely in a right angle, and thereby the points are determined through which my line must pass. The end does not determine the commandment ; but, on the contrary, the immediate purport of the commandment determines the end.

I say, it is the law which commands me to act that of itself assigns an end to my action ; the same inward power that compels me to think, that I ought to act thus compels me also to believe that from my action some result will

arise; it opens to my spiritual vision a prospect into another world,—which is indeed a world, a reality namely, and not an action,—but another and better world than that which is present to the physical eye; it constrains me to aspire after this better world, to embrace it with every power, to long for its realization, to live only in it, and in it alone find satisfaction. The law itself is my guarantee for the certain attainment of this end. The same resolution by which I devote my whole thought and life to the fulfilment of this law, and determine to see nothing beyond it, brings with it the indestructible conviction that the promise it implies is likewise true and certain, and renders it impossible for me even to conceive the possibility of the opposite. As I live in obedience to it, so do I live also in the contemplation of its end,—in that better world which it promises to me.

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Even in the mere consideration of the world as it is, apart from this law, there arises within me the wish, the desire,—no, not the mere desire, but the absolute demand for a better world. I cast a glance on the present relations of men towards each other and towards Nature; on the feebleness of their powers, on the strength of their desires and passions. A voice within me proclaims with irresistible conviction—"It is impossible that it can remain thus; it must become other and better."

I cannot think of the present state of humanity as that in which it is destined to remain; I am absolutely unable to conceive of this as its complete and final vocation. Then, indeed, were all a dream and a delusion; and it would not be worth the trouble to have lived, and played out this ever-repeated game, which tends to nothing and signifies nothing. Only in so far as I can regard this state as the means towards a better, as the transition-point to a higher and more perfect state, has it any value in my

eyes;—not for its own sake, but for the sake of that better world for which it prepares the way, can I support it, esteem it, and joyfully perform my part in it. My soul can accept no place in the present, nor rest in it even for a moment; my whole being flows onward, incessantly and irresistibly, towards that future and better state of things.

Shall I eat and drink only that I may hunger and thirst and eat and drink again, till the grave which is open beneath my feet shall swallow me up and I myself become the food of worms? Shall I beget beings like myself, that they too may eat and drink and die, and leave behind them beings like themselves to do over again the same things that I have done? To what purpose this ever-revolving circle, this ceaseless and unvarying round, in which all things appear only to pass away, and pass away only that they may re-appear as they were before;—this monster continually devouring itself that it may again bring itself forth, and bringing itself forth only that it may again devour itself?

This can never be the vocation of my being, and of all being. There must be something which exists because it has come into existence; and endures, and cannot come anew, having once become such as it is. And this abiding existence must be produced amid the vicissitudes of the transitory and perishable, maintain itself there, and be borne onwards, pure and inviolate, upon the waves of time.

Our race still laboriously extorts the means of its subsistence and preservation from an opposing Nature. The larger portion of mankind is still condemned through life to severe toil in order to supply nourishment for itself and for the smaller portion which thinks for it;—immortal spirits are compelled to fix their whole thoughts and endeavours on the earth that brings forth their food. It still frequently happens that, when the labourer has completed his toil and has promised himself in return a lasting

endurance for himself and for his work, a hostile element will destroy in a moment that which it has cost him years of patient forethought and industry to accomplish, and the assiduous and careful man is undeservedly made the prey of hunger and misery ;—often do floods, storms, volcanoes, desolate whole countries, and works which bear the impress of a rational soul are mingled with their authors in the wild chaos of destruction and death. Disease sweeps into an untimely grave men in the pride of their strength and children whose existence has as yet borne no fruit ; pestilence stalks through blooming lands, leaves the few who escape its ravages like lonely orphans bereaved of the accustomed support of their fellows, and does all that it can do to give back to the wilderness regions which the labour of man has reclaimed from thence as a possession to himself. Thus it is now, but thus it cannot remain for ever. No work that bears the stamp of Reason, and has been undertaken to extend her power, can ever be wholly lost in the onward progress of the ages. The sacrifices which the irregular violence of Nature extorts from Reason, must at least exhaust, satiate, and appease that violence. The same power which has burst out into lawless fury, cannot again commit like excesses ; it cannot be destined to renew its ravages ; by its own outbreak its energies must henceforth and for ever be exhausted. All those outbreaks of unregulated power before which human strength vanishes into nothing, those desolating hurricanes, those earthquakes, those volcanoes, can be nothing but the last struggles of the rude mass against the law of regular, progressive, living, and systematic activity to which it is compelled to submit in opposition to its own undirected impulses ;—nothing but the last shivering strokes by which the perfect formation of our globe has yet to be accomplished. That resistance must gradually become weaker and at length be worn out, since, in the regulated progress of things, there can be

nothing to renew its strength; that formation must at length be achieved and our destined dwelling-place be made complete. Nature must gradually be resolved into a condition in which her regular action may be calculated and safely relied upon, and her power bear a fixed and definite relation to that which is destined to govern it,—that of man. In so far as this relation already exists and the cultivation of Nature has attained a firm footing, the works of man, by their mere existence, and by an influence altogether beyond the original intent of their authors, shall again react upon Nature and become to her a new vivifying principle. Cultivation shall quicken and ameliorate the sluggish and baleful atmosphere of primeval forests, deserts, and marshes; more regular and varied cultivation shall diffuse throughout the air new impulses to life and fertility; and the sun shall pour his animating rays into an atmosphere breathed by healthful, industrious, and civilized nations. Science, first called into existence by the pressure of necessity, shall afterwards calmly and deliberately investigate the unchangeable laws of Nature review its powers at large and learn to calculate their possible manifestations; and, while closely following the footsteps of Nature in the living and actual world, form for itself in thought a new ideal one. Every discovery which Reason has extorted from Nature shall be maintained throughout the ages, and become the ground of new knowledge for the common possession of our race. Thus shall Nature ever become more and more intelligible and transparent, even in her most secret depths; human power, enlightened and armed by human invention, shall rule over her without difficulty, and the conquest, once made, shall be peacefully maintained. This dominion of man over Nature shall gradually be extended, until, at length, no farther expenditure of mechanical labour shall be necessary than what the human body requires for its development, cultivation, and health; and this labour shall

cease to be a burden ;—for a reasonable being is not destined to be a bearer of burdens.

But it is not Nature, it is Freedom itself, by which the greatest and most terrible disorders incident to our race are produced ; man is the cruellest enemy of man. Lawless hordes of savages still wander over vast wildernesses ;—they meet, and the victor devours his foe at the triumphal feast :—or where culture has at length united these wild hordes under some social bond, they attack each other, as nations, with the power which law and union have given them. Defying toil and privation, their armies traverse peaceful plains and forests ;—they meet each other, and the sight of their brethren is the signal for slaughter. Equipt with the mightiest inventions of the human intellect, hostile fleets plough their way through the ocean ; through storm and tempest man rushes to meet his fellow-men upon the lonely inhospitable sea ;—they meet, and defy the fury of the elements that they may destroy each other with their own hands. Even in the interior of states, where men seem to be united in equality under the law, it is still for the most part only force and fraud which rule under that venerable name ; and here the warfare is so much the more shameful that it is not openly declared to be war, and the party attacked is even deprived of the privilege of defending himself against unjust oppression. Combinations of the few rejoice aloud in the ignorance, the folly, the vice, and the misery in which the greater number of their fellow-men are sunk, avowedly seek to retain them in this state of degradation, and even to plunge them deeper in it in order to perpetuate their slavery ;—nay, would destroy any one who should venture to enlighten or improve them. No attempt at amelioration can anywhere be made without rousing up from slumber a host of selfish interests to war against it, and uniting even the most varied and opposite in a common hostility. The good cause is ever the weaker, for it is simple, and

can be loved only for itself; the bad attracts each individual by the promise which is most seductive to him; and its adherents, always at war among themselves, so soon as the good makes its appearance, conclude a truce that they may unite the whole powers of their wickedness against it. Scarcely, indeed, is such an opposition needed, for even the good themselves are but too often divided by misunderstanding, error, distrust, and secret self-love, and that so much the more violently, the more earnestly each strives to propagate that which he deems to be the best; and thus internal discord dissipates a power which, even when united, could scarcely hold the balance with evil. One blames the other for rushing onwards with stormy impetuosity to his object, without waiting until the way shall have been prepared; whilst he in turn is blamed that, through hesitation and cowardice, he accomplishes nothing, but allows all things to remain as they are, contrary to his better conviction, because for him the hour of action never arrives:—and only the Omniscient can determine whether either of the parties in the dispute is in the right. Every one regards the undertaking, the necessity of which is most apparent to him, and for the prosecution of which he has acquired the greatest skill, as most important and needful,—as the point from which all improvement must proceed; he requires all good men to unite their efforts with his, and to subject themselves to him for the accomplishment of his particular purpose, holding it to be treason to the good cause if they hold back;—while they on the other hand make the same demands upon him, and accuse him of similar treason for a similar refusal. Thus do all good intentions among men appear to be lost in vain disputations, which leave behind them no trace of their existence; while in the meantime the world goes on as well, or as ill, as it can without human effort, by the blind mechanism of Nature,—and so will go on for ever.

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And so go on for ever?—No;—not so, unless the whole existence of humanity is to be an idle game, without significance and without end. It cannot be intended that those savage tribes should always remain savage; no race can be born with all the capacities of perfect humanity and yet be destined never to develop these capacities, never to become more than that which a sagacious animal by its own proper nature might become. Those savages must be destined to be the progenitors of more powerful, cultivated, and virtuous generations;—otherwise it is impossible to conceive of a purpose in their existence, or even of the possibility of their existence in a world ordered and arranged by reason. Savage races may become civilized, for this has already occurred;—the most cultivated nations of modern times are the descendants of savages. Whether civilization is a direct and natural development of human society, or is invariably brought about through instruction and example from without, and the primary source of all human culture must be sought in a super-human guidance,—by the same way in which nations which once were savage have emerged into civilization, will those who are yet uncivilized gradually attain it. They must, no doubt, at first pass through the same dangers and corruptions of a merely sensuous civilization by which the civilized nations are still oppressed, but they will thereby be brought into union with the great whole of humanity and be made capable of taking part in its further progress.

It is the vocation of our race to unite itself into one single body, all the parts of which shall be thoroughly known to each other, and all possessed of similar culture. Nature, and even the passions and vices of men, have from the beginning tended towards this end; a great part of the way towards it is already passed, and we may surely calculate that this end, which is the condition of all further progress, will in time be attained. Let us not ask of

history if man, on the whole, has yet become purely moral ! To a more extended, comprehensive, energetic freedom he has certainly attained ; but hitherto it has been an almost necessary result of his position that this freedom has been applied chiefly to evil purposes. Neither let us ask whether the æsthetic and intellectual culture of the ancient world, concentrated on a few points, may not have excelled in degree that of modern times ! It might happen that we should receive a humiliating answer, and that in this respect the human race has not advanced, but rather seemed to retrograde, in its riper years. But let us ask of history at what period the existing culture has been most widely diffused, and distributed among the greatest number of individuals ; and we shall doubtless find that from the beginning of history down to our own day, the few light-points of civilization have spread themselves abroad from their centre, that one individual after another, and one nation after another, has been embraced within their circle, and that this wider outspread of culture is proceeding under our own eyes. And this is the first point to be attained in the endless path on which humanity must advance. Until this shall have been attained, until the existing culture of every age shall have been diffused over the whole inhabited globe, and our race become capable of the most unlimited inter-communication with itself, one nation or one continent must pause on the great common path of progress, and wait for the advance of the others ; and each must bring as an offering to the universal commonwealth, for the sake of which alone it exists, its ages of apparent immobility or retrogression. When that first point shall have been attained, when every useful discovery made at one end of the earth shall be at once made known and communicated to all the rest, then, without further interruption, without halt or regress, with united strength and equal step, humanity shall move onward to a higher culture, of which we can at present form no conception.

Within those singular associations, thrown together by unreasoning accident, which we call States,—after they have subsisted for a time in peace, when the resistance excited by yet new oppression has been lulled to sleep, and the fermentation of contending forces appeased,—abuse, by its continuance, and by general sufferance, assumes a sort of established form ; and the ruling classes, in the uncontested enjoyment of their extorted privileges, have nothing more to do but to extend them further, and to give to this extension also the same established form. Urged by their insatiable desires, they will continue from generation to generation their efforts to acquire wider and yet wider privileges, and never say “ It is enough !” until at last oppression shall reach its limit, and become wholly insupportable, and despair give back to the oppressed that power which their courage, extinguished by centuries of tyranny, could not procure for them. They will then no longer endure any among them who cannot be satisfied to stand and to abide on an equality with others. In order to protect themselves against internal violence or new oppression, all will take on themselves the same obligations. Their deliberations, in which, whatever a man may decide, he decides for himself, and not for one subject to him whose sufferings will never affect him and in whose fate he takes no concern ;—deliberations, according to which no one can hope that it shall be he who is to *practise* a permitted injustice, but every one must fear that he may have to *suffer* it ;—deliberations that alone deserve the name of legislation, which is something wholly different from the ordinances of combined lords to the countless herds of their slaves ;—these deliberations will necessarily be guided by justice, and will lay the foundation of a true State, in which each individual, from a regard for his own security, will be irresistibly compelled to respect the security of every other without exception ; since, under the supposed legislation, every injury which he should attempt

to do to another would not fall upon its object but would infallibly recoil upon himself.

By the establishment of this only true State, this firm foundation of internal peace, the possibility of foreign war, at least with other true States, is cut off. Even for its own sake, even to prevent the thought of injustice, plunder, and violence entering the minds of its own citizens, and to leave them no possibility of gain, except by means of industry and diligence within their legitimate sphere of activity, every true state must forbid as strictly, prevent as carefully, compensate as exactly, or punish as severely, any injury to the citizen of a neighbouring state as to one of its own. This law concerning the security of neighbours is necessarily a law in every state that is not a robber-state; and by its operation the possibility of any just complaint of one state against another, and consequently every case of self-defence among nations, is entirely prevented. There are no necessary, permanent, and immediate relations of states, as such, with each other, which should be productive of strife; there are, as a rule, only relations of the individual citizens of one state to the individual citizens of another; a state can be injured only in the person of one of its citizens; but such injury will be immediately compensated, and the aggrieved state satisfied. Between states such as these, there is no rank which can be insulted, no ambition which can be offended. No officer of one state is authorised to intermeddle in the internal affairs of another, nor is there any temptation for him to do so, since he could not derive the slightest personal advantage from any such influence. That a whole nation should determine, for the sake of plunder, to make war on a neighbouring country, is impossible; for in a state where all are equal, the plunder could not become the booty of a few, but must be equally divided amongst all, and the share of no one individual could ever recompense him for the trouble of the war. Only where the

advantage falls to the few oppressors, and the injury, the toil, the expense, to the countless herd of slaves, is a war of spoliation possible and conceivable. Not from states like themselves could states such as these entertain any fear of war; only from savages, or barbarians whose lack of skill to enrich themselves by industry impels them to plunder; or from enslaved nations driven by their masters to a war from which they themselves will reap no advantage. In the former case, each individual civilized state must already be the stronger through the arts of civilization; against the latter danger, the common advantage of all demands that they should strengthen themselves by union. No free state can reasonably suffer in its vicinity associations governed by rulers whose interests would be promoted by the subjugation of adjacent nations, and whose very existence is therefore a constant source of danger to their neighbours; a regard for their own security compels all free states to transform all around them into free states like themselves; and thus, for the sake of their own welfare, to extend the empire of culture over barbarism, of freedom over slavery. Soon will the nations civilized or enfranchised by them find themselves placed in the same relation towards others still enthralled by barbarism or slavery in which the earlier free nations formerly stood towards them, and be compelled to do the same things for these which were formerly done for themselves; and thus, of necessity, by reason of the existence of some few really free states, will the empire of civilization, freedom, and with it universal peace, gradually embrace the whole world.

Thus, from the establishment of a just internal organization, and of peace between individuals, there will necessarily result integrity in the external relations of nations towards each other, and universal peace among them. But the establishment of this just internal organization, and the emancipation of the first nation that shall be

truly free, arises as a necessary consequence from the ever-growing oppression exercised by the ruling classes towards their subjects, which gradually becomes insupportable,—a progress which may be safely left to the passions and the blindness of those classes, even although warned of the result.

In this only true state all temptation to evil, nay, even the possibility of a man resolving upon a bad action with any reasonable hope of benefit to himself, will be entirely taken away; and the strongest possible inducements will be offered to every man to make virtue the sole object of his life.

There is no man who loves evil because it is evil; it is only the advantages and enjoyments expected from it, and which, in the present condition of humanity, do actually, in most cases, result from it, that are loved. So long as this condition shall continue, so long as a premium shall be set upon vice, a fundamental improvement of mankind, as a whole can scarcely be hoped for. But in a civil society constituted as it ought to be, as reason requires it to be, as the thinker may easily describe it to himself although he may nowhere find it actually existing at the present day, but as it must necessarily exist in the first nation that shall really acquire true freedom,—in such a state of society evil will present no advantages, but rather the most certain disadvantages, and self-love itself will restrain the excess of self-love when it would run out into injustice. By the unerring administration of such a state every fraud or oppression practised upon others, all self-aggrandizement at their expense, will not merely be rendered vain, and all labour so applied fruitless, but such attempts would even recoil upon their author, and assuredly bring home to himself the evil which he would cause to others. In his own land,—out of his own land,—throughout the whole world, he could find no one whom he might injure and yet go unpunished. But

it is not to be expected, even of a bad man, that he would determine upon evil merely for the sake of such a resolution, although he had no power to carry it into effect and nothing could arise from it but infamy to himself. The use of liberty for evil purposes is thus destroyed; man must resolve either to renounce his freedom altogether, and patiently to become a mere passive wheel in the great machine of the universe, or else to employ it for good. In soil thus prepared good will easily prosper. When men shall no longer be divided by selfish purposes, nor their powers exhausted in struggles with each other, nothing will remain for them but to direct their united strength against the one common enemy which still remains unsubdued,—resisting, uncultivated Nature. No longer estranged from each other by private ends, they will necessarily combine for this common object; and thus there arises a body everywhere animated by the same spirit and the same love. Every misfortune to the individual, since it can no longer be a gain to any other individual, is a misfortune to the whole and to each individual member of the whole; and is felt with the same pain, and remedied with the same activity, by every member;—every step in advance made by one man is a step in advance made by the whole race. Here, where the petty, narrow self of mere individual personality is merged in the more comprehensive unity of the social constitution, each man truly loves every other as himself,—as a member of this greater *self* which now claims all his love, and of which he himself is no more than a member, capable of participating only in a common gain or in a common loss. The strife of evil against good is here abolished, for here no evil can intrude. The strife of the good among themselves for the sake of good disappears now that they find it easy to love good for its own sake alone and not because they are its authors; now that it has become all-important to them that the truth should really be discovered, that the useful action

should be done,—but not at all by whom this may be accomplished. Here each individual is at all times ready to join his strength to that of others, to make it subordinate to that of others; and whoever is acknowledged by all as most capable of accomplishing the greatest amount of good, will be supported by all, and his success rejoiced in by all with a common joy.

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This is the purpose of our earthly life, which Reason sets before us, and for the infallible attainment of which she is our pledge and security. This is not an object given to us only that we may strive after it for the mere purpose of exercising our powers on something great, the real existence of which we may perhaps be compelled to abandon to doubt;—it shall, it must be realized; there must be a time in which it shall be accomplished, as surely as there is a sensible world and a race of reasonable beings existent in time with respect to which nothing earnest and rational is conceivable besides this purpose, and whose existence becomes intelligible only through this purpose. Unless all human life be metamorphosed into a mere theatrical display for the gratification of some malignant spirit, who has implanted in poor humanity this extinguishable longing for the imperishable only to amuse himself with its ceaseless pursuit of that which it can never overtake, with its ever-repeated efforts, Ixion-like, to embrace that which still eludes its grasp, with its restless hurrying on in an ever-recurring circle;—only to mock its earnest aspirations with an empty, insipid farce;—unless the wise man, seeing through this mockery, and feeling an irrepressible disgust at continuing to play his part in it, is to cast life indignantly from him and make the moment of his awakening to reason also that of his physical death;—unless these things are so, this purpose



most assuredly must be attained.—Yes! it is attainable *in life*, and *through life*, for Reason commands me to live:—it is attainable, for—I am.

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### III.

But when this end shall have been attained, and humanity shall at length stand at this point, what is there then to do? Upon earth there is no higher state than this;—the generation which has once reached it, can do no more than abide there, steadfastly maintain its position, die, and leave behind it descendants who shall do the like, and who will again leave behind them descendants to follow in their footsteps. Humanity would thus stand still upon her path; and therefore her earthly end cannot be her highest end. This earthly end is conceivable, attainable, and finite. Even although we consider all preceding generations as means for the attainment of the last complete one, we do not thereby escape the question of earnest reason,—to what end then is this last one? Since a Human Race has appeared upon earth, its existence there must certainly be in accordance with, and not contrary to, reason; and it must attain all the development which it is possible for it to attain on earth. But why should such a race have an existence at all,—why may it not as well have remained in the womb of chaos? Reason is not for the sake of existence, but existence for the sake of Reason. An existence which does not of itself satisfy reason and solve all her questions cannot by possibility be the highest being.

And, then, are those actions which are commanded by the voice of conscience—by that voice whose dictates I never dare to criticise, but must always obey in silence—are those actions, in reality, always the means, and the

only means, for the attainment of the earthly purpose of humanity? That I cannot do otherwise than refer them to this purpose, and dare not have any other object in view to be attained by means of them, is incontestible. But then are these, my intentions, always fulfilled?—is it enough that we will what is good, in order that it may happen? Alas! many virtuous resolutions are entirely lost for this world, and others appear even to hinder the purpose which they were designed to promote. On the other hand, the most despicable passions of men, even their vices and their crimes, often forward more certainly the good cause than the endeavours of the virtuous man who will never do evil that good may come! It seems that the Highest Good of the world pursues its course of increase and prosperity independently of all human virtues or vices, according to its own laws, through an invisible and unknown Power,—just as the heavenly bodies run their appointed course independently of all human effort; and that this Power carries along with it, in its own great plan, all human intentions good and bad, and, with over-ruling wisdom, employs for its own purpose that which was undertaken for other ends.

Thus, even if the attainment of this earthly end could be the purpose of our existence, and every doubt which reason could start with regard to it were silenced, yet would this end not be ours, but the end of that unknown power. We do not know at any given moment what is most conducive to this end; and nothing is left to us but to give by our actions some material, no matter what, for this power to work upon, and to leave to it the task of elaborating this material to its own purposes. It would, in that case, be our highest wisdom not to trouble ourselves about matters that do not concern us; to live according to our own fancy or inclinations, and quietly leave the consequences to that unknown power. The moral law within us would be void and superfluous, and absolutely

unfitted to a being destined to nothing higher than this. In order to be at one with ourselves, we should have to refuse obedience to that law, and to suppress it as a perverse and foolish fanaticism.

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No!—I will not refuse obedience to the law of duty;—as surely as I live and am, I will obey, absolutely because it commands. This resolution shall be first and highest in my mind; that to which everything else must conform, but which is itself dependent on nothing else;—this shall be the innermost principle of my spiritual life.

But, as a reasonable being, before whom a purpose must be set solely by its own will and determination, it is impossible for me to act without a motive and without an end. If this obedience is to be recognised by me as a reasonable service,—if the voice which demands this obedience be really that of the creative reason within me, and not a mere fanciful enthusiasm, invented by my own imagination, or communicated to me somehow from without,—this obedience must have some consequences, must serve some end. It is evident that it does not serve the purpose of the world of sense;—hence there must be a super-sensual world whose purposes it does serve.

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The mist of delusion clears away from before my sight! I receive a new organ, and a new world opens before me. It is disclosed to me only by the law of reason, and answers only to that law in my spirit. I apprehend this world—limited as I am by my sensuous view I must thus name the unnameable—I apprehend this world merely in and through the end which my obedience demands;—it is in reality nothing else than this necessary end itself which reason annexes to the law of duty.

Setting aside everything else, how could I suppose that this law had reference to the world of sense, or that the whole end and object of the obedience which it demands is to be found within that world, since that in which alone this obedience consists serves no purpose whatever in that world, can never become a cause in it, and can never produce results. In the world of sense, which proceeds on a chain of material causes and effects, and in which whatever happens depends merely on that which preceded it, it is never of any moment *how, and with what motives and intentions*, an action is performed, but only *what the action is*.

Had it been the sole purpose of our existence to produce an earthly condition of our race, there would have been required only an unerring mechanism by which our outward actions might have been determined,—we need have been no more than wheels well fitted to the great machine. Freedom would have been not merely vain, but even obstructive; a virtuous will wholly superfluous. The world would, in that case, have been most unskillfully directed, and attain the purposes of its existence by wasteful extravagance and circuitous byeways. Hadst thou, mighty World-Spirit! withheld from us this freedom which thou art now constrained to adapt to thy plans with labour and contrivance; hadst thou rather at once compelled us to act in the way in which thy plans required that we should act, thou wouldst have attained thy purposes by a much shorter way, as the humblest of the dwellers in these thy worlds can tell thee. But I am free; and therefore such a chain of causes and effects, in which freedom is absolutely superfluous and without aim, cannot exhaust my whole nature. I must be free; for it is not the mere mechanical act, but the free determination of free will, for the sake of duty and for the ends of duty only,—thus speaks the voice of conscience within us,—this alone it is which constitutes our true worth. The

bond with which this law of duty binds me is a bond for living spirits only; it disdains to rule over a dead mechanism, and addresses its decrees only to the living and the free. It requires of me this obedience;—this obedience cannot be nugatory or superfluous.

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And now the Eternal World rises before me more brightly, and the fundamental law of its order stands clearly and distinctly apparent to my mental vision. In this world, *will* alone, as it lies concealed from mortal eye in the secret obscurities of the soul, is the first link in a chain of consequences that stretches through the whole invisible realms of spirit; as, in the physical world, *action*—a certain movement of matter—is the first link in a material chain that runs through the whole system of nature. The will is the efficient, living principle of the world of reason, as motion is the efficient, living principle of the world of sense. I stand in the centre of two entirely opposite worlds:—a visible world, in which action is the only moving power; and an invisible and absolutely incomprehensible world, in which will is the ruling principle. I am one of the primitive forces of both these worlds. My will embraces both. This will is, in itself, a constituent element of the super-sensual world; for as I move it by successive resolutions I move and change something in that world, throughout which my activity thus extends itself giving birth to new and ever-enduring results which henceforward possess a real existence and need not be again produced. This will may break forth in a material act,—and this act belongs to the world of sense and does there that which pertains to a material act to do.

It is not necessary that I should first be severed from the terrestrial world before I can obtain admission into the celestial one;—I am and live in it even now, far more truly than in the terrestrial; even now it is my only sure

foundation, and the eternal life on the possession of which I have already entered is the only ground why I should still prolong this earthly one. That which we call heaven does not lie beyond the grave; it is even here diffused around us, and its light arises in every pure heart. My will is mine, and it is the only thing that is wholly mine and entirely dependent on myself; and through it I have already become a citizen of the realm of freedom and of pure spiritual activity. What determination of my will—of the only thing by which I am raised from earth into this region—is best adapted to the order of the spiritual world, is proclaimed to me at every moment by my conscience, the bond that constantly unites me to it;—and it depends solely on myself to give my activity the appointed direction. Thus I cultivate myself for this world; labour in it, and for it, in cultivating one of its members; in it, and only in it, pursue my purpose according to a settled plan, without doubt or hesitation, certain of the result, since here no foreign power stands opposed to my free will. That, in the world of sense my will, truly so called, also becomes an action, is but the law of this sensuous world. I did not send forth the act as I did the will; only the latter was wholly and purely my work,—it was all that proceeded forth from me. It was not even necessary that there should be another particular act on my part to unite the deed to the will; the deed unites itself to it according to the law of that second world with which I am connected through my will, and in which this will is likewise an original force, as it is in the first. I am indeed compelled, when I regard my will, determined according to the dictates of conscience, as a fact and an efficient cause in the world of sense, to refer it to that earthly purpose of humanity as a means to the accomplishment of an end;—not as if I should first survey the plan of the world and from this knowledge calculate what I had to do; but the specific action, which conscience di-

rectly enjoins me to do, reveals itself to me at once as the only means by which, in my position, I can contribute to the attainment of that end. Even if it should afterwards appear as if this end had not been promoted—nay, if it should even seem to have been hindered—by my action, yet I can never regret it, nor perplex myself about it, so surely as I have truly obeyed my conscience in performing this act. Whatever consequences it may have in this world, in the other world there can nothing but good result from it. And even in this world, should my action appear to have failed of its purpose, my conscience *for that very reason* commands me to repeat it in a manner by which it may more effectually reach its end; or, should it seem to have hindered that purpose, *for that very reason* to make good the detriment and annihilate the untoward result. I will as I ought, and the new deed follows. It may happen that the consequences of this new action, in the world of sense, may appear to me not more beneficial than those of the first; but with respect to the other world I retain the same calm assurance as before; and in the present it is again my bounden duty to make good my previous failure by new action. And thus should it still appear that, during my whole earthly life, I have not advanced the good cause a single hair's-breadth in this world, yet I dare not cease my efforts: after every unsuccessful attempt I must still believe that the next will be successful. But in the spiritual world no step is ever lost. In short, I do not pursue the earthly purpose for its own sake alone or as a final aim; but only because my true final aim, obedience to the law of conscience, does not present itself to me in this world in any other shape than as the advancement of this end. I may not cease to pursue it unless I were to deny the law of duty, or unless that law were to manifest itself to me, in this life, in some other shape than as a commandment to promote this purpose in my own place;—I shall actually cease to pursue

it in another life in which that commandment shall have set before me some other purpose wholly incomprehensible to me here. In this life, I must *will* to promote it, because I must obey; whether it be *actually* promoted by the deed that follows my will thus fittingly directed is not my care; I am responsible only for the will, (which indeed in the world of sense can only have to do with the earthly purpose) but not for the result. Previous to the actual deed, I can never resign this purpose; the deed, when it is completed, I may resign, and repeat it, or improve it. Thus do I live and labour, even here, in my most essential nature and in my nearest purposes, only for the other world; and my activity for it is the only thing of which I am completely certain;—in the world of sense I labour only for the sake of the other, and only because I cannot work for the other without at least *willing* to work for the world of sense.

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I will establish myself firmly in this, to me, wholly new view of my vocation. The present life cannot be rationally regarded as the sole purpose of my existence, or of the existence of a human race in general;—there is something in me, and there is something required of me, which finds in this life nothing to which it can be applied, and which is entirely superfluous and unnecessary for the attainment of the highest objects that can be attained on earth. There must therefore be a purpose in human existence which lies beyond this life. But should the present life, which is nevertheless imposed upon us, and which may possibly be designed solely for the development of reason, since even awakened reason commands us to maintain it and to promote its highest purposes with all our powers, —should this life not prove entirely vain and ineffectual, it must at least have relation to a future life, as means to an end. Now there is nothing in this present life, the



ultimate consequences of which do not remain on earth,—nothing whereby we could be connected with a future life,—but only our virtuous will, which in this world, by the fundamental laws thereof, is entirely fruitless. Only our virtuous will can it, must it be, by which we can labour for another life, and for the first and nearest objects which are there revealed to us; and it is the consequences, invisible to us, of this virtuous will, through which we first acquire a firm standing-point in that life, whence we may then advance in a farther course of progress.

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That our virtuous will in, and for and through itself, must have consequences, we know already in this life, for reason cannot command anything which is without a purpose; but what these consequences may be,—nay, how it is even possible for a mere will to produce any effect at all,—as to this we can form no conception whatever, so long as we are still involved in this material world; and it is true wisdom not to undertake an inquiry in which we know beforehand that we cannot be successful. With respect to the nature of these consequences, the present life is therefore, in relation to the future, *a life in faith*. In the future life, we shall possess these consequences, for we shall then proceed from them as our starting-point, and build upon them as our foundation; and this other life will thus be, in relation to the consequences of our virtuous will in the present, *a life in sight*. In that other life, we shall also have an immediate purpose set before us, as we have in the present; for our activity must not cease. But we remain finite beings,—and for finite beings there is but finite, determinate activity; and every determinate act has a determinate end. As, in the present life, the actually existing world as we find it around us, the fitting adjustment of this world to the work we have to do in it, the degree of culture and virtue already at-

tained by men, and our own physical powers,—as these stand related to the purposes of this life,—so, in the future life, the consequences of our virtuous will in the present shall stand related to the purposes of that other existence. The present is the beginning of our existence; the endowments requisite for its purpose, and a firm footing in it, have been freely bestowed on us:—the future is the continuation of this existence, and in it we must acquire for ourselves a beginning, and a definite standing-point.

And now the present life no longer appears vain and useless; for this and this alone it is given to us—that we may acquire for ourselves a firm foundation in the future life, and only by means of this foundation is it connected with our whole eternal existence. It is very possible, that the immediate purpose of this second life may prove as unattainable by finite powers, with certainty and after a fixed plan, as the purpose of the present life is now; and that even there a virtuous will may appear superfluous and without result. But it can never be lost there, any more than here, for it is the eternal and unalterable command of reason. Its necessary efficacy would, in that case, direct us to a third life, in which the consequences of our virtuous will in the second life would become visible;—a life which during the second life would again be believed in through faith, but with firmer, more unwavering confidence, since we should already have had practical experience of the truthfulness of reason, and have regained the fruits of a pure heart which had been faithfully garnered up in a previously completed life.

As in the present life it is only from the command of conscience to follow a certain course of action that there arises our conception of a certain purpose in this action, and from this our whole intuitive perception of a world of sense;—so in the future, upon a similar, but now to us wholly inconceivable command, will be founded our conception of the immediate purpose of that life; and upon

this, again, our intuitive perception of a world in which we shall set out from the consequences of our virtuous will in the present life. The present world exists for us only through the law of duty ; the other will be revealed to us, in a similar manner, through another command of duty ; for in no other manner can a world exist for any reasonable being.

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This, then, is my whole sublime vocation, my true nature. I am a member of two orders :—the one purely spiritual, in which I rule by my will alone ; the other sensuous, in which I operate by my deed. The sole end of reason is pure activity, absolutely by itself alone, having no need of any instrument out of itself,—independence of everything which is not reason,—absolute freedom. The will is the living principle of reason,—is itself reason, when purely and simply apprehended ; that reason is active by itself alone, means that pure will, merely as such, lives and rules. It is only the Infinite Reason that lives immediately and wholly in this purely spiritual order. The finite reason,—which does not of itself constitute the world of reason, but is only one of its many members,—lives necessarily at the same time in a sensuous order ; that is to say, in one which presents to it another object beyond a purely spiritual activity :—a material object, to be promoted by instruments and powers which indeed stand under the immediate dominion of the will, but whose activity is also conditioned by their own natural laws. Yet as surely as reason is reason, must the will operate absolutely by itself, and independently of the natural laws by which the material action is determined ;—and hence the sensuous life of every finite being points towards a higher, into which the will, by itself alone, may open the way, and of which it may acquire possession,—a possession which indeed we are again constrained to conceive of sensuously as a state, and not as a mere will.

These two orders,—the purely spiritual and the sensuous, the latter consisting possibly of an innumerable series of particular lives,—have existed for me since the first moment of the development of an active reason within me, and still continue parallel to each other. The latter order is only a phenomenon for myself, and for those with whom I am associated in this life ; the former alone gives it significance, purpose, and value. I *am* immortal, imperishable, eternal, as soon as I form the resolution to obey the laws of reason ; I do not need to *become* so. The super-sensual world is no future world ; it is now present ; it can at no point of finite existence be more present than at another ; not more present after an existence of myriads of lives than at this moment. My sensuous existence may, in future, assume other forms, but these will be just as little the true life as its present form. By that resolution I lay hold on eternity, and cast off this earthly life and all other forms of sensuous life which may yet lie before me in futurity, and place myself far above them. I become the sole source of my own being and its phenomena, and, henceforth, unconditioned by anything without me, I have life in myself. My will, directed by no foreign agency in the order of the super-sensual world but by myself alone, is this source of true life, and of eternity.

But it is my will alone which is this source of true life and of eternity :—only by recognising this will as the true seat of moral goodness, and by actually raising it thereto, do I obtain the assurance and the possession of that super-sensual world.

Without regard to any conceivable or visible object, without inquiry as to whether my will may be followed by any result other than the mere volition,—I must will in accordance with the moral law. My will stands alone, apart from all that is not itself, and is its own world merely by itself and for itself ; not only as being itself an absolutely *first*, primary and original power, before which

there is no preceding influence by which it may be governed, but also as being followed by no conceivable or comprehensible *second* step in the series, by which its activity may be brought under the dominion of a foreign law. Did there proceed from it any second, and from this again a third result, and so forth, in any conceivable sensuous world distinct from the spiritual world, then would its strength be broken by the resistance of the independent elements which such a world would set in motion; the mode of its activity would no longer exactly correspond to the purpose expressed in the volition; and the will would be no longer free, but be in so far limited by the laws of its heterogeneous sphere of action. And thus must I actually regard the will in the present sensuous world, the only one known to me. I am indeed compelled to believe, and consequently to act as if I thought, that by my mere volition my tongue, my hand, or my foot, may be set in motion; but how a mere aspiration, an impress of intelligence upon itself, such as will is, can be the principle of motion to a heavy material mass,—this I not only find it impossible to conceive, but the mere assertion is, before the tribunal of the understanding, a palpable absurdity;—here the movement of matter, even in myself, can be explained only by the internal forces of matter itself.

Such a view of my will as I have taken, can, however, be attained only through an intimate conviction that it is not merely the highest active principle for this world,—which it certainly might be, without having freedom in itself, by the mere energy of the system of the universe, such as we must conceive of the formative power in Nature,—but that it absolutely disregards all earthly objects, and generally all objects lying out of itself, and recognises itself, for its own sake, as its own ultimate end. ✓  
But by such a view of my will I am at once directed to a super-sensual order of things, in which the will, by itself alone and without any instrument lying out of itself, be-

comes an efficient cause in a sphere which, like itself, is purely spiritual, and is thoroughly accessible to it. That moral volition is demanded of us absolutely for its own sake alone,—a truth which I discover only as a fact in my inward consciousness, and to the knowledge of which I cannot attain in any other way :—this was the first step of my thought. That this demand is reasonable, and the source and standard of all else that is reasonable ; that it is not modelled upon any other thing whatever, but that all other things must, on the contrary, model themselves upon it, and be dependent upon it,—a conviction which also I cannot arrive at from without, but can attain only by inward experience, by means of the unhesitating and immovable assent which I freely accord to this demand :—this was the second step of my thought. And from these two terms I have attained to faith in a super-sensual Eternal World. If I abandon the former, the latter falls to the ground. If it were true, — as many say it is, assuming it without farther proof as self-evident and extolling it as the highest summit of human wisdom,—that all human virtue must have before it a certain definite external object, and that it must first be assured of the possibility of attaining this object, before it can act and before it can become virtue ; that, consequently, reason by no means contains within itself the principle and the standard of its own activity, but must receive this standard from without through contemplation of an external world ;—if this were true, then might the ultimate end of our existence be accomplished here below ; human nature might be completely developed and exhausted by our earthly vocation, and we should have no rational ground for raising our thoughts above the present life.

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But every thinker who has anywhere acquired those first principles historically, moved perhaps only by a mere

love of the new and unusual, and who is able to prosecute a correct course of reasoning from them, might speak and teach as I have now spoken to myself. He would then present us with the thoughts of some other being, not with his own; everything would float before him empty and without significance, because he would be without the sense whereby he might apprehend its reality. He is a blind man, who, upon certain true principles concerning colours which he has learned historically, has built a perfectly correct theory of colour, notwithstanding that there is in reality no colour existing for him;—he can tell how, under certain conditions, it *must be*; but to him it *is* not so, because he does not stand under these conditions. The faculty by which we lay hold on Eternal Life is to be attained only by actually renouncing the sensuous and its objects, and sacrificing them to that law which takes cognizance of our will only and not of our actions;—renouncing them with the firmest conviction that it is reasonable for us to do so,—nay, that it is the only thing reasonable for us. By this renunciation of the Earthly, does faith in the Eternal first arise in our soul, and is there enshrined apart, as the only support to which we can cling after we have given up all else,—as the only animating principle that can elevate our minds and inspire our lives. We must indeed, according to the figure of a sacred doctrine, first “die unto the world and be born again, before we can enter the kingdom of God.”

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I see—Oh I now see clearly before me the cause of my former indifference and blindness concerning spiritual things! Absorbed by mere earthly objects, lost in them with all our thoughts and efforts, moved and urged onward only by the notion of a result lying beyond ourselves,—by the desire of such a result and of our own enjoyment therein,—insensible and dead to the pure impulse of rea-

son, which gives a law to itself, and offers to our aspirations a purely spiritual end, — the immortal Psyche remains with fettered pinions fastened to the earth. Our philosophy becomes the history of our own heart and life ; and according to what we ourselves are do we conceive of man and his vocation. Never impelled by any other motive than the desire after what can be actually realized in this world, there is for us no true freedom,—no freedom which holds the ground of its determination absolutely and entirely within itself. Our freedom is, at best, that of the self-forming plant ; not essentially higher in its nature, but only more elaborate in its results ; not producing a mere material form with roots, leaves, and blossoms, but a mind with impulses, thoughts, and actions. We cannot have the slightest conception of true freedom, because we do not ourselves possess it ; when it is spoken of, we either bring down what is said to the level of our own notions, or at once declare all such talk to be nonsense. Without the idea of freedom, we are likewise without the faculty for another world. Everything of this kind floats past before us like words that are not addressed to us ; like a pale shadow, without colour or meaning, which we know not how to lay hold of or retain. We leave it as we find it, without the least participation or sympathy. Or should we ever be urged by a more active zeal to consider it seriously, we then convince ourselves to our own satisfaction that all such ideas are untenable and worthless reveries which the man of sound understanding unhesitatingly rejects ; and according to the premises from which we proceed, made up as they are of our inward experiences, we are perfectly in the right, and secure from either refutation or conversion so long as we remain what we are. The excellent doctrines which are taught amongst us with a special authority, concerning freedom, duty, and everlasting life, become to us romantic fables, like those of Tartarus and the Elysian fields ; although we do not



publish to the world this our secret opinion, because we find it expedient, by means of these figures, to maintain an outward decorum among the populace ; or, should we be less reflective, and ourselves bound in the chains of authority, then we sink to the level of the common mind, and believing what, *thus understood*, would be mere foolish fables, we find in those pure spiritual symbols only the promise of continuing throughout eternity the same miserable existence which we possess here below.

In one word :—only by the fundamental improvement of my will does a new light arise within me concerning my existence and vocation ; without this, however much I may speculate, and with what rare intellectual gifts soever I may be endowed, darkness remains within me and around me. The improvement of the heart alone leads to true wisdom. Let then my whole life be unceasingly devoted to this one purpose.

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#### IV.

My Moral Will, merely as such, in and through itself, shall certainly and invariably produce consequences ; every determination of my will in accordance with duty, although no action should follow it, shall operate in another to me incomprehensible world, in which nothing but this moral determination of the will shall possess efficient activity. What is it that is assumed in this conception ?

Obviously a *Law* ; a rule absolutely without exception, according to which a will determined by duty must have consequences ; just as in the material world which surrounds me I assume a law according to which this ball, when thrown by my hand with this particular force, in this particular direction, necessarily moves in such a direction with a certain degree of velocity,—perhaps strikes another ball with a certain amount of force, which in its

turn moves on with a certain velocity,—and so on. As here, in the mere direction and motion of my hand, I already recognise and apprehend all the consequent directions and movements with the same certainty as if they were already present before me ; even so do I embrace by means of my virtuous will a series of necessary and inevitable consequences in the spiritual world as if they were already present before me ; only that I cannot define them as I do those in the material world,—that is, I only know *that* they must be, but not *how* they shall be ;—and even in doing this I conceive of a *Law* of the spiritual world in which my pure will is one of the moving forces, as my hand is one of the moving forces of the material world. My own firm confidence in these results, and the conceptions of this *Law* of a spiritual world, are one and the same ;—they are not two thoughts one of which arises by means of the other, but they are entirely the same thought ; just as the confidence with which I calculate on a certain motion in a material body, and the conception of a mechanical law of nature on which that motion depends, are one and the same. The conception of a *Law* expresses nothing more than the firm, immovable confidence of reason in a principle, and the absolute impossibility of admitting its opposite.

I assume such a law of a spiritual world,—not given by my will nor by the will of any finite being, nor by the will of all finite beings taken together, but to which my will, and the will of all finite beings, is subject. Neither I, nor any finite and therefore sensuous being, can conceive how a mere will can have consequences, nor what may be the true nature of those consequences ; for herein consists the essential character of our finite nature,—that we are unable to conceive this,—that having indeed our will, as such, wholly within our power, we are yet compelled by our sensuous nature to regard the consequences of that will as sensuous states :—how then can I, or any other finite

being whatever, propose to ourselves as objects, and thereby give reality to, that which we can neither imagine nor conceive? I cannot say that, in the material world, my hand, or any other body which belongs to that world and is subject to the universal law of gravity, brings this law into operation;—these bodies themselves stand under this law, and are able to set another body in motion only in accordance with this law, and only in so far as that body, by virtue of this law, partakes of the universal moving power of Nature. Just as little can a finite will give a law to the super-sensual world which no finite spirit can embrace; but all finite wills stand under the law of that world, and can produce results therein only inasmuch as that law already exists, and inasmuch as they themselves, in accordance with the form of that law which is applicable to finite wills, bring themselves under its conditions and within the sphere of its activity by moral obedience;—by moral obedience, I say, the only tie which unites them to that higher world, the only nerve that descends from it to them, and the only organ through which they can re-act upon it. As the universal power of attraction embraces all bodies, and holds them together in themselves and with each other, and the movement of each separate body is possible only on the supposition of this power, so does that super-sensual law unite, hold together, and embrace all finite reasonable beings. My will, and the will of all finite beings, may be regarded from a double point of view:—partly as a mere *volition*, an internal act directed upon itself alone, and, in so far, the will is complete in itself, concluded in this act of volition;—partly as something beyond this, a *fact*. It assumes the latter form to me, as soon as I regard it as completed; but it must also become so beyond me:—in the world of sense, as the moving principle, for instance, of my hand, from the movement of which, again, other movements follow;—in the super-sensual world, as the

principle of a series of spiritual consequences of which I have no conception. In the former point of view, as a mere act of volition, it stands wholly within my own power; its assumption of the latter character, that of an active first principle, depends not upon me, but on a law to which I myself am subject;—on the law of nature in the world of sense, on a super-sensual law in the world of pure thought.

What, then, is this law of the spiritual world which I conceive? This idea now stands before me in fixed and perfect shape; I cannot and dare not add anything whatever to it; I have only to express and interpret it distinctly. It is obviously not such as I may suppose the principle of my own, or any other possible sensuous world, to be,—a fixed, inert existence, from which by the encounter of a will some internal power may be evolved,—something altogether different from a mere will. For,—and this is the substance of my belief,—my will, absolutely by itself, and without the intervention of any instrument that might weaken its expression, shall act in a perfectly congenial sphere,—reason upon reason, spirit upon spirit,—in a sphere to which nevertheless it does not give the law of life, activity, and progress, but which has that law in itself;—therefore upon self-active reason. But self-active reason is will. The law of the super-sensual world must, therefore, be a Will:—A Will which operates purely as will; by itself, and absolutely without any instrument or sensible material of its activity; which is at the same time both act and product; with whom to will is to do, to command is to execute; in which therefore the instinctive demand of reason for absolute freedom and independence is realized:—A Will, which in itself is law; determined by no fancy or caprice, through no previous reflection, hesitation, or doubt:—but eternal, unchangeable, on which we may securely and infallibly rely, as the physical man relies with certainty on the laws of his world:—A Will in

which the moral will of finite beings, and this alone, has sure and unfailing results ; since for it all else is unavailing, all else is as if it were not.

That sublime Will thus pursues no solitary path withdrawn from the other parts of the world of reason. There is a spiritual bond between Him and all finite rational beings ; and He himself is this spiritual bond of the rational universe. Let me will, purely and decidedly, my duty ; and He wills that, in the spiritual world at least, my will shall prosper. Every moral resolution of a finite being goes up before Him, and—to speak after the manner of mortals—moves and determines Him, not in consequence of a momentary satisfaction, but in accordance with the eternal law of His being. With surprising clearness does this thought, which hitherto was veiled in obscurity, now reveal itself to my soul ; the thought that my will, merely as such and through itself, shall have results. It has results, because it is immediately and infallibly perceived by another Will to which it is related, which is its own accomplishment and the only living principle of the spiritual world ; *in Him* it has its first results, and *through Him* it acquires an influence on the whole spiritual world, which throughout is but a product of that Infinite Will.

Thus do I approach—the mortal must speak in his own language—thus do I approach that Infinite Will ; and the voice of conscience in my soul, which teaches me in every situation of life what I have there to do, is the channel through which again His influence descends upon me. That voice, made audible by my environment and translated into my language, is the oracle of the Eternal World which announces to me how I am to perform my part in the order of the spiritual universe, or in the Infinite Will who is Himself that order. I cannot, indeed, survey or comprehend that spiritual order, and I need not to do so ; —I am but a link in its chain, and can no more judge of the whole, than a single tone of music can judge of the

entire harmony of which it forms a part. But what I myself ought to be in this harmony of spirits I must know, for it is only I myself who can make me so,—and this is immediately revealed to me by a voice whose tones descend upon me from that other world. Thus do I stand connected with the ONE who alone has existence, and thus do I participate in His being. There is nothing real, lasting, imperishable in me, save these two elements:—the voice of conscience, and my free obedience. By the first, the spiritual world bows down to me and embraces me as one of its members; by the second, I raise myself into this world, apprehend it, and re-act upon it. That Infinite Will is the mediator between it and me; for He Himself is the original source of both it and me. This is the one True and Imperishable for which my soul yearns even from its inmost depths; all else is mere appearance, ever vanishing, and ever returning in a new semblance.

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This Will binds me in union with Himself; He also binds me in union with all finite beings like myself, and is the common mediator between us all. This is the great mystery of the invisible world, and its fundamental law, in so far as it is a world or system of many individual wills:—*the union and direct reciprocal action of many separate and independent wills*; a mystery which already lies clearly before every eye in the present life, without attracting the notice of any one, or being regarded as in any way wonderful. The voice of conscience, which imposes on each his particular duty, is the light-beam on which we come forth from the bosom of the Infinite, and assume our place as particular individual beings; it fixes the limits of our personality; it is thus the true original element of our nature, the foundation and material of all our life. The absolute freedom of the will, which we bring down with us from the Infinite into the world of

Time, is the principle of this our life. I act :— and, the sensible intuition through which alone I become a personal intelligence being supposed, it is easy to conceive how I must necessarily know of this my action,—I know it because it is I myself who act ;—it is easy to conceive how, by means of this sensible intuition, my spiritual act appears to me as a fact in the world of sense ; and how, on the other hand, by the same intuition, the law of duty, which in itself is a purely spiritual law, should appear to me as the command to such an act ;—it is easy to conceive, how an actually present world should appear to me as the condition of this act, and, in part, as the consequence and product of it. Thus far I remain within myself and upon my own territory ; everything here which has an existence for me, unfolds itself purely and solely from myself ; I see everywhere only myself, and no true existence out of myself. But in this my world I admit also the operations of other beings, as separate and independent of me as I am of them. How these beings can themselves know of the influences which proceed from them may easily be conceived ; they know of them in the same way in which I know of my own. But how *I* can know of *them* is absolutely inconceivable ; just as it is inconceivable how *they* can possess that knowledge of *my* existence, and its manifestations, which nevertheless I ascribe to them. How do they come within my world, or I within theirs,—since the principle by which the consciousness of ourselves, of our operations, and of their sensuous conditions, is deduced from ourselves,—*i. e.* that each individual must undoubtedly know what he himself does,—is here wholly inapplicable ? How have free spirits knowledge of free spirits, since we know that free spirits are the only reality, and that an independent world of sense, through which they might act on each other, is no longer to be taken into account ? Or shall it be said,— I perceive reasonable beings like myself by the changes

which they produce in the world of sense ? Then I ask again,—How dost thou perceive these changes ? I comprehend very well how thou canst perceive changes which are brought about by the mere mechanism of nature ; for the law of this mechanism is no other than the law of thy own thought, according to which, this world being once assumed, it is carried out into farther developments. But the changes of which we now speak are not brought about by the mere mechanism of nature, but by a free will elevated above nature ; and only in so far as thou canst regard them in this character, canst thou infer from them the existence of free beings like thyself. Where then is the law within thyself, according to which thou canst realize the determinations of other wills absolutely independent of thee ? In short, this mutual recognition and reciprocal action of free beings in this world, is perfectly inexplicable by the laws of nature or of thought, and can be explained only through the One in whom they are united although to each other they are separate ; through the Infinite Will who sustains and embraces them all in His own sphere. Not immediately from thee to me, nor from me to thee, flows forth the knowledge which we have of each other ;—we are separated by an insurmountable barrier. Only through the common fountain of our spiritual being do we know of each other ; only in Him do we recognize each other and influence each other. “ Here reverence the image of freedom upon the earth ;—here, a work which bears its impress :”—thus is it proclaimed within me by the voice of that Will which speaks to me only in so far as it imposes duties upon me ;—and the only principle through which I recognize thee and thy work is the command of conscience to respect them.

Whence, then, our feelings, our sensible intuitions, our discursive laws of thought, on all which is founded the external world which we behold, in which we believe that we exert an influence on each other ? With respect to



the two last—our sensible intuitions and our laws of thought—to say these are laws of reason in itself, is only to give no satisfactory answer at all. For us, indeed, who are excluded from the pure domain of reason in itself, it may be impossible to think otherwise, or to conceive of reason under any other law. But the true law of reason in itself is the practical law, the law of the super-sensual world, or of that sublime Will. And, leaving this for a moment undecided, whence comes our universal agreement as to feelings, which, nevertheless, are something positive, immediate, inexplicable? On this agreement in feeling, perception, and in the laws of thought, however, it depends that we all behold the same external world.

“It is a harmonious, although inconceivable, limitation of the finite rational beings who compose our race; and only by means of such a harmonious limitation do they become a race:”—thus answers the philosophy of mere knowledge, and here it must rest as its highest point. But what can set a limit to reason but reason itself?—what can limit all finite reason but the Infinite Reason? This universal agreement concerning a sensible world,—assumed and accepted by us as the foundation of all our other life, and as the sphere of our duty—which, strictly considered, is just as incomprehensible as our unanimity concerning the products of our reciprocal freedom,—this agreement is the result of the One Eternal Infinite Will. Our faith, of which we have spoken as faith in duty, is only faith in Him, in His reason, in His truth. What, then, is the peculiar and essential truth which we accept in the world of sense, and in which we believe? Nothing less than that from our free and faithful performance of our duty in this world, there will arise to us throughout eternity a life in which our freedom and morality may still continue their development. If this be true, then indeed is there truth in our world, and the only truth possible for finite beings; and it must be true, for this

world is the result of the Eternal Will in us,—and that Will, by the law of His own being, can have no other purpose with respect to finite beings than that which we have set forth.

That Eternal Will is thus assuredly the Creator of the World, in the only way in which He can be so, and in the only way in which it needs creation:—in the finite reason. Those who regard Him as building up a world from an everlasting inert matter, which must still remain inert and lifeless,—like a vessel made by human hands, not an eternal procession of His self-development,—or who ascribe to Him the production of a material universe out of nothing, know neither the world nor Him. If matter only can be reality, then indeed there is nothing, and throughout all eternity there can be nothing. Reason alone exists:—the Infinite in Himself,—the finite in Him and through Him. Only in our minds has he created a world; at least that *from which* we unfold it, and that *by which* we unfold it;—the voice of duty, and harmonious feelings, intuitions, and laws of thought. It is His light through which we behold the light and all that it reveals to us. In our minds He still creates this world, and acts upon it by acting upon our minds through the call of duty as soon as another free being changes aught therein. In our minds He upholds this world, and thereby the finite existence of which alone we are capable, by continually evolving from each state of our existence other states in succession. When He shall have sufficiently proved us according to His supreme designs, for our next succeeding vocation, and we shall have sufficiently cultivated ourselves for entering upon it, then, by that which we call death, will He annihilate for us this life, and introduce us to a new life, the product of our virtuous actions. All our life is His life. We are in His hand, and abide therein, and no one can pluck us out of His hand. We are eternal, because He is eternal.

Sublime and Living Will! named by no name, compassed by no thought! I may well raise my soul to Thee, for Thou and I are not divided. Thy voice sounds within me, mine resounds in Thee; and all my thoughts, if they be but good and true, live in Thee also. In Thee, the Incomprehensible, I myself, and the world in which I live, become clearly comprehensible to me; all the secrets of my existence are laid open, and perfect harmony arises in my soul.

Thou art best known to the child-like, devoted, simple mind. To it Thou art the searcher of hearts, who seest its inmost depths; the ever-present true witness of its thoughts, who knowest its truth, who knowest it though all the world know it not. Thou art the Father who ever desirest its good, who rulest all things for the best. To Thy will it unhesitatingly resigns itself: "Do with me," it says, "what Thou wilt; I know that it is good, for it is Thou who doest it." The inquisitive understanding, which has heard of Thee, but seen Thee not, would teach us Thy nature; and, as Thy image, shows us a monstrous and incongruous shape, which the sagacious laugh at and the wise and good abhor.

I hide my face before Thee, and lay my hand upon my mouth. *How* Thou art, and seemest to Thine own being, I can never know, any more than I can assume Thy nature. After thousands upon thousands of spirit-lives, I shall comprehend Thee as little as I do now in this earthly house. That which I conceive becomes finite through my very conception of it; and this can never, even by endless exaltation, rise into the Infinite. Thou differest from men, not in degree but in nature. In every stage of their advancement they think of Thee as a greater *man*, and still a greater; but never as God—the Infinite,—whom no measure can mete. I have only this discursive, progressive thought, and I can conceive of no other:—how can I venture to ascribe it to Thee? In the Idea of

*person* there are imperfections, limitations :—how can I clothe Thee with it without these ?

I will not attempt that which the imperfection of my finite nature forbids, and which would be useless to me :—*How* Thou art, I may not know. But let me be what I ought to be, and Thy relations to me—the mortal—and to all mortals, lie open before my eyes, and surround me more clearly than the consciousness of my own existence. *Thou workest* in me the knowledge of my duty, of my vocation in the world of reasonable beings ;—*how*, I know not, nor need I to know. *Thou knowest* what I think and what I will :—*how* Thou canst know, through what act thou bringest about that consciousness, I cannot understand,—nay, I know that the idea of an act, of a particular act of consciousness belongs to me alone, and not to Thee,—the Infinite One. *Thou wiltest* that my free obedience shall bring with it eternal consequences :—the act of Thy will I cannot comprehend, I only know that it is not like mine. *Thou doest*, and Thy will itself is the deed ; but the way of Thy working is not as my ways,—I cannot trace it. *Thou livest and art*, for Thou knowest and wiltest and workest, omnipresent to finite Reason ; but Thou *art not* as *I* now and always must conceive of being.

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In the contemplation of these Thy relations to me, the finite being, will I rest in calm blessedness. I know immediately only what I ought to do. This will I do, freely, joyfully, and without cavilling or sophistry, for it is Thy voice which commands me to do it ; it is the part assigned to me in the spiritual World-plan ; and the power with which I shall perform it is Thy power. Whatever may be commanded by that voice, whatever executed by that power, is, in that plan, assuredly and truly good. I remain tranquil amid all the events of this world, for they are in Thy world. Nothing can perplex or surprise or

dishearten me, as surely as 'Thou livest, and I can behold Thy life. For in Thee, and through Thee, O Infinite One! do I see even my present world in another light. Nature and natural consequences in the destinies and conduct of free beings become, in relation to Thee, empty unmeaning words. Nature is no longer; Thou, only Thou, art. It no longer appears to me to be the end and purpose of the present world to bring about that state of universal peace among men, and of unlimited dominion over the mechanism of Nature, for its own sake alone,—but that this should be brought about by men themselves;—and since the duty is laid upon *all*, that it should be brought about by *all*, as one great, free, moral, community. Nothing new and better for an individual shall be attainable except through his own virtuous will; nothing new and better for a community except through the common will being in accordance with duty:—this is a fundamental law of the great moral empire of which the present life is a part. The good will of the individual is thus often lost to this world because it is only the will of the individual, and the will of the majority is not in harmony with his,—and then its results are to be found solely in a future world; while even the passions and vices of men coöperate in the attainment of good,—not in and for themselves, for in this sense good can never come out of evil,—but by holding the balance against the opposite vices, and, at last, by their excess, annihilating these antagonists and themselves with them. Oppression could never have gained the upper hand in human affairs unless the cowardice, baseness, and mutual mistrust of men had smoothed the way to it. It will continue to increase until it extirpate cowardice and slavishness; and despair itself at last reäwaken courage. Then shall the two opposite vices have annihilated each other, and the noblest of all human relations, lasting freedom, come forth from their antagonism.

The actions of free beings, strictly considered, have results only in other free beings ; for in them, and for them alone, there is a world ; and that in which they all accord is itself the world. But they have these results only through the Infinite Will,—the medium through which all individual beings influence each other. But the announcement, the publication of this Will to us, is always a call to a particular duty. Thus even what we call evil in the world, the consequence of the abuse of freedom, exists only through this Will ; and it exists for those who experience it only in so far as, through it, duties are laid upon them. Were it not in the eternal plan of our moral culture, and of the culture of our whole race, that precisely these duties should be laid upon us they would not be so laid upon us ; and that through which they are laid upon us—*i. e.* what we call evil—would not even have arisen. In so far, everything that is is good, and absolutely legitimate. There is but one world possible,—a thoroughly good world. All that happens in this world is subservient to the improvement and culture of man, and, by means of this, to the promotion of the purpose of his earthly existence. It is this higher World-plan which we call Nature, when we say,—Nature leads men through want to industry ; through the evils of general disorder to a just constitution ; through the miseries of continual wars to endless peace on earth. Thy will, O Infinite One ! thy Providence alone, is this higher Nature. This, too, is best understood by artless simplicity, when it regards this life as a place of trial and culture, as a school for eternity ; when, in all the events of life, the most trivial as well as the most important, it beholds thy guiding Providence disposing all for the best ; when it firmly believes that all things must work together for the good of those who love their duty, and who know Thee.

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Oh ! I have, indeed, dwelt in darkness during the past days of my life ! I have indeed heaped error upon error, and imagined myself wise ! Now, for the first time, do I wholly understand the doctrine which from thy lips, O Wonderful Spirit ! seemed so strange to me although my understanding had nothing to oppose to it ; for now, for the first time, do I comprehend it in its whole compass, in its deepest foundations, and through all its consequences.

Man is not a product of the world of sense, and the end of his existence cannot be attained in it. His vocation transcends Time and Space, and everything that pertains to sense. What he is, and to what he is to train himself, of that he must know ;—as his vocation is a lofty one, he must be able to raise his thoughts above the limitations of sense. He must accomplish it :—where his being finds its home, there his thoughts too seek their dwelling-place ; and the truly human mode of thought, that which alone is worthy of him, that in which his whole spiritual strength is manifested, is that whereby he raises himself above those limitations, whereby all that pertains to sense vanishes into nothing,—into a mere reflection in mortal eyes of the one, abiding Infinite.

Many have raised themselves to this mode of thought, without scientific inquiry, merely by their nobleness of heart and their pure moral instinct, because their lives have been preëminently lives of feeling and sentiment. They have denied, by their conduct, the efficiency and reality of the world of sense, and made it of no account in regulating their resolutions and their actions ;—whereby they have not indeed made it clear, by reasoning, that this world has no existence for the intellect. Those who could dare to say, “Our citizenship is in heaven ; we have here no continuing city, but we seek one to come ;”—those whose chief principle it was “to die to the world, to be born again, and already here below to enter upon a new life,”—certainly set no value whatever on the things of

sense, and were, to use the language of the schools, practical Transcendental Idealists.

Others, who, besides possessing the natural proneness to mere sensuous activity which is common to us all, have also added to its power by the adoption of similar habits of thought, until they have got wholly entangled in it, and it has grown with their growth and strengthened with their strength, can raise themselves above it, permanently and completely, only by persistent and conclusive thought; otherwise, with the purest moral intentions, they would be continually drawn down again by their understanding, and their whole being would remain a prolonged and insoluble contradiction. For these, the philosophy which I now, for the first time, thoroughly understand will be the power that shall first set free the imprisoned Psyche and unfold her wings, so that, hovering for a moment above her former self, she may cast a glance on her abandoned slough, and then soar upwards thenceforward to live and move in higher spheres.

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Blessed be the hour in which I first resolved to inquire into myself and my vocation! All my doubts are solved; I know what I can know, and have no apprehensions regarding that which I cannot know. I am satisfied; perfect harmony and clearness reign in my soul, and a new and more glorious spiritual existence begins for me.

My entire complete vocation I cannot comprehend; what I shall be hereafter transcends all my thoughts. A part of that vocation is concealed from me; it is visible only to One, to the Father of Spirits, to whose care it is committed. I know only that it is sure, and that it is eternal and glorious like Himself. But that part of it which is confided to myself, I know, and know it thoroughly, for it is the root of all my other knowledge. I know assuredly, in every moment of my life, what I ought to do; and



this is my whole vocation in so far as it depends on me. From this point, since my knowledge does not reach beyond it, I shall not depart; I shall not desire to know aught beyond this; I shall take my stand upon this central point, and firmly root myself here. To this shall all my thoughts and endeavours, my whole powers, be directed; my whole existence shall be interwoven with it.

I ought, as far as in me lies, to cultivate my understanding and to acquire knowledge;—but only with the purpose of preparing thereby within me a larger field and wider sphere of duty. I ought to desire to have much;—in order that much may be required of me. I ought to exercise my powers and capacities in every possible way;—but only in order to render myself a more serviceable and fitting instrument of duty, for until the commandment shall have been realized in the outward world, by means of my whole personality, I am answerable for it to my conscience. I ought to exhibit in myself, as far as I am able, humanity in all its completeness;—not for the mere sake of humanity, which in itself has not the slightest worth, but in order that virtue, which alone has worth in itself, may be exhibited in its highest perfection in human nature. I ought to regard myself, body and soul, with all that is in me or that belongs to me, only as a means of duty; and only be solicitous to fulfil that, and to make myself able to fulfil it, as far as in me lies. But when the commandment,—provided only that it shall have been in truth the commandment which I have obeyed, and I have been really conscious only of the pure, single intention of obeying it,—when the commandment shall have passed beyond my personal being to its realization in the outward world, then I have no more anxiety about it, for thenceforward it is committed into the hands of the Eternal Will. Farther care or anxiety would be but idle self-torment; would be unbelief and distrust of that Infinite Will. I shall never dream of governing the world in His

stead ; of listening to the voice of my own imperfect wisdom instead of to His voice in my conscience ; or of substituting the partial views of a short-sighted creature for His vast plan which embraces the universe. I know that thereby I should lose my own place in His order, and in the order of all spiritual being.

As with calmness and devotion I reverence this higher Providence, so in my actions ought I to reverence the freedom of other beings around me. The question for me is not what they, according to my conceptions, ought to do ; but what I may venture to do in order to induce them to do it. I can only desire to act on their conviction and their will as far as the order of society and their own consent will permit ; but by no means, without their conviction and consent, to influence their powers and relations. They do what they do on their own responsibility : with this I neither can nor dare intermeddle, and the Eternal Will will dispose all for the best. It concerns me more to respect their freedom than to hinder or prevent what to me seems evil in its use.

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In this point of view I become a new creature, and my whole relations to the existing world are changed. The ties by which my mind was formerly united to this world, and by whose secret guidance I followed all its movements, are for ever sundered, and I stand free, calm and immovable, a universe to myself. No longer through my affections, but by my eye alone, do I apprehend outward objects and am connected with them ; and this eye itself is purified by freedom, and looks through error and deformity to the True and Beautiful, as upon the unruffled surface of water shapes are more purely mirrored in a milder light.

My mind is for ever closed against embarrassment and

perplexity, against uncertainty, doubt, and anxiety ;—my heart against grief, repentance, and desire. There is but one thing that I may know,—namely, what I ought to do ; and this I always know infallibly. Concerning all else I know nothing, and know that I know nothing. I firmly root myself in this my ignorance, and refrain from harassing myself with conjectures concerning that of which I know nothing. No occurrence in this world can affect me either with joy or sorrow ; calm and unmoved I look down upon all things, for I know that I cannot explain a single event, nor comprehend its connexion with that which alone concerns me. All that happens belongs to the plan of the Eternal World, and is good in its place ; thus much I know :—what in this plan is pure gain, what is only a means for the removal of some existing evil, what therefore ought to afford me more or less satisfaction, I know not. In His world all things prosper ;—this satisfies me, and in this belief I stand fast as a rock :—but what in His world is merely the germ, what the blossom and what the fruit itself, I know not.

The only matter in which I can be concerned is the progress of reason and morality in the world of reasonable beings ; and this only for its own sake,—for the sake of this progress. Whether I or some one else be the instrument of this progress, whether it be my deed or that of another by which it is promoted or hindered, is of no importance to me. I regard myself merely as one of the instruments for carrying out the purpose of reason ; I respect, love, or feel an interest in myself only as such an instrument, and desire the successful issue of my deed only in so far as it promotes this purpose. In like manner, I regard all the events of this world only with reference to this one purpose ; whether they proceed from me or from others, whether they relate directly to me or to others. My breast is steeled against annoyance on account of personal offences and vexations, or exultation in personal merit ;

for my whole personality has disappeared in the contemplation of the purpose of my being.

Should it ever seem to me as if truth had been put to silence, and virtue expelled from the world ; as if folly and vice had now summoned all their powers, and even assumed the place of reason and true wisdom ;—should it happen, that just when all good men looked with hope for the regeneration of the human race, everything should become even worse than it had been before ;—should the work, well and happily begun, on which the eyes of all true-minded men were fixed with joyous expectation, suddenly and unexpectedly be changed into the vilest forms of evil,—these things will not disturb me ; and as little will I be persuaded to indulge in idleness, neglect, or false security, on account of an apparently rapid growth of enlightenment, a seeming diffusion of freedom and independence, an increase of more gentle manners, peacefulness, docility and general moderation among men, as if now everything were attained. Thus it appears to me ; or rather it is so—it is actually so to me ; and I know in both cases, as indeed I know in all possible cases, what I have next to do. As to everything else, I rest in the most perfect tranquillity, for I know nothing whatever about any other thing. Those, to me, so sorrowful events may, in the plan of the Eternal One, be the direct means for the attainment of a good result ;—that strife of evil against good may be their last decisive struggle, and it may be permitted to the former to assemble all its powers for this encounter only to lose them, and thereby to exhibit itself in all its impotence. These, to me, joyful appearances may rest on very uncertain foundations ;—what I had taken for enlightenment may perhaps be but hollow superficiality, and aversion to all true ideas ; what I had taken for independence but unbridled passion ; what I had taken for gentleness and moderation but weakness and indolence. I do not indeed know this, but it might

be so; and then I should have as little cause to mourn over the one as to rejoice over the other. But I do know that I live in a world which belongs to the Supreme Wisdom and Goodness, who thoroughly comprehends its plan, and will infallibly accomplish it; and in this conviction I rest, and am blessed.

That there are free beings, destined to reason and morality, who strive against reason and call forth all their powers to the support of folly and vice;—just as little will this disturb me and stir up within me indignation and wrath. The perversity which would hate what is good because it is good, and promote evil merely from a love of evil as such,—this perversity which alone could excite my just anger, I ascribe to no one who bears the form of man, for I know that it does not lie in human nature. I know that for all who act thus there is really, in so far as they act thus, neither good nor evil, but only an agreeable or disagreeable feeling; that they do not stand under their own dominion, but under the power of Nature; and that it is not themselves but this Nature in them which with all its strength seeks the pleasure and flies from the pain, without regard to whether it be otherwise good or evil. I know that, being once for all what they are, they cannot act in any respect otherwise than as they do act, and I am very far from getting angry with necessity, or indulging in wrath against blind and unconscious Nature. Herein truly lies their guilt and unworthiness, that they are what they are; and that, in place of being free and independent, they have resigned themselves to the current of mere natural impulse.

It is this alone which could excite my indignation; but here I should fall into absolute absurdity. I cannot call them to account for their want of freedom, without first attributing to them the power of making themselves free. I wish to be angry with them, and find no object for my wrath. What they actually are, does not deserve my

anger; what might deserve it they are not, and they would not deserve it if they were. My displeasure would strike an impalpable nonentity. I must indeed always treat them, and address them, as if they were what I well know they are not; I must always suppose in them that whereby alone I can approach them and communicate with them. Duty commands me to act towards them according to a conception of them the opposite of that which I arrive at by contemplating them. And thus it may certainly happen that I turn towards them with a noble indignation, as if they were free, in order to arouse within them a similar indignation against themselves,—an indignation which in my own heart I cannot reasonably entertain. It is only the practical man of society within me whose anger is excited by folly and vice; not the contemplative man who reposes undisturbed in the calm serenity of his own spirit.

Should I be visited by corporeal suffering, pain, or disease, I cannot avoid *feeling* them, for they are accidents of my nature; and as long as I remain here below I am a part of Nature. But they shall not *grieve* me. They can only touch the Nature with which in a wonderful manner I am united,—not myself, the being exalted above all Nature. The sure end of all pain, and of all sensibility to pain, is death; and of all things which the mere natural man is wont to regard as evils, this is to me the least. I shall not die to myself, but only to others; to those who remain behind, from whose fellowship I am torn:—for myself the hour of Death is the hour of Birth to a new, more excellent life.

Now that my heart is closed against all desire for earthly things, now that I have no longer any sense for the transitory and perishable, the universe appears before my eyes clothed in a more glorious form. The dead inert mass, which only filled up space, has vanished; and in its place there flows onward, with the rushing music of mighty

waves, an endless stream of life and power and action, which issues from the original Source of all life—from Thy Life, O Infinite One ! for all life is Thy Life, and only the religious eye penetrates to the realm of True Beauty.

I am related to Thee, and all that I behold around me is related to me ; all is life and soul, and regards me with bright spirit-eyes, and speaks with spirit-voices to my heart. In all the forms that surround me, I behold the reflection of my own being broken up into countless diversified shapes, as the morning sun, broken in a thousand dew-drops, throws back its splendours to itself.

Thy Life, as alone the finite mind can conceive it, is self-forming, self-manifesting Will :—this Life, clothed to the eye of the mortal with manifold sensible forms, flows forth through me, and throughout the immeasurable universe of Nature. Here it streams as self-creating and self-forming matter through my veins and muscles, and pours out its abundance into the tree, the plant, the grass. Creative life flows forth in one continuous stream, drop on drop, through all forms and into all places where my eye can follow it ; it reveals itself to me, in a different shape in each various corner of the universe, as the same power by which in secret darkness my own frame was formed. There, in free play, it leaps and dances as spontaneous activity in the animal, and manifests itself in each new form as a new, peculiar, self-subsisting world :—the same power which, invisibly to me, moves and animates my own frame. Everything that lives and moves follows this universal impulse, this one principle of all motion, which, from one end of the universe to the other, guides the harmonious movement ;—in the animal *without freedom* ; in me, from whom in the visible world the motion proceeds although it has not its source in me, *with freedom*.

But pure and holy, and as near to Thine own nature as aught can be to mortal eye, does this Thy Life flow forth as the bond which unites spirit with spirit, as the breath

and atmosphere of a rational world, unimaginable and incomprehensible, and yet there, clearly visible to the spiritual eye. Borne onward in this stream of light, thought floats from soul to soul without pause or variation, and returns purer and brighter from each kindred mind. Through this mysterious union does each individual perceive, understand, and love himself only in another; each soul unfolds itself only through its fellows, and there are no longer individual men, but only one humanity; no individual thought or love or hate, but only thought, love and hate, in and through each other. Through this wondrous influence the affinity of spirits in the invisible world permeates even their physical nature;—manifests itself in two sexes, which, even if that spiritual bond could be torn asunder, would, simply as creatures of nature, be compelled to love each other;—flows forth in the tenderness of parents and children, brothers and sisters, as if the souls were of one blood like the bodies, and their minds were branches and blossoms of the same stem;—and from these embraces, in narrower or wider circles, the whole sentient world. Even at the root of their hate, there lies a secret thirst after love; and no enmity springs up but from friendship denied.

Through that which to others seems a mere dead mass, my eye beholds this eternal life and movement in every vein of sensible and spiritual Nature, and sees this life rising in ever-increasing growth, and ever purifying itself to a more spiritual expression. The universe is to me no longer what it was before—the ever-recurring circle, the eternally-repeated play, the monster swallowing itself up only to bring itself forth again;—it has become transfigured before me, and now bears the one stamp of spiritual life—a constant progress towards higher perfection in a line that runs out into the Infinite.

The sun rises and sets, the stars sink and reappear, the spheres hold their circle-dance;—but they never return



again as they disappeared, and even in the bright fountain of life itself there is life and progress. Every hour which they lead on, every morning and every evening, sinks with new increase upon the world ; new life and new love descend from the spheres like dew-drops from the clouds, and encircle nature as the cool night the earth.

All Death in Nature is Birth, and in Death itself appears visibly the exaltation of Life. There is no destructive principle in Nature, for Nature throughout is pure, unclouded Life ; it is not Death that kills, but the more living Life which, concealed behind the former, bursts forth into new development. Death and Birth are but the struggle of Life with itself to assume a more glorious and congenial form. And *my* death,—how can it be aught else, since I am not a mere show and semblance of life, but bear within me the one original, true, and essential Life ? It is impossible to conceive that Nature should annihilate a life which does not proceed from her ;—the Nature which exists for me and not I for her.

Yet even my natural life, even this mere outward manifestation to mortal sight of the inward invisible Life, she cannot destroy without destroying herself ;—she who only exists for me, and on account of me, and exists not if I am not. Even because she destroys me must she animate me anew ; it is only my Higher Life, unfolding itself in her, before which my present life can disappear ; and what mortals call Death is the visible appearance of this second Life. Did no reasonable being who had once beheld the light of this world die, there would be no ground to look with faith for a new heavens and a new earth ; the only possible purpose of Nature, to manifest and maintain Reason, would be fulfilled here below, and her circle would be completed. But the very act by which she consigns a free and independent being to death, is her own solemn entrance, intelligible to all Reason, into a region beyond this act itself, and beyond the whole sphere of existence

which is thereby closed. Death is the ladder by which my spiritual vision rises to a new Life and a new Nature.

Every one of my fellow-creatures who leaves this earthly brotherhood and whom, because he is my brother, my spirit cannot regard as annihilated, draws my thoughts after him beyond the grave;—he is still, and to him there belongs a place. While we mourn for him here below,—as in the dim realms of unconsciousness there might be mourning when a man bursts from them into the light of this world's sun, —above there is rejoicing that a man is born into that world, as we citizens of the earth receive with joy those who are born unto us. When I shall one day follow, it will be but joy for me; sorrow shall remain behind in the sphere I shall have left.

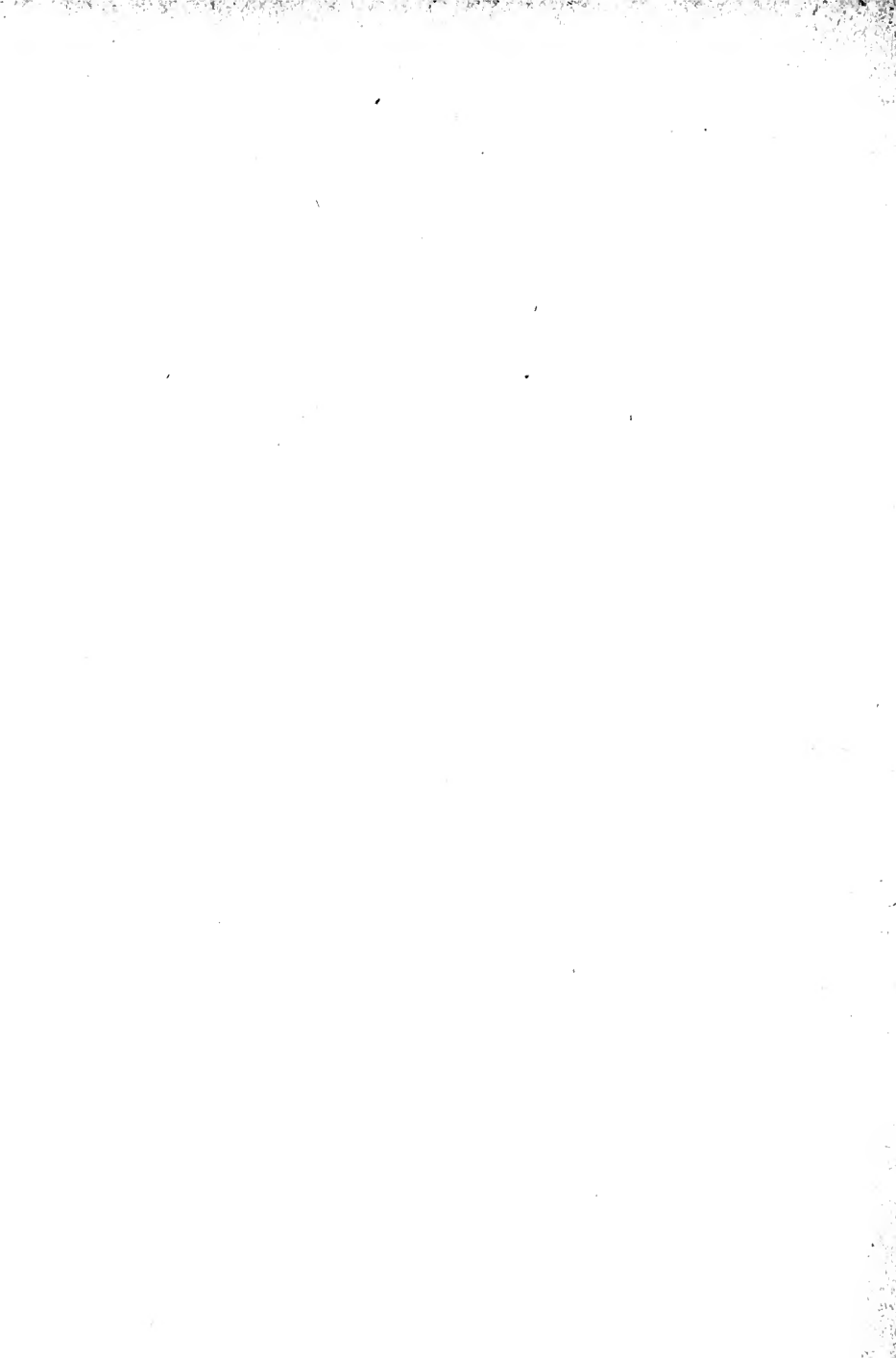
The world on which but now I gazed with wonder passes away from before me and is withdrawn from my sight. With all the fulness of life, order, and increase which I beheld in it, it is yet but the curtain by which a world infinitely more perfect is concealed from me, and the germ from which that other world shall develope itself. My FAITH looks behind this veil, and cherishes and animates this germ. It sees nothing definite, but it awaits more than it can conceive here below, more than it will ever be able to conceive in all time.

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Thus do I live, thus am I, and thus am I unchangeable, firm, and completed for all Eternity;—for this is no existence assumed from without,—it is my own, true, essential Life and Being.



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