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A SEARCH AFTER
ULTIMATE TRUTH

THE DIVINE PERFECTION INHERENT IN MAN AND
IN ALL CREATION



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IN MAN AND IN ALL CREATION

BY

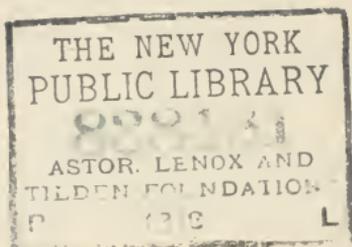
AARON MARTIN CRANE

AUTHOR OF "RIGHT AND WRONG THINKING AND
THEIR RESULTS"



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A SEARCH AFTER ULTIMATE TRUTH.

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TO MY WIFE

MY FAITHFUL COMPANION IN MY WORK

AND IN MY LIFE



PREFACE

THIS book now goes on its way. It is the result of one man's investigation of what Kant called, "the inevitable problems of pure reason itself — God, Freedom, and Immortality" — the result of one man's search after Ultimate Truth. The search has been pursued through many years, and by devious ways, but Truth seemed to lead; and since it was Truth that he was seeking, he had no alternative but to follow, even if it led him out of the old, familiar paths into untried and new ways, but always keeping steadfastly in mind the fact, "that no man can fitly seek after Truth who does not hold Truth in the deepest reverence." Seeing the way one man went may enable others to avoid his mistakes, to make short cuts where he made long détours, and thus, with greater certainty, find the way to greater results. The zest of the search, and the joy of discovery, will be ample reward.

This book is strictly elemental and fundamental, and, because the ultimate criterion is always one's

own perception, the reader is never to accept anything on the dictum of another; therefore he who finds Truth in these pages must work out for himself its practical application to his own conduct and career, but an earnest appeal is made for careful consideration. Ruskin said, in "Sesame and Lilies": "Be sure that you go to an author to get at *his* meaning, not to find yours. . . . And be sure also, if the author is worth anything, that you will not get his meaning all at once; — nay, that at his whole meaning you will not for a long time arrive in any wise."

Each reader is urged, in his own freedom, by the light of his own understanding, and with the fearlessness of the old Welsh motto, "The Truth against the world," to follow with entire confidence wherever he sees that Truth leads. Truth belongs to everybody, and as Socrates said, "The point is not who said the words, but whether they are true or not."

AARON MARTIN CRANE.

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A SEARCH AFTER ULTIMATE TRUTH

PART FIRST

PRELIMINARY

I

INTRODUCTION

1. It has been said that science is an orderly or systematic arrangement of statements of fact or truth; hence that is scientific in which all the statements are accurate and their correct relation to each other is set forth in logical order. Because all truth is of God, it is divine; therefore because science consists of properly arranged statements of truth, all science is divine.

In its larger meaning the word "science" is very comprehensive, including within its limits all knowledge and all wisdom; therefore it embraces the whole immense round of truth. In this meaning of the word, all of religion which is true must be scien-

tific; therefore the precepts of Jesus must be strictly scientific also if, as Christians assert, they are expressions of the truth of God or are based on that truth; hence, when all error is banished from what for convenience is called secular science, and when all misstatements and misconceptions are eliminated from religion, then such perfect harmony will be seen to exist between science and religion that both will be recognized as parts of one inseparable whole, each supporting and sustaining the other.

2. What is called the conflict between science and religion does not arise from either science or religion in itself, but from errors associated with one or the other. By some people these errors are resolutely insisted upon as correct, while by others they are as resolutely denied, and the errors and the turmoil which they cause obscure the truth in both science and religion. That which is not true is not science nor is it even scientific, and untruth is not religion nor is it even religious, but all true science is religious and all true religion is scientific; hence, wherever they are applicable, religious rules may be applied to the further development of scientific objects, and scientific rules may, with equal advantage, be applied to the discovery, elaboration, and elucidation of religious truth. The wide dis-

similarities which exist between true science and true religion do not affect this statement, because the rules of science are correctly applied to objects as entirely different from each other as are these; for example, light in which there is no gravitation, and gravitation in which there is no light.

Errors associated with both science and religion have prevented recognition of the perfect harmony really existing between them, but the correctness of this position will be recognized and accepted as these errors are eliminated; and it is an occasion for congratulation that the intellectual activities of the world are moving in this direction more rapidly than ever before.

3. In the consideration or discussion of any subject the statements should be arranged and expressed so that every one may recognize the correctness of the fundamental propositions, their value, their bearing upon the conclusions, and the relations of the various parts of the subject to those propositions and to each other. By rejecting all errors as soon as they are known to be errors, by adhering with exactness to the truth of the propositions which have been proved, and by never varying these propositions in the slightest to accommodate them to any seemingly desirable condition or

result, each person will be able to solve correctly his own problems and those of others.

If the student of mathematics understands the fundamental principles of that science and adheres with accuracy to its axiomatic basis as well as to each of the propositions that have been proved true, he can always solve his problems correctly. In algebra, whenever one is dealing with an unknown quantity, he ascertains its exact value before he attempts to use it in the solution of any problem, and when that value is once ascertained, he uses it with undeviating accuracy. Similarly, though its problems are those of life and living, that greater science which is called religion, when it is rightly understood, will be found to be as exactly logical and scientific as any branch of mathematics; and if men will adhere as inflexibly to the basic truths of religion as they do to those of mathematics, they can work out to correct conclusions all of life's problems.

This being true, it is not presumption to attempt an examination of religious propositions by a method different from that of previous investigations, nor is it presumption to pursue those investigations farther than has been done. If, perchance, errors should occur, numberless persons stand ready to correct them; while, on the other hand, if a real advance

should be made, the fact that even a few are led into clearer light will be reward enough.

4. All religions, in their basic ideas, though the fact may not be directly stated, and though the devotees may not be consciously aware of it, are concerned with the existence and character of God, and also with the character of man and his relationship to God and to his fellow-men. It is around these vital subjects that the most fervent questions of humanity are grouped, and they must be correctly and completely answered before continuous and permanent progress of the race can be assured; indeed, that progress will always be in exact proportion to the accuracy of the answers to these questions and to the willingness of the race to accept them and to follow in the direction which they indicate.

5. The proposition that God exists is strictly basic in character and is of the first importance, because it lies at the very foundation of all religious, moral, and ethical principles, and tinges, if it does not color, every question touching these vitally important subjects; yet the consciousness of God's existence is often surrounded by a haze of uncertainty which, though men may scarcely be aware of its presence, seriously obscures that consciousness and makes opportunity for grave defects in the superstructure

built upon that proposition. There are multitudes who are not consciously aware of any reason for their acceptance of the belief in God's existence except their own sincere, though unreasoning faith; and there are yet others who accept it solely because they have been told to do so, or because it is a subject of general belief.

Because of these conditions, the proposition of the existence of God should be considered at the beginning of every examination of religious subjects, for the ultimate foundation of religion lies in that proposition, and accuracy is indispensable in the foundation if it is to be expected in the superstructure.

To some of these questions, therefore, attention is now directed; but it will be well first to consider a few subjects contributory to this basic proposition, because they will serve to make its scope and bearing more definite and distinct.

II

LAYING A FOUNDATION

6. Aristotle said, "To know a thing well, it is necessary to know its first cause"; and Plato said, "It behooves the lover of mind and knowledge to inquire into the first causes of intelligent nature"; therefore, if authority were necessary, we have good authority for going back as far as we can toward the beginnings of things. Richard of St. Victor was among the first of those who, far back in the Middle Ages, began to doubt the decrees of the religious authority then in the height of its arbitrary power. He stated one of the great questions of the world clearly and exactly when he said, "The problem is to find a firm, unmovable, and certain basis on which to erect the system." Man is inclined to reason, but he cannot begin with reasoning because that demands an already existent and accepted point from which to start.

7. Man does not lay a foundation, either in erecting a house or in elaborating an idea. There is

always something already in existence, whether it be material, or mental, or spiritual, on which his superstructure must rest for its support, something more enduring, stronger, and more sustaining than any foundation that man can lay; perception reveals it. The foundation of a house is the earth which the builder sees; the foundation of a science or of a philosophy is a principle, or a series of principles or facts, which are perceived.¹ So far as these are realities or facts, they must be discovered; man does not originate them, and any attempt to do so is always at last a failure. When a foundation for either a science or a philosophy has been discovered, a structure may be built upon it by the proper use of other material which has been either perceived or revealed by reasoning.

¹ The word "perceive" means to discern, or to become aware of, whether it is an external action or thing, or an action of one's mind and its result. Perception is of two kinds, physical and mental; the first includes those actions in which the senses take part, and the second those which are performed wholly by the mind; but physical perceptions are never effective unless the physical action is followed by that mental action necessary to complete it by establishing mental awareness of the external object. Therefore perception may be said to be the process, or series of processes, by which one becomes aware of, or comes to know, things or actions either external or internal to the person; and the final result may be said to be the consciousness of having perceived.

8. Each of the exact sciences has for its foundation some already existent truth which is an object of perception only. This fundamental truth is expressed in a statement which is called an assumption by those who, though using it for their purposes, do not acknowledge it as necessarily true; but it is called an axiom by those who unreservedly accept it as correct. An axiom is a proposition which every one who understands the terms in which it is expressed at once perceives to be true; but, because it is strictly fundamental, it has the peculiarity that its truth cannot be logically proved or demonstrated as can the truth of other propositions.

Geometry, eminently the science of reasoning, is the most pretentiously logical of the exact sciences, yet its very basic foundations consist of certain propositions,¹ whether they are called postulates, assertions, assumptions, or axioms, which are accepted on their mere statement and without attempt at any proof. In striking contrast to this is an exacting demand for logical proof throughout the whole course

¹ "Modern science consists of a mass of propositions. The answer to every question which it is possible to frame must be contained in a proposition, or assertion. Whatever can be the object of belief, or even of disbelief, must, when put into words, assume the form of a proposition. All truth and all error lie in propositions." — JOHN STEWART MILL.

of every geometric process; not anything is taken for granted, and every step must be established by logical arguments or by reasoning from premises which, if not axiomatic, have themselves been conclusively proved. Every one recognizes as correct the propositions that two straight lines cannot enclose a space, and that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points; these are illustrations of fundamental propositions in geometry which it is impossible either to prove or to disprove by the usual methods, but men perceived their accuracy, and on them and others like them they built the science of geometry.

9. The history of every natural science furnishes many illustrations of the inability of men to lay an enduring foundation. The science of optics shows their general course. Not correctly perceiving the foundation which was already laid, the materialistic atomic theory was made the basis, and a structure was built upon it. This stood for a while, but finally was crushed under the weight of additional perceptions, — under the weight of “observed facts,” — and then another structure was erected, with the vibratory theory for its foundation; that is now as much the wonder of scientists as, in its day, was its rejected predecessor.

10. Conditions similar to those in the natural sci-

ences also exist in the domain of philosophy. System after system has arisen, and, because men have failed to recognize in all its completeness the already existent foundation, they have attempted to build upon theories of their own. Contentions have arisen between successive systems, each in its turn asserting its own supremacy, but one after another has been found defective, finally falling into fragmentary ruin as its insufficiencies and errors were exposed.

II. The multitudinous religions which have appeared in the world are also examples of similar conditions. Like the image which the eastern king saw in his dream,¹ each of these religions possessed somewhat of the pure gold of truth, but the image had baser things also, and its feet were an incongruous mixture of iron and clay. There is neither cohesion nor strength in such a combination, and it could not endure the weight of the structure itself nor the shock of contending forces. For causes typified by this dream, many religions of the past have, like the image, gone down, many others are tottering to their fall, and yet others are being constructed out of the wreckage. Wise indeed must the builders become before they cease to include, either in their foundation or in their structure, more or less of error; but neither

¹ Daniel ii. 1-35.

science, philosophy, nor religion will be enduring until men shall perceive the already existent foundation of eternal truth and use only truth in their work.

Now, as heretofore, through all these efforts run seams of golden, indestructible truth. Whatever may befall the structure which man makes, eternal truth has no part in any destruction, for truth can neither destroy nor be destroyed. Truth alone remains steadfast, and it furnishes the only material which will endure. Men are recognizing this fact more and more, and are slowly eliminating the errors which weaken and destroy. It is the privilege of every man to do his part in this great work for humanity — hastening the recognition of truth.

On the foundation of eternal truth, out of the very substance of truth itself, and in exact compliance with the principles of truth, the final, enduring structure shall be built. No force in the universe can overturn a structure erected on such a basis and fashioned in such a manner out of such materials, because all of infinite truth will contribute its whole power to sustain and uphold it, and it will be immovable and everlasting.

12. Two questions here present themselves: What is this existent foundation of truth which must be

perceived? and, What are the proofs by which it shall be known?

Directly or indirectly, this question of proof arises at the outset of every inquiry concerning any proposition, and its importance increases with the increased magnitude or value of the proposition. Before entering upon the consideration of the main question, therefore, it is well to make an examination of the subject of proof that will place its essential characteristics beyond further question.

III

EVIDENCE AND PROOF

13. The words "evidence" and "proof" are used with various and often conflicting shades of meaning, and sometimes interchangeably, as if they were synonymous. These erroneous usages have been indulged in by the best writers, even appearing in carefully considered decisions from the bench and in the definitions of legal text-books; consequently the makers of dictionaries may be excused for having accepted and indorsed them.

Evidence is that by which the truth or the falsity of an assertion, allegation, or declaration is made clear and certain; but in the larger meaning of the word any effort, process, or operation which is designed to determine or establish a fact or a truth is evidence, and conclusive evidence furnishes the logical and sufficient reason for assenting to the truth of a proposition or for declaring its falsity. Evidence is the means by which the truth or falsity of an assertion is established; it is that by which proof is produced; proof is the result which follows

evidence; but evidence is not proof, nor is proof evidence.

We say that a certain statement is proof of the accuracy of a proposition; but, strictly speaking, the statement is the evidence which convinces us that the proposition is correct; it is the means by which the proposition is proved; it is evidence, but it is not proof.

We perceive the meaning of this evidence and understand its value in relation to the proposition in question; then these mental processes of perceiving and understanding produce in the mind another perception which is the cognition of the sufficiency of the evidence; this cognition constitutes the mental certainty of the proposition, and this is proof to that person. All this transfers both evidence and proof to the mental domain and shows that the validity and influence of both evidence and proof depend at last upon one's own perceptions and other mental processes.

14. When a man perceives (7) that another person is present, the merely mechanical process of seeing is followed by an action of the mind which results in the consciousness that some one else is in the room. This mental action is the essential element in the process, constituting ample evidence to him, and

producing proof of the presence of that other person. He might have been told repeatedly that some one besides himself was there, but the mere telling might not have been conclusive evidence, and in that case it would not have resulted in proof to him of another's presence.

The astronomer perceives the stars, and to him that is evidence sufficient to produce proof of their existence, and all his ideas concerning them are results of these and subsequent perceptions. In countless instances numerous other things are similarly proved beyond any doubt on the part of the one who perceives them.

In all cases of physical perception, evidence resolves itself into a personal affair, or the condition of being mentally aware of certain external things, circumstances, or conditions which in one way or another are related to the proposition in question. This perception constitutes the evidence by which is established proof of the truth or the falsity of the proposition. Closely following each evidential perception, caused by it, and evolved from it, is another mental action which culminates in the condition of consciousness that the proposition is correct; and this condition of consciousness constitutes the proof regarding it. This mental condition remains es-

tablished and final until such time as other evidence is perceived, when similar mental processes again occur. The fact that these mental processes are so rapid, and of such frequent occurrence that we are usually unconscious of them, in no way affects the accuracy of this analysis.

So true is it that perception, or "seeing" of some sort, is the root of all understanding, that long ago there came into existence the saying, "To see is to believe." Even Hume made that mental condition which follows perception the criterion of all belief.

15. An intellectual proposition is proved in like manner, but by purely mental perception. The usage of language in its most familiar form shows this. A statement is questioned, and some one tries to explain it. At last, through some mental avenue, the idea breaks in upon the mind of the doubter, he perceives its accuracy, and exclaims, "Oh! I see." This may come at the end of an argument, or as a consequence of the grouping of certain facts which bear upon the situation, and we may say that the way in which the subject was presented proved that the statement was correct. This assertion is inaccurate, for the explanation would not have effected anything if it had not been followed by the doubter's own mental perception, which brought its meaning to

his consciousness. The perception of its bearing upon his doubts was the active essential of the evidence, and consciousness of its accuracy was the proof that followed.

16. The evidence which thus far has been considered is direct and primary in its character; there is another variety which is indirect and secondary.¹

17. In the complicated conditions by which we are surrounded, evidence through sense perception is not always possible. Your friend tells you something which he has perceived, and you say that his statements prove its correctness. You do not yourself have any direct knowledge of the subject, therefore the evidence, coming through another, is not direct but secondary; and yet, as in all cases of primary evidence, this rests upon your own personal perception, for you accept the word of your friend as sufficient because you have perceived that he always tells the truth.

The condition is like this in all cases where wit-

¹ Legal definitions are not followed here. They refer to the value of evidence as testimony tending to establish the truth or falsity of the questions at issue between the parties in litigation, or to its influence upon the court and jury. These definitions are correct and valuable because they bear upon the objects in view, but for the purposes of this book it is more desirable to use definitions descriptive of the character of evidence itself.

nesses are required to testify in court, whatever the complexity of circumstances and whatever the methods. Smith saw Brown at a certain place at a certain time. Smith testifies as a witness; the acceptance of his statement does not depend upon anything which the court itself knows about the circumstance, but it is based entirely upon the perception by the court that Smith is accurate and truthful in his statements. That this presentation of the condition is substantially correct is shown by the fact that whenever the court perceives that the witness fails in either of these two particulars, his statements are rejected. Like all other cases, this is purely an affair of personal perception.

18. Conditions closely similar to these also prevail in the mental domain. The philosopher, through his reasoning, arrives at certain conclusions. Others not so learned attempt to follow his arguments and to decide upon their validity. Some are able to understand his processes and, depending upon their own perceptions, they verify his conclusions. This method is primary and clearly personal in its character.

Still others, not able to follow the philosopher's mental methods, occupy a position like that of the court. Having perceived that in general he is both

accurate and truthful, they accept his conclusions as satisfactory evidence of the correctness of his propositions;¹ and this also rests entirely on personal perception.

19. Precisely similar conditions influence the opinions of many religious people. In every church organization many of the laity are neither able to understand the basis nor to follow the reasoning which supports the creed to which they have subscribed, but they accept it because they believe that they perceive the accuracy and truthfulness of those who promulgate it. This evidence is secondary in character. Others, through their own perceptions, have primary evidence for at least a portion of the propositions, or they may have had certain spiritual experiences which go farther than all else to open their minds to belief in the truth of the doctrines in question; but in each case it is an affair of personal perception.

¹ An excellent illustration of this appears in a strictly scientific work in which the author appeals to the public for their acceptance of certain statements, thus: "We are dependent for these facts on the men who enunciate them; but if these men are men of light and leading, if they command the respect of their confrères, and if they occupy positions of the highest honor and responsibility in the world of science, we *must* have faith in their facts." — ROBERT KENNEDY DUNCAN, in *The New Knowledge*, p. 140.

20. Thus it appears that perception constitutes the essential element in all evidence and in all proof (13), and forms the entire basis from which man can either reason or act. Whether his reasoning is inductive or deductive, its foundation is always an object or an idea which he has perceived (7), and, although his reasoning or his actions may lead to the perception of additional ideas, those also are perceptions. Indeed, unless he perceives the conclusion of his reasoning, and also perceives that both the reasoning and conclusion are accurate, he cannot accept the result, and therefore will not act upon it, so that here, as elsewhere, he depends entirely upon his own perceptions or cognitions.

The possibility of error in his perceptions does not interfere in the slightest with the general proposition. On the contrary, the appearances of error strongly confirm the position that he is dependent upon his own individual perceptions, because, whether the perceptions are accurate or not, the results in all instances conform to his perceptions. This is the condition of the race, and it is upon this that he must rely, satisfied when he receives the universal and unvarying testimony of the uncontradicted perceptions of all mankind, that in this testimony he has the best possible evidence and proof. This does not

interfere with any certainty at which any man has arrived for himself, though he stand alone against the whole world — so absolutely is all evidence and proof an affair of the individual.¹

21. Questions arise which involve the accuracy or sufficiency of perception. No person ever sees the whole of an object at one view; no two persons looking at the same object or event ever see it just alike; the perception of one or of both may be erroneous; or they may differ for various other reasons. Besides, evidence and proof are entirely distinct, and what is perceived as evidence or proof by one may not be so perceived by another, thus creating a wide divergence in their conclusions. Similar difficulties occur in mental perceptions as well as physical, and the possible variations in these perceptions extend to all subjects. Questions which depend upon secondary evidence are more complicated and produce more errors than others.

22. Every man thinks his own perceptions more worthy of credence than those of another, therefore he accepts another's conclusions with reluctance; hence all changes in opinion must come, as they have come in the history of the sciences as well as in the every-day affairs of life, by the comparison of per-

¹ See Appendix A.

ception with perception, and by the application of accurate reasoning to those perceptions. Such a course frequently results in added perceptions and consequent changes of conclusions and opinions, especially when the investigation is prosecuted with open mind; the final opinion is only a result of all these perceptions. Though the whole world save one may fail to perceive, or may perceive erroneously, yet that one may be correct in his perception and right in his conclusion; and this conclusion is an added factor clearly indicating that perception is purely a personal affair. Compulsion or domination, whether of a man or a nation, never really causes a change of opinion, because that comes only from new perceptions; thus, it is literally true, that "a man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still." It is neither force nor will, but the perception back of both, that convinces.

23. The conditions are the same, whether they concern one person or several, for the decision of any group, large or small, is only the decision of each member of that group united with that of each of the others. However any person may be influenced, whether his perceptions are accurate and his evidence sufficient, or inaccurate and insufficient, and whatever the character of the decision, because

the perceptions on which his decisions rest are always his own, each person really makes that decision himself, and in every case the question of evidence and proof is purely personal.¹

24. Thus, at last, we are face to face with the fact that this subject of proof, simple as it is, is vastly larger than any mere question of deciding upon the accuracy or inaccuracy of a few facts. One's own perceptions or cognitions form the basis of all opinions and of all decisions, creating, modifying, or destroying them, whether they are important or trivial. In one's own perception is the root of all beliefs, opinions, and conclusions, say what one will about education, reason, scepticism, superstition, heredity, tradition, environment, or any or all of those factors which have a part in influencing conclusions; therefore, however it may be reached, because all these rest upon and grow out of his personal perceptions, the final decision is necessarily one's own; and whether he sinks into blind subserviency, actively rebels against authority, or thoughtfully follows an independent course, the consequences rightly fall upon his own head.

¹ It may be well to note here that this whole subject of proof is only an additional argument in favor of the position set forth in the beginning (7), that man does not lay a foundation, but must seek his foundation in that which he perceives as already existent.

Here, then, in the conditions, methods, and facts which surround and minister to proof, in the manner by which it is attained, in all which has a share in producing or in modifying it, and in the very character and quality of proof itself, exist the strongest possible reasons why individual or personal opinion should be absolutely free. From whatever source proof may come, anything that interferes to hinder, limit, or prevent this freedom is an obstruction in the way of progress toward the recognition of truth and is a crime against humanity. In proportion as complete freedom of opinion is allowed, even to the humblest and most ignorant, in that proportion will be the progress of mankind.

IV

THE AXIOM

25. As shown in the preceding chapter, the axiom, which is a statement of a single fundamental fact in the simplest possible form, is the best illustration that the essential of all evidence and of all proof exists in one's own perception. The mental procedure in the case of the axiom is the same as in all propositions, but with this difference, that in others something more than the single proposition is brought into consideration. The full perception of the meaning of the language used in stating the axiom — like the explanation, the argument, or the grouping of facts in other propositions (15) — causes the mind to act in a way which produces a clear cognition of all the conditions; and this is evidence. Following this evidence is a perception or consciousness of the exact accuracy of the statement; and this is proof. Perception and cognition are the constituents of all evidence and of all proof (13); and these unvarying and uncontradicted perceptions of all persons con-

firm the axiom. No more valid evidence or proof is possible.

26. The wide scope of a single statement, or its inclusion of a number of contributory propositions, may so affect the mind that it may not be able to enter at once into the perception of the whole, and it immediately becomes aware that something more is requisite. The condition is like that of the traveller who finds the scene too large to be embraced within the limits of his horizon and is compelled to proceed from point to point to see it all.

In the axiom the object of perception is a unit. The limited scope of the subject and the simplicity of the form of its statement place it within the conscious grasp of the mind so that it takes in the whole at once, and at the same instant knows that it has done so; and this is its evidence. This complete perception is followed by an equally complete cognition of the correctness or accuracy of the proposition; and this constitutes its proof. Other propositions do not differ from the axiom in the method of the mental action connected with them, but in the fact that they need the presentation and perception of further details or of additional modifying particulars. The axiom needs nothing. It is sustained by proof absolutely sound and as incontrovertible as when the

whole multitude agree to the presence of a certain person whom they see (14); and, as in that case, it is all a subject of perception (20).

27. In contradiction to the statement that the axiom cannot be proved is the fact that it does not require either argument, explanation, or additional statement to open the mind of every man to such complete consciousness of its accuracy that neither opportunity nor occasion is left for the use of logic or reasoning in connection with it; and this is indisputable proof. Herein is its supremacy and, because of this supremacy, the axiom is the foundation of all exact science.

28. In the axiom, and in all those things which pertain to it, is shown the fallacy of the eighteenth-century doctrine that "reason is the only foundation of all certitude." Man never begins with reason, because reason always deals with something not itself, and this something is the real certitude which was perceived before he began to reason. Perception, not reason, points out the certitude; there must be the perception of a basis before reason can begin; perception must accompany it through its whole course, and must furnish the crowning certainty to its conclusions (7). It is this method which gives to mathematics its certainty and its exactness, and

finally it will be adopted as the one correct and universal method. The fact that, without the use of his reason, man perceives an axiom to be an expression of truth is both proof of the accuracy of the axiomatic proposition and an illustration of the fact that all truth is a subject of perception or cognition. This effectually contradicts the assertion of the agnostics who hold that ultimate truth is not within the range of man's understanding, because here are ultimate truths so entirely within his comprehension as to be wholly beyond question.

An able writer has said that no fact is actually known unless it is stated in mathematical terms. Jesus, the Christ, used the axiomatic form with the skill of a complete master, thus making his teaching, at least in this particular, different from that of all others and superior to them all. He never fails to reach the very basis of his topic. He is always simple but profound, elemental but exhaustive. With all his simplicity nothing is omitted, and therefore nothing is to be added; even explanation is not necessary if the reader will only examine the proposition thoroughly. This method is possible only with the axiom. The proof of his propositions is in the propositions themselves. Look at his fundamental ethical utterances. Swear not at all; judge

not; resist not evil; love your enemies; lay not up for yourselves treasure on earth; lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven; as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. He frequently illustrates his propositions to make his meaning clear, but, with few exceptions, does not argue. He presents his statement in a form which, when understood, is beyond argument, and there he leaves it to be perceived by him who hears. Once perceived, his statement, like the axiom, is more powerful than aught else. Evidently he understood the value of perception; and as he dealt in elementals, so he appealed, as the axiom does, to perception, which constitutes the basis and substance of all understanding. No other man ever spake as Jesus spake.

PART SECOND

V

FIRST CAUSE

29. It is the universal perception of all mankind that each thing that now is, is the effect of something which preceded it as its cause, and that not anything exists without a cause.¹ Laplace made a clear statement of this universal perception when he said, "A thing cannot begin to be without a cause to produce it"; and he adds, "We ought, then, to regard the present state of the universe as the effect of its antecedent state and as the cause of the state that is to follow."²

¹ A cause is that by which something is done or made; it is an antecedent to an event; it is that which gives existence, or being and characteristics to the event, thing, or consequence; it is that which brings a thing to be.

An effect is that which follows, or is produced by, an act, an occurrence, event, condition, or proceeding.

² The word "thing," as here used, includes in its meaning objects, actions, conditions, and all realities; or, in a larger generalization, whatever exists.

From the greatest scientists and philosophers down to the simplest and most unlearned persons, all perceive the existence and relationship of cause and effect; and not only do they perceive these, but this perception is unavoidable.¹ Because they perceive it, all are under the necessity of believing in the natural order of cause and effect, and also in its permanency. Just as the perception of another person in the room constitutes the strongest possible evidence of the presence of that person (14), so, as in the case of the axiom (26), this universal perception of cause and effect is the strongest possible proof that they exist (20). When a man decides upon some action, then acts, and afterward perceives the result of his action, he is aware of a cause of the result within himself, or else he is aware of himself as the cause of the result; and though he perceives causes operating in numberless events all about him, this personal experience is the most perfect knowledge and ex-

¹ Mivart, in *Nature and Thought*, ch. V, makes the following statement: "One of these self-evident and necessary truths is that every change or new existence requires a cause;" which is only another way of saying that it was produced by a cause; and Hoffding says: "By virtue of the law of persistence of energy, nothing happens, however insignificant, without exercising its effect on what happens afterward." One of these propositions requires a cause, the other furnishes it.

planation of causation that he can have. The existence of cause and effect is proved by this exceptionless perception of all mankind (13).¹

30. Each thing in existence is an effect of something which existed before it did, and this we call its cause; and each effect becomes the cause of something which follows. This places each object or incident in the condition of being first an effect, and then a cause — a dual relationship necessitated by the universality of cause and effect.

If the thought turns backward towards what is called the starting-point of time, we find this dual relationship everywhere; each cause had its own cause which preceded it and of which it was the effect; and continuing in this backward course, from effect to cause, at last we are inevitably led to a first cause. The mind which accepts the existence of cause and effect — and every mind is so constituted that it does and must accept it — cannot find any place to stop until it reaches a first cause, for the

¹ The problem of reason is to construe the universe. "The aim of the reason is to explain, and the essence of explanation is in saying, 'This is a cause of That.' The final idea and demand of thought is, the reduction of all things to a single, ultimate explanation." The demand for this single explanation must sooner or later make itself felt. To stop short of that is for thought to be baffled. — J. B. PRATT, in *Psychology of Religious Belief*, p. 78.

perception of cause and effect necessarily includes the perception of first cause. Beyond first cause it is impossible for the mind to go, and because it is first it must be the one, only, and ultimate cause of all that has succeeded it.

“We are all the effect of one great cause,
Whatever that may be.”

31. This may be stated in other words: To cause is to originate, and a cause is an origin; therefore the idea of cause includes in itself the idea of origin, and origin necessarily includes the idea of an ultimate origin which must be the origin of all things. These are perceptions of the whole human race, and they are uncontradicted (20), therefore all may remain secure in the proposition which declares the existence of origin or cause, and, because of the laws of evidence and proof (13), we may rest confident in the assurance of an ultimate origin, a first cause.

32. There is another and a very important point connected with this subject. All things now existent are effects of antecedent causes (29), and, following this succession backward from each effect to its cause, we find everything merging into an ultimate first cause (30); therefore, as the first and only cause, it must stand alone. There can be only one

first cause, and there could not have been anything to act upon it nor with it, nor could there have been anything for it to act upon. Thus it clearly appears, that out of this first cause came all things which have been and all things which are now; and out of it will come all things which ever will be, for there was no other origin, source, or cause from which anything could proceed; hence it is true that first cause contained within itself all that ever was and all that ever will be.

33. The word "all" is used here in its simplest but most comprehensive meaning, and must include everything, whether known or unknown — the totality, the whole. If there is a perception of limitation in what has been called "all," then there must also be a consciousness of something outside of it or beyond it; this "something" must be admitted before the "all" can be complete and the limitation disappear. There cannot be any existing thing beyond or more than all, and no additional thing, action, or condition exterior to it is possible in thought or otherwise.

VI

CAUSE AND EFFECT

34. The statement that the cause exists in its effect (32) is universally perceived to be true whenever circumstances and conditions are carefully examined. Difficulties sometimes arise in connection with this examination, because conditions are more or less complex and analysis is often troublesome,¹ but a few illustrations will be sufficient to establish the accuracy of the proposition.

35. The principle is clearly illustrated by water, which is produced through the chemical union of oxygen and hydrogen. Here are three causes, oxygen, hydrogen, and that other unexplained, and therefore mysterious, action which is called the chemical union.² Together these three make the water

¹ Analysis does not prove anything, but often it removes obstructions that interfere with the perception, and thus enables the investigator to cognize conditions which before were hidden.

² In this chemical union are two agencies, the action of uniting and the result of that action, which is the continuing union.

what it is, with all its characteristics; each exists in the water, and, regardless of any changes in appearance which have occurred because of having entered into the combination, they are its sole constituents. If one of them is separated from the water, the others fall apart, the water disappears, and there then exists the three separate causes just as before the combination took place. Causes not only exist in their effects, but they are the sole constituents of those effects, and they create them as these three create water.

36. The boy strikes his ball with his bat. From this complex action two simple elements are selected to illustrate the proposition: In the boy's arm is that which is called force, or energy. He starts this force into activity and immediately it becomes manifest in motion. The action of force in the arm produces the motion of the arm; these two, the force and the motion, are distinct, and yet in combination. The force which caused the motion exists in that motion which it caused.

Next, this combination of force and motion go over from the arm into the bat and cause the bat to move. The force and motion of the bat are effects of the force and motion which were in the arm, and they are the same in the bat that they were in the arm. The cause exists in its effect.

When the bat hits the ball, the force and motion which were active in the bat go over into the ball and cause force and motion in the ball, and they are the same in the ball that they were in the bat. Again, the cause exists in its effect.

37. In this illustration the cause at first contained only one element, force; but that force created motion and exists in combination with it, so that in each of the succeeding actions the cause is complex, containing both force and motion; but in neither of these actions did it create anything except another manifestation of itself, which appeared successively in the bat and ball. Any effect may be analyzed, and, if the analysis is accurate and complete, similar conditions will always be found.

38. The silex, which is a constituent of the stalk of grain, giving it strength and stability to support the weight of its head of wheat, is the same silex that was in the earth, where it was selected by the roots of the plant and thence carried up to its place in the stalk. Though it existed in new surroundings and in new combinations, it was not changed into something else by being carried up into the plant, for, by a chemical process, it can all be recovered from the plant.

39. Similarly, the juices of the plant are the same

that were in the earth before they were absorbed by the roots. Some of them went into the leaves of the plant and there, uniting with gases from the air, combined to make something "new," but analysis of that "new" thing would show that, like the water, it contains only the same things which existed in its various causes.

40. A tree is a combination of effects resulting from a multitude of causes; but analysis will show that in the fluids and in the solids, in the trunk and in the leaf, and in each atom which goes to make up the tree — even in the form of the tree and in its size — the causes of those conditions are present, each in its own place, acting in harmony with all the others, and producing the general result seen in the tree as a whole. "Causes are known in their effects, for cause and effect ever correspond in quality and character. . . . Nay, more, is not the effect only, as it were, the cause embodied, the old force, unspent, persisting in a new form?"¹

41. Illustrations might be multiplied, and always with the same result, but the foregoing are sufficient to establish the accuracy of the proposition, that the cause exists in its effect, somewhat of the cause going

¹ Andrew M. Fairburn, in *The Philosophy of the Christian Religion*.

over into the effect, and becoming the constituent of that effect. The reverse form of the statement is also true, that the effects existed primarily in their cause; therefore first cause, as the origin from which came all that was, or is, or ever will be, must have contained all within itself; and its substance must also be the substance of all that is (32).

The general proposition may be stated as follows: The cause exists in its effect, furnishes out of itself the constituents of that effect, creating it, and making it what it is.¹

42. First cause, acting as all causes act (35), brought forth or produced an effect. Because there was not anything else from whence the first effect could come (32), it must have come out of first cause, and necessarily it was a part of the substance of first cause and one with it; each action of first cause,

¹ From this principle are clearly deducible the following four propositions, which are invaluable as rules for guiding the thinking: (1) good produces good; (2) evil produces evil; (3) good never produces evil; (4) evil never produces good. Jesus makes these exact statements in metaphorical form in Matt. vii. 17 and 18: "Even so (1) every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but (2) a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit; (3) a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; (4) neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." These propositions are correct and scientifically exact, and if men would adhere to them rigidly, they would establish accuracy in all their thinking.

both in method and result, must be similar to each other action, so that every effect of the action of first cause must be from it and made of the substance of that cause; that is, some portion of first cause went over into each of its effects and became the constituent of that effect.

43. Any one of these effects of the action of first cause may itself alone, or in combination with other effects of the action of first cause, act as a cause (31). The constituent of each of these is of the substance of first cause (41), therefore, since the cause exists in its effect, the consequence of the action of this effect of first cause must be constituted of the original substance of first cause, drawn either from first cause itself, or from some effect of first cause.

44. However remote from first cause, or whatever the combination of causes in any action, the substance of first cause continues to exist in each of these causes and goes over into each effect, forming its only constituent; thus the substance of first cause is the constituent of all effects; and this is in exact accordance with the principle that the cause exists in its effect. Then it follows, of necessity, that the reverse of this proposition is also true, and each effect has existed in its cause; therefore first cause contained all within itself; and this is equivalent

to saying that all effects preëxisted within first cause (32).

45. All existent things are only varying effects or manifestations of first cause, are directly or indirectly drawn from first cause, and are built up out of the substance of first cause (41); at the beginning there was only first cause, there has been only first cause all the way along (32), and there is now only first cause existing in itself, and also in all that it has produced throughout its whole chain of effects; therefore, as first cause constitutes the whole of all there is, first cause is all.

The same conclusion is reached by a reversal of the process. Taking all now existent things into consideration, and applying the principles of cause and effect, if we go backward along the stream of time until we arrive at first cause, we shall find all things absorbed in it (32); first cause is all.

46. Although the cause exists in its effect, yet the cause is not the effect, nor is the effect the cause. This becomes very clear whenever several causes combine to produce an effect, as in the case of water (35). The tree is not its causes, neither are its causes the tree, though each cause is in its place in the tree; nor can the causes themselves be assembled to constitute this special tree in any other way

than exactly as they have been in this case; any other method of combination would have produced another and a different tree.

47. To cause is to originate; therefore a cause is an origin (31); and if the cause exists in its effect and is the constituent of it, then the cause is the source from which the effect is derived and is its originator. Thus it follows that the cause makes or creates the effect (35, 36, 40). Then a cause is not only a source, but is an originator, a maker, or a creator.

48. It is also a fact that a cause does not produce a result either greater or less than itself, but just equal to so much of itself as took part in bringing forth that particular effect. Neither all the force in existence, nor that portion which goes to create the motion of the boy's arm (36), is either increased or diminished by creating that motion. The effect of a blow is just equal to the force that struck the blow. In each case the cause is exactly equal to the effect produced; cause and effect are exactly balanced. This parallels the assertion that the cause exists in its effect. If one is true, the other is also true; each confirms the other. In the making of water just so much oxygen as became a constituent of the water is taken from the great supply of oxygen, and exactly that quantity is in the water and may be found there

(35); thus it is evident that the total amount of oxygen in existence was neither increased nor diminished because of the creation of water. Conditions, forms, relationships, appearances, — all may have changed, but the aggregate quantity of any substance in existence remains the same. This condition shows the correctness of the law of the conservation of energy, necessitates it, and is necessitated by it.

49. Not all the force in the boy's arm is expended in its action upon the bat and the ball; the immense storehouse of silex in the earth is not exhausted in a single stalk of grain, nor in all the plants that have ever grown; neither does all the oxygen go into the making of all the water of the earth. The cause not only does not put all of itself into any single effect, but it does not exhaust itself even in the production of all succeeding effects. If it should exhaust itself, then existence would only be a succession of detached things or events, with no continuity, one expiring at the birth of the next, and mankind would be forced into the acceptance of pantheism, with no God except nature and its manifestations.

50. From these, as well as such other observations as man is able to make, he can but conclude that first cause has never exhausted itself, that it is

continuous alongside of its effects as well as within them, and that it never will exhaust itself in all that it shall yet create; it is infinite, and the infinite is exhaustless.

VII

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

51. We have seen that in each instance an effect may become the cause of some succeeding effect (30); similarly, each conclusion which we reach may become, sooner or later, the basis for another and farther reaching conclusion; this constitutes progress. Having established with certainty the existence and reality of first cause (30), and with equal positiveness and certainty the fact that first cause is all (32, 45), we can, with these conclusions for a basis, go on to the examination of other things toward which they unerringly point.

52. First cause, being the cause or origin of all (32), is that out of which all things arise (29); it is the producer by the action of which everything is brought into manifestation or existence, and each effect produced by a cause is something new; this is to create (47). Water may not be called new, but when the chemist unites oxygen and hydrogen, the water which is produced by that union is new water

(35); motion may not be new, but each motion that is caused, is, in every instance, a new motion (36); in the same way the effect of each cause is something new (39), and it is created by its cause (47). Thus, in every case, to cause is to create just as to create is to cause, and, consequently, creator is only another name for first cause.

53. Without the action of first cause there would not have been any effect; therefore, for the reason that first cause is that by which everything is brought into existence or being (32), it is not only *a* creator, but it is the *only* creator (47). Then the first great cause which caused all is the one creator that created all, therefore first cause is only another name for creator, and the two names are interchangeable.

54. We call God the Creator, and we call the Creator God; in exactly the same way that God is Creator He is first cause (52), and these two words are also interchangeable. The three designations, first cause, Creator, and God, simply indicate varying conceptions and cognitions of different minds occupying different points of view, each observing or giving prominence to one or another group of the many manifestations or expressions; if we only look far enough, we shall find that all of these manifestations or expressions belong in common to the three.

There is a great central group of ideas peculiar to each of these and supreme in each, and, whether we use the designation God, Creator, first cause, or unite all three, the name will never be large enough, because man's view can never include the whole. From the nature of the conditions, any name that man may use will include only so much as is recognized by the one using it or by the one hearing it, but each serves to make prominent some idea associated with Him.

55. Every one is aware of a difference between his idea of a creator and his idea of the supreme and absolute being whom we call God, because, when considered directly and specifically, creation is only one of His many acts, and hence He must be more than a creator. This difference is so widely and so well understood that there is no confusion of ideas when one uses the words interchangeably and says Creator when he means God, or says God when he means Creator. This difference is not between first cause and Creator, nor between Creator and God, but between man's varying perceptions, his ideas, and his use of words. The significance of either designation is so large that it is beyond man's comprehension, so far beyond his ken that definiteness is impossible. Indeed both terms are infinite in mean-

ing, and therefore beyond the grasp of the highest human intelligence. In view of these facts, therefore, the word "creator," as it is ordinarily used, does not include in its meaning all that belongs to God; hence, while it is correct to say that God is the Creator, it would not be correct to say that the Creator is God. For the same reasons we should not say that first cause is God, although we speak with as entire accuracy when we say that God is first cause as when we say He is Creator. Similar conditions exist in connection with many other relations whose designations are often used interchangeably.¹

56. The existence of first cause has been established beyond the possibility of question (31); but first cause is only another name for creator (47), and, since all statements which can be correctly made about the creator can also be made with equal accuracy about God (53), therefore the same valid reasoning which established the existence of first cause has, with equal certainty, established the existence of God. This is the greatest and most fundamental of all propositions that man deals with, the great truth, which may be best stated in the simplest possible language — GOD IS.²

¹ See Appendix C.

² "It is allowed by all that the supreme God exists necessarily,

57. This is the enduring foundation (6), and the foundation for all that exists (32). However dimly it may have been perceived, or however much of error may have been connected with it, nevertheless the existence of a God has been universally accepted; for, whatever the grade of their intelligence, a race, a nation, or a tribe of men has never been known or heard of in any part of the earth, nor in any period of its history, who did not believe in an invisible being superior to themselves, to whom they were more or less subject, and to whom they rendered some form of homage.¹

The Chinese acknowledged God in pre-Confucianism; the ancient Hindus told about Him in the Vedas, though they almost smothered their idea of Him under the mysterious ceremonials of the Sutras and in the mud of the Ganges; the Assyrians, the Babylonians, and the Egyptians inherited their belief in Him from the prehistoric races whence they sprang; the Hebrews traced their knowledge of Him from Abraham to the days before the deluge;

and, by the same necessity, He exists *always* and everywhere." — SIR ISAAC NEWTON in *Principia*.

¹ "The universal propensity to form an idea of God, if not an original instinct, is at least a general attendant of human nature." — DAVID HUME, in *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, sect. IX.

and the uncultured savages of the whole world, from the wandering Semite of Asia to the roving Indian of America, were as sure of God as are the most sincere Christians of these days; indeed, many of the earliest and most ignorant peoples held fast to those gleams of the divinest truth with which they were blest, and which some of the more civilized races have only come into the knowledge of in our own times.

58. The universality of this belief may not raise the proposition that God exists to the position of an axiom (25); perhaps in the magnitude of the idea may be the obstacle which prevents this recognition (26); but the intimate relation of this proposition to everything that exists is so close, that without any assumption whatever, but by carefully following a course of exact and logical reasoning, from a basis universally perceived to be true (20), we have necessarily and unavoidably arrived at the demonstrative certainty that God exists. What is this but proof? If, because of the universality of its perception, the proposition, God is, deserves to be called an axiom, then this demonstration becomes additional confirmation. The one object of all reasoning and all logic, as well as of every axiom, is to open the mind so that men may perceive the truth of statements otherwise beyond their mental grasp; and the more

avenues of approach to God that are clearly perceived, the better for mankind.

59. Despite all distinctions and differences among men, the belief in God is the bond which unites in one all the religions of the world. The fundamental thought of every religion is some conception of God. Grouped around this, more or less consistent with it, and derived directly or indirectly from it, are a large number of what, for convenience, may be called secondary ideas, all claiming coherence with the grand central idea of God, ministering to it and ministered to by it, but often creating mystery, if not doubt and uncertainty, in the mind. Then that religion which has the most clearly defined and most nearly correct idea of God will be the best, because it will be nearest to the truth and will contain the least of untruth.

Here we see the reason why, in every consideration of a religious subject, the study of God is of the very first importance (5). Fortunately God has made some conception of a superior or supreme spiritual being a condition of man's existence, and has given to each an ability and understanding in this direction which keeps pace with his other attainments; therefore it is possible for every one to know something of God and to increase that knowledge indefinitely.

60. If, by the simple act of spiritual perception or revelation, one has come into conscious certainty of the existence of God, and if another has arrived at a perception of the same truth by the longer, more difficult, and less satisfactory process of reasoning, that need not in the slightest diminish the confidence of either in the sufficiency and accuracy of his own conclusions; instead, each may be confirmed and strengthened, because the two experiences show that there is more than one distinct method by which this supreme result may be attained.

61. Some shrink from the thought of examining the evidence of the existence of God because they consider the topic too sacred to be subjected to such a procedure; there are others whose spiritual perception is so vivid that they are able to hold frequent if not constant communion with Him, and therefore for them investigation is not necessary. But there are still others who depend largely upon reason and its results for their conclusions. To these, accurate reasoning is an immeasurable advantage, for they will be made much stronger by any course which appeals directly to their intellect. Belief in God may be intellectual as well as emotional, spiritual, or volitional — a subject for reason as well as for perception or for feeling — and reasoning on this sub-

ject need not weaken the faith of those to whom it is not necessary; rather should it cause them to rejoice that by it the confidence of some is increased and the hope of others is changed into certainty.

62. The proposition that declares the existence of God constitutes the great foundation which no man laid (7), but which endures from eternity to eternity. It is the one basic fact on which must rest all wisdom, all science, all philosophy, and all religion. Without it there would not be anything, but with it all things exist.

63. Our course has been, step by step, from that which has been clearly and universally perceived (13) to other realities that emerged to view as we progressed (3). Each step in advance furnished a point of vantage from which to perceive another just ahead, until at last we recognize this, the one foundation on which all else must rest. From first to last it was a series of perceptions (20), until the great reality — God — has been reached. This reality is now our point of departure for all succeeding progress, and the point to which we shall continually return for other departures.

64. That which is to be erected on this foundation must be constructed with the logical accuracy of exact science. There must be the same loyalty and

inflexibility that the mathematician holds toward his fundamental proposition (3). Anything less than this will be erroneous, and must not be accepted, for however much error may seem to promise, and however much it may for a while seem to prosper a cause, at the last it is destruction. An arithmetical error, slight in the beginning, becomes immensely magnified at the conclusion, and the result of the process must be wrong. Here we are engaged with the problem of life and living; the ideal toward which we are pressing is nothing short of perfection, and, because the possibilities are larger, a slight mistake may lead to larger errors. Furthermore, the mathematician deals with insensate objects, while errors in this domain are manifested in the agonies of throbbing, palpitating, human lives.

VIII

GOD IS ALL

65. Preceding propositions furnish abundant basis for further conclusions (51), and the next step in the natural order is to learn something about God.

The identity of first cause with God has been clearly established (52-56); God is the one, great, first cause; and, in the simple and comprehensive meaning of the word "all" (33), that first cause is all (32, 45); therefore as first cause God must include within Himself all that ever was, or is, or ever will be.

66. God is in His creation, constituting it all (34-45); but He is also more and greater than His creation; the whole of Himself does not go into any one item of that creation, nor even into its entirety (49). Notwithstanding their very intimate relation, we have seen that the cause is not the effect nor is the effect the cause (46); therefore, if God, the cause, exhausted Himself, or put all of Himself into His creation, there would not be any God left; but He is His own infinite Self over and above all His creation;

He is Himself and all else besides. In the largest and most inclusive possible meaning of the phrase, *God is all*. His substance is the one, infinite, divine substance which not only pervades the entire universe, but fills all spaces and all worlds, and is the substance of all existences, — of all that is, — and when we say that God is all we must adhere strictly to this all-embracing proposition.

67. Even the order of the words, “God is all,” cannot be reversed without danger of serious error. In careless thinking the expression, “all is God,” might be understood to mean that creation itself alone constitutes God; this would exclude that of Him which is over, and above, and more than the universe, and it would give a basis for the old erroneous doctrine of pantheism.

68. Accepted in the plain and unlimited meaning of the words, this declaration that God is all is of tremendous significance, second in importance only to the declaration of His existence; but it is not a new idea; the newness connected with the proposition consists in the method of its application, — in always adhering to the plain and simple meaning of the declaration.

“God is all and in all” or “God is all in all” are common forms of speech, and the religious world

has become very familiar with the idea expressed in those forms. There is a vast difference between the simple declaration that God is all and the assertion that He is in all, for this provokes questions distinctly divergent from the original proposition, and it implies that there is something other than Himself for Him to be contained in. What, then, is it? And if it contains Him, must it not be greater than He is? If these suggestions were correct, they would destroy the truth of the proposition that God is all, and He would no longer be infinite; but they are not correct; God is indeed all; and the additional phrase "in all" is without meaning and therefore superfluous.

69. The only accurate declaration of this truth is found in its simplest form, God is all, and if accepted in the unmodified but full and complete meaning of the words, it expresses the exact truth. Whatever is added is either meaningless or erroneous, and causes confusion and misunderstanding. It is presumable that, recognizing the immensity and majesty of the sublime idea contained in the complete though simple form of this proposition, men sought to express it more fully by the added words, failing to perceive that the most exalted ideas always find their best expression in the simplest forms,

and that any addition detracts from their accuracy, beauty, majesty, and sublimity.

We now have two broad general propositions: The first and basic one is the declaration that God is; the second is the declaration that God is all; the second describes the first in a single particular, but it does not otherwise modify it in any degree except to enlarge and make more definite man's idea of God.

IX

INFINITY

70. We understand and appreciate the simple meaning of the word "all" (33) when applied to limited quantities, but as magnitudes increase, the ability to comprehend them diminishes, the meaning of the word becomes more and more vague, until, finally, the mind ceases to form any definite idea of their proportions. In like manner, though in vastly greater degree, the mind finds itself unable to grasp the idea of first cause, God — or All. Although it can form some conception of them, either is entirely beyond comprehension.

Consideration of such immensity suggests the word "infinite," for the habit of the mind is to associate that word with the greatest imaginable magnitude. Because indefiniteness of thought, and consequent indefiniteness of expression, have led many into the mists of uncertainty and error, it is well to have a definite understanding of the meaning of a word of so much importance and of such frequent use in this discussion.

71. The word "infinite" has two distinct and accepted definitions: One defines it, "immensely large, vast, immeasurable, innumerable." A difficulty with this definition arises out of its indefiniteness, which allows the word a great variety of applications; indeed, the innumerable or the immeasurable is necessarily and always indefinite and inexact. Under this definition two objects of immense difference in extent may both be correctly called "infinite."

In geometry a point has neither length, breadth, nor thickness, but place or position only, and a line is a succession of these points; therefore, a line a mile long would be made up of so many of these points that it would be impossible to number them, and they would be called "innumerable"; hence, under this definition, their number might rightly be called "infinite." A line two miles long would have twice as many points and yet, with equal accuracy, their number also might be called "infinite"; while a line a thousand miles long, with the same accuracy in the use of the word, would also be described as having an infinite number of points.

It is no wonder that the acceptance of this meaning has created almost inextricable confusion, for such indefiniteness deprives the word of all value in any

attempt at either accurate description or accurate reasoning, because it could be taken to mean anything that circumstances or fancy might suggest. A person seeking only to sustain some particular conclusion would find this definition well suited to his purpose, while one who was really striving to ascertain the truth might unwittingly be led far astray by its variable meaning.

72. In contrast to this, the derivative meaning of the word "infinite" is definite and exact. Infinite is derived from "*in*," meaning not, and "*fnitus*," meaning limited or bounded; hence, the word means not limited nor bounded — without any terminal point or anything that limits, circumscribes, confines, or restrains, not only in fact but in thought; therefore the infinite is not only innumerable and immeasurable, but it includes within itself the whole incomprehensible vastness. This is definite, exact, precise, and unchangeable; and when the word is used with this meaning, the infinite must be, as regards time or existence, without beginning and without end, and as regards space, without boundary, so that one may send his thought outward in every direction forever and yet forever, and at each point in its progress the thought will be as much in the centre of all as it was at the starting-place. Let it be remem-

bered that in these pages the word "infinite" is always used with this derivative meaning.

73. Many attempts have been made to illustrate infinity, but an illustration can be made only by comparison, and as an essential peculiarity of infinity is the absence of a limit, it must, therefore, include everything within itself, and not anything remains with which to compare it.

74. Because of its immensity, it has been asserted that man cannot comprehend the infinite, and hence that his knowledge of it must be vague, and consequently insufficient for accurate reasoning. Had man ceased his investigations whenever he found himself dealing with subjects incomprehensible in their entirety, his range of understanding would be extremely limited. There is no more reason to be overwhelmed by the magnitude of infinity than when considering any other subject which, as a whole, is beyond the mental grasp, but of which, in some particulars, one has unquestionable and exact knowledge.¹ The fact that we can define infinity shows

¹ C. J. Keyser, in the *Hibbert Journal* for January, 1909, has wisely said: "It is true indeed that whatsoever is infinite does transcend the photographic faculties of the intellect, but not the conceptual, not the logical. For thought the unknowable does not exist."

that we have some comprehensible knowledge of it, and if its precise meaning is adhered to and the reasoning held rigidly to that meaning, we can reason as accurately concerning that exact knowledge which we possess as we can concerning any exact knowledge of any other subject.

It is not uncommon for men to deal with subjects beyond their comprehension, nor for their conclusions to be accepted without question. A million miles is an incomprehensible distance, but the mathematician says with positive certainty that twice one million miles are two million miles; all accept his statement, simply because he is dealing with that part of his immense subject which they fully comprehend, and his method is in exact compliance with the basic principles of arithmetic, of which they are absolutely certain; nor do we question the accuracy of the astronomer, who plays with incomprehensible distances as a child plays with its blocks.

In dealing with infinity we recognize the absence of all limit (72), and this recognition is exact and comprehensible. If we hold ourselves rigorously to this one fact, then, in that particular, we can be just as accurate in our reasoning and just as sure of our conclusions as the mathematician. To be correct about these things, to insure accuracy, one has only

to use the same exact, relentless, emotionless logic that he uses in mathematics.

75. There is not anything outside of the infinite nor beyond it. If there were, that which is called "infinite" could not really be infinite, because it would have a limit or boundary. That which is thus erroneously called "infinite," before it could become so, would have to be enlarged to include everything — the whole. It is unthinkable that something can be bounded by nothing, yet, out of a struggle to imagine such a condition, one can gain a larger idea of the infinite.

76. The infinite cannot be exhausted. If it could be, that would prove that it has a limit and that its limit had been reached; but it does not have a limit (72), therefore it cannot be exhausted.

77. Neither is there anything beyond, or outside of, or more than all (75). When the all is fully included, then the limitless is reached beyond which there is not anything, not even a beyond; and this is the infinite. Therefore the two coincide; the infinite is all, and the all is infinite.

78. Since the infinite and the all thus coincide and are one, then, because God is all (65), He is also one and infinite; and thus we arrive at the

third proposition: GOD IS INFINITE.¹ We may state these propositions thus: —

God is.

God is all.

God is infinite.

79. If the all were divided, neither part would be all; likewise, if the infinite were divided, neither part would be infinite, because, whatever the proportions, both would be limited; hence, there can be only one all; neither can there be more than one infinite.

80. Since God is all and infinite, therefore it follows of necessity that there is only one God.²

This expression of truth sounds almost like an echo of that early cry of the ancient Hebrews which distinguished them in their day from all other nations. It was given to them to perceive this great truth as no other nation had done, and they have since kept it

¹ Herbert Spencer says: "Certain conclusions respecting the nature of the universe seem unavoidable. In our search after causes we discover no resting-place until we arrive at first cause, and we have no alternative but to regard this first cause as infinite and absolute."

² "A being eternal, infinite, absolutely perfect." — NEWTON.

"Infinite, eternal, immutable, independent, all-knowing, all-powerful." — DESCARTES.

"Absolutely infinite, consisting of infinite attributes, each expressing eternal and infinite essentiality." — KANT.

ringing like a war-cry all down through the centuries:
“Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord.”

This is the great foundation, both sure and steadfast, unmovable, which no man laid, on which rests all truth, both religious and scientific, and by which it is sustained. God is one, and there is no other God beside Him, for He is infinite and He is all.

X

THE ORIGIN OF GOD

81. The propositions, that God exists, that He is all, and that He is infinite, have been established; but we are immediately confronted with innumerable questions which come in confused mass, tumbling over each other in their haste for replies. For the immediate present they all may be included in the one query: What follows as the logical and necessary outcome of these conclusions? What is God? Who is He? Where is He? What was His origin? or, as the child would ask, where did He come from? These vitally important questions are as old as the race, for men have recognized His existence from a time earlier than history, tradition, or even myths tell us of, and from the very first, both child and man have asked all kinds of questions about Him.

The immensity of these subjects has overawed even the wisest, and, influenced by their own reverential fear, they have allowed themselves to think that these things are either too deep and too sacred

for investigation, or that they are unfathomable mysteries; therefore they have declared solution impossible. But the more we know of God the greater will be our wonder, love, and reverential awe, and the more intense will be our adoration and worship; therefore these questions deserve the most earnest consideration, and they shall yet be correctly answered.

Some of these answers have been found, but even the wisest sometimes fail to perceive the spiritual things that are closest. Often among the unlearned are those who are spiritually discerning, and who show wonderful spiritual vigor, clear perception, and keen discrimination of the truth. Recognizing this, Jesus said, "It is hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes;" therefore one need not despise these little ones, nor need the most humble despair, for he also said, "he that seeketh findeth," and all that is of the truth shall be known in good time. These answers are not so deeply hidden that we cannot find them, for God did not mean that His children should be ignorant of these things.

82. To know God in His relations to man must necessarily prove an incentive to become better men, and this knowledge will furnish the intelligence that will enable them to live better lives, therefore every

doubt made clear must be of incalculable advantage to the whole world. Knowing that each point of understanding gained furnishes opportunity for gaining others, however impregnable they may seem, it is the part of wisdom, with confidence in the future strengthened by experience of the past, to press on to the solution of each and all of these problems.

83. Men have always queried concerning the origin of God, though that question has occupied much less prominence than many others, perhaps because the subject presents so many difficulties and is so far removed from the usual course of thinking. The difficulty has come from failure to understand the basis on which the problem rests. Expecting something occult, intricate, and quite beyond human comprehension, men have started from the wrong point and have looked too far; therefore they have made serious mistakes. When the subject is approached from the right direction, the answer is not difficult to find.

One stumbling-block is found in the proposition that God is self-created, a statement which will not survive a moment's examination, because it necessitates untenable absurdities. To create is to act, to bring something into existence which did not exist

before; but action is impossible before the actor exists, therefore that which creates anything must itself already be in existence; being already existent, it could not be again created either by itself or by anything else. A thing cannot exist and not exist at one and the same instant; self-creation is an impossibility.

Any possible view of self-creation is equally absurd, and the farther the subject is pursued the greater become the difficulties and the worse the entanglement in meaningless contradictions, while a return to the first simple but basic and all-embracing proposition that God is infinite (78) at once opens an avenue of escape from this labyrinth and furnishes a satisfactory solution of all difficulties.

84. Although it is impossible to comprehend infinity (74), yet the most unlearned person may fully understand the simple statement that the infinite does not have any limit (72). If God had a creator, or if He were self-created, then there was a time, as men count time, when He was not, and at that point He was limited; but God is infinite, hence there is not any limitation to the duration of His existence, and He could not have had an origin or a beginning; consequently He never was created nor did He ever have a creator. Furthermore, because He is infinite

and limitless, He cannot cease to be; His duration is without beginning, it is also without ending; He always was, He always will be.

It is the tendency of the human mind, even when thoroughly convinced of the accuracy of a proposition, to go back over the whole round of doubt and questioning, and thus one may again find himself halted by an imagined beginning of first cause, creating for himself a seeming void of unexplained and unexplainable nothingness into which he peers, bewildered and afraid, asking himself the same old questions — what? how? when? where? Even there he may find his answer and be at peace, if he will but remember there is no place where God is not; that God is always there, just as He is always here, just as He is always everywhere — always the same infinite and eternal God.

85. There is not anything in the slightest ambiguous, occult, mysterious, or doubtful in these simple statements, and the reasoning is in exact accord with previously accepted propositions. It is true that this deals with infinity, but we adhere strictly to the derivative meaning of the word "infinite," in which there is no variation (72), and we deal only with that part of the subject concerning which there can be no more doubt than there is about the proposition that twice

one are two; therefore there is no doubt about the conclusion.

86. This eternal continuity of the origin of all origins completely explains the great law of persistence, continuity, and indestructibility which scientific men have observed on every hand, and which forbids the assumption that anything which exists ever, either suddenly or slowly, made its appearance out of nothing, or that it will ever disappear into nothingness. Such action would be in direct violation of the principle of cause and effect, as well as that of eternal continuity. It is impossible that nothing should produce something, neither can anything which exists ever cease to be, because God is all, and neither the all nor any part of the all of God can be destroyed. God is infinite in the fulness of the meaning of the word (78).

87. There is a vast difference between self-creation and self-existence. The idea of self-creation necessarily rests on the impossible assumption that at some time the infinite God began to be; but in His infinity He always was, and by His own infinite power He is able always to maintain and continue His existence. It is beyond the limit of possibility that God, being infinite in each and every particular of Himself, should lack anything. Although a

characteristic or a quality may belong to Him as an essential of Him, yet it can never have been a necessity to Him in the sense of something to be supplied.

88. God is all, and He is infinite, and self-existent, therefore He combines within Himself both cause and effect; consequently He exists by His own power, or by the ability that is inherent within Himself; in other words, He was not created, nor was He brought into existence. God is, and there is naught else besides Him.¹

89. Five propositions are now established: The first declares that God exists (56); the second sets forth that God is all (65); the third, God is infinite (78), is nearly an equivalent for the second; and the fourth, God is eternal (84), is, in a way, a repetition of the third; while the fifth asserts the unity of them all in the declaration that God is one (80). While they are distinct, yet all are of the same general character, and, because each is contained in each of the others, explains it, and is necessitated by it, they have such an intimate relation to each other that if one of them is untrue the others are also untrue; and if any one of them is true, the others must be true also. They do not limit or modify the

¹ See Appendix B.

idea of God, but in a certain way they describe that idea and make it more definite. They stand as follows:—

God is.

God is all.

God is infinite.

God is eternal.

God is one.

PART THIRD

*ESSENTIALS AND CHARACTER-
ISTICS OF GOD*

XI

POWER

90. Having arrived at the unquestionable certainty that God is (56), also at an equal certainty regarding each of His distinguishing characteristics enumerated at the close of the last chapter, it is well to consider what, in man's recognition of God's relations to himself, may properly be called His essentials, for without an understanding of these no intelligent idea of Him is complete. Man's knowledge of these essentials depends, as does all his knowledge (20), upon his perceptions or cognitions, and although the essentials relate to spiritual existencies, which are the real and the enduring, his perceptions of them are no less trustworthy than are his perceptions of other things.¹

¹ See Appendix C.

91. The perception that God acts is as universal as the perception of a god. The god of the child or of the man, of the wildest savage, or of the most cultured human being, is continuously active. Whatever characteristics men have connected with God, action is always one of them, and this universal perception is of itself the best proof of His activity that we can have (20). Distinct from this perception is the fact that God, as creator and first cause (56), necessarily must act (52).

92. Webster defines "power" as the ability to act; this ability is one of God's essentials, and that He acts proves that He possesses power. A god without power is unthinkable, for it would mean the inability to do anything; therefore power is an inseparable essential of God and its manifestation is a manifestation of Himself. God is power.¹

93. But God is infinite (78), consequently His power is likewise infinite, and therefore He is omnipotent;² then He is not only all the power there is, but He is the all-power. The word "omnipotent"

¹ See Appendix D.

² Omnipotent is compounded from *omnis*, meaning all, and *potens*, meaning powerful, potent, or the ability to do; hence the word means all-powerful, or all-power. Omnipotence implies "In general such an absence of limitation that it depends only upon the inward determination of the subject whether or not it will act."

indicates no more than a quality or a condition, but power is an entity, therefore the all-power means far more than omnipotent — means something which is itself an entity. Since God is the infinite all-power, then He must be all that the term implies, and thus we pass from the recognition that God is omnipotent to the larger conception that God is omnipotence itself.

94. The importance of this proposition has given it prominence in connection with a wide range of subjects, and it is almost universally accepted by intelligent and religious men, though often it may be without any very definite apprehension of its meaning — as a phrase convenient for use in certain contingencies and to be forgotten or ignored in others. Because of this, and also because of the momentous conclusions which are to be derived from it, the proposition that God is omnipotence is especially important, and should always be kept distinctly in mind, and uncompromisingly adhered to in all reasoning connected with this topic.

95. After establishing the accuracy of basic statements, our thinking should be in exact accord with those statements. The fact that men allow themselves to wander, even in the slightest degree, from the correct statement of fundamental and exact propositions,

has introduced many difficulties and errors in connection with this and other subjects, and it furnishes at least one great reason why ethics, morals, and religion have not yet arrived at as satisfactory a condition as have the exact sciences. If the statement that God is omnipotence is ever correct, then it is always correct, and we ought to govern all our thinking and all our reasoning in exact compliance with that fact.

96. God is infinite, and since there can be only one infinite (79) He is the one all-power (93), and this all-power can be nothing less than omnipotence. Since there cannot be any power other than the one infinite all-power, then there is not anything to interfere with omnipotence either to hinder or to prevent its action in any way; hence, there cannot be any effort nor any weariness connected with His action, however extensive it may be in amount and duration. This entire absence of interference and of effort is a necessary consequence of God's infinity and applies to all His actions, whether watching the smallest living ion, observing the movements of an entire universe of solar systems, or speaking a world into existence.

97. The condition of being one, and all, and infinite omnipotence, not only implies but necessitates the condition of perfect freedom; God is en-

tirely free to act in exact accord with His own choice. This unlimited freedom establishes the fact of complete self-control, and all His actions must depend entirely upon His own inward determination; therefore all causes and all acts originate solely within God Himself, and are self-determined. This is only another way of saying that God is the one first cause and the cause of all. This conclusion is derived from a point of view which is entirely distinct from the one previously considered (30, 31), and the two not only harmonize, but each sustains and confirms the other.

XII

PRESENCE

98. The proposition that God is everywhere present, which is accepted, at least nominally, by every form of Christianity, need no longer rest on blind faith nor on the arbitrary assertion of some one who claims authority. Conclusive proof exists in the fact that God is all (65) and that He is infinite (78); this being true, there cannot anywhere be the minutest place where He is not; He must be literally and exactly present everywhere; and this is only another form of saying that He is omnipresent.¹

There is other correlative and contributory evidence: God is the one creator and the cause of all that exists(54), and the cause is always present in its effects (41), hence that which is the substance and constituent of God must be the substance and constituent of every created existence (44). His sub-

¹ This word is formed by the union of *omnis*, meaning all, and *presens*, meaning present; hence, literally, the word means all-present, everywhere present.

stance makes everything what it is in all its parts, therefore God, in His substance, must be everywhere present, not only surrounding everything, but, as its constituent, in and through everything.

99. The word "present" relates to place, position, or location only; but a much larger, far more important, and distinctly different meaning attaches to the word "presence." Though God is everywhere present, God's *presence* has nothing to do with location. Presence is something so essential that without it existence would be impossible, and yet, it is wholly beyond sense perception. It is a reality pertaining to the living individual exclusively, an essential in which each differs from every other one, an entity which includes the different constituents of true individuality. In His infinite diversity of expression, God never manifests Himself just the same either in any two instances or to any two individuals; and, similarly, the presence of each individual differs from that of every other.

When this presence ceases to manifest itself, as when what is called death takes place, although the body, with all that was tangible or visible to the eye, is still present, we are keenly conscious that what responded to us, what called forth our love, kindness, and sympathy — what really made our friend what

he was to us — is no longer there; we miss the presence which animated that body, but which is no longer associated with it. This elevates the meaning of presence beyond anything transient or ephemeral, and makes it an existent reality, or “thing in itself.”¹

100. From this recognition of what presence really is we perceive more of its characteristics than any definition or description can give; and, as a man’s experience of the cause acting within himself is the most perfect explanation of causation that he can have (29), so our own consciousness of presence in ourselves is the most positive and absolute proof that we can have of its existence and reality. In the recognition of presence in others we only follow our consciousness of a certain uniformity with ourselves which we expect to find in each individual — a uniformity that pervades all created things. Sunlight, though varying in the degree of its intensity, has always certain uniform peculiarities, and we have good reason to believe that gravitation exists throughout the universe, and that everywhere it shows the same qualities. Whatever really exists must be endowed

¹ The phrase “thing in itself,” or noumenon, implies the thinking of something without taking account of the forms of sensuousness; and yet a real object, though entirely distinct from phenomenon or things visible.

with presence, and this presence must everywhere exhibit characteristics peculiar to itself.

Because God is the cause of all, and is infinite, in Him this presence must exist in its fulness; and because this all-pervading presence, in the most comprehensive definition of the word, is an essential of Him, He is presence itself.

101. Thus we have advanced from the perception of God as omnipresent to the perception of presence, which is vastly greater. Because He is infinite and all, we know that His presence must be the infinite, ultimate presence which, as first cause, is in and through all and the constituent of all the presence there is; then He is omnipresence.

By means of presence and its peculiarities in himself each human being manifests himself to others as an individual; and in a similar, but far larger way, in the perception of His presence we perceive something of God Himself, of our nearness to Him, and of His nearness to us and to every one of His creatures. Vast numbers have been as conscious of His divine presence as they have been of the presence of their fellow-men. Without this omnipresence He would not be God nor would He exist.

102. This declaration of God's omnipresence is only a more precise and complete form of the decla-

ration of His presence in and through His entire creation as its sole constituent — a truth gradually becoming more widely and more clearly recognized in all Christendom. This truth is but partially set forth in the doctrine of His immanence, or His permanent indwelling in all created things, although the idea of immanence, as it is ordinarily understood, is a great advance from the older ideas of an entire separateness between God and His creation. The defect in this doctrine of an immanent God consists in the idea of a creation different from Him but which contains Him, a defect which is suggested by the expression, “God is all and in all” (68). God’s omnipresence is vastly more than immanence, for He is not only present in all things but He is the constituent elemental substance of all existing realities (44).

103. This does not controvert the doctrine of transcendence because, although the cause exists in its effect and is the sole constituent of it, yet it is not the effect (46), nor is it exhausted in producing that effect (50). Because God is unlimited by space, by time, or by anything else (45, 72), He exists above, around, and throughout the universe; and as a man can watch the action of his own mind in thinking and direct that action, so God can observe and direct

the actions of the universe. God transcends all categories, all experiences, all worlds, and the universe itself; in His own being He is supereminent over all.¹

¹This subject will be more fully elaborated in chapters XLVI and XLVII.

XIII

SPIRIT

104. God is never visible to human eyes. Perhaps it is because of this that the entire race uses the word "spirit"¹ as a common designation for all invisible beings. This designation is heard so constantly from the lips of all, whether educated or not, that it has made its way into the general consciousness until there is little strangeness in connection with it; neither has it been the subject of nice distinction, nor of much philosophical discussion, and, therefore, it has not become surrounded by speculative and conflicting definitions which, in the minds of many, produce confusion and uncertainty.

105. Through the perceptions which men have of God they are aware that He is totally beyond all sense perceptions. They have various names for

¹ Some one has said that spirit is a makeshift word; and so are all words which undertake to name the essentials of God. Even the name God, or any name for Him, even the pronouns which we apply, are a poor kind of makeshift, if we look at them from one point of view.

the things which come within range of the senses, and they say, this is of wood, or iron, or stone, meaning that the material of which these things are constituted is wood, or iron, or stone. In a closely similar way, and with the simplest and most accurate reasoning, they say that God is spirit, meaning, that as the rod is of iron, so that which makes God what He is, is something which they call spirit, although they are clearly aware that they do not know much about what spirit really is, except the very apparent fact that it is entirely beyond sense perception.

106. The idea that the substance of God is wholly unlike that of material things and is in great, if not exact, contrast to them, must be as old as man's earliest cognitions of God, for to-day men in primitive and barbaric conditions have similar ideas and expressions. The belief in invisible spirit is as universal as the belief in God. It not only extends back to those earlier Greek philosophers who believed that spirit was warm air, or breath, but also to the older Indian sages, who thought that spirit was mixed breath and fire; and still so much farther back does it go, with many variations in form, that its real origin is lost in prehistoric darkness. The earliest Semites, of whom the Jews were a branch, were not only imbued with this belief, but they recognized a universal

spirit common to their gods, themselves, and the animal creation. On this belief rested their reason for the sacrifice of animals, for they thought that by eating the animal they partook of its spirit, and thus became more entirely one with their gods.

107. Man recognizes himself as material, but does not so recognize God. This dissimilarity is only one among many wide differences which the race has noted between itself and God. Dwelling continually upon these radically distinctive peculiarities has resulted in emphasizing man's idea of a vast difference between himself and God. This thought that God is of one substance and man of another must be a mistake because, as we have already seen, God is the one creator and cause (56), and the cause exists in its effects (41); hence, whether we are able to perceive it or not, the substance of God, which is spirit, must be the essential constituent and substance of man as well as of all else, for all is from Him as first cause (32).

108. This means that man, in the essential of himself, is spiritual; and he is conscious of this whenever, in his more serious moments, he turns to an examination of himself and realizes that his highest, best, and holiest thoughts, aspirations, and cognitions have come out of that of himself which is

not material. This has been recognized from very early times. The Egyptians had very definite ideas about spiritual life as distinct from materiality, and they believed the future life to be an unbroken continuation of the spiritual portion of their life on earth; the Vedic hymns, which are three or four thousand years old, declare a belief in a psychic (or spiritual) body inside the fleshly or material one. Similar ideas also appear in the Babylonian writings of even an earlier date, and the Chinese worship of the living spirits of their ancestors extends so far back toward the infancy of the race that its origin is lost in antiquity; in fact, these ideas are found wherever the belief in a god exists.

109. Thus naturally has come the universal recognition that God is spirit. Jesus declared this not only indirectly in all his teaching, but directly and positively when he said to the Samaritan woman at the well, "God is spirit:¹ and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." But God is infinite (78), and as first cause He exists in all effects (44); therefore the true, real, and enduring of man

¹ John iv. 24. The King James version of this passage is not correct. Jesus said "God is spirit," he did not say, "God is *a* spirit." The "*a*" does not occur in the earliest and best Greek manuscripts. Both the Revised version and the American Revision omit it in their marginal readings.

is spirit, and is of that infinite spirit which is God. Then, the fact that God is spirit does not indicate any separation nor any separateness between God and man; on the contrary, it binds them in the closest possible relationship. When man shall definitely recognize the meaning of this faith of all the ages, and shall realize that in the essential of his own being he is spiritual, he will then comprehend that this fact, that God is spirit, forms the strongest possible tie between himself and his heavenly Father.

XIV

SUBSTANCE

110. The meaning of certain words in more or less common use is, by many, not definitely nor accurately understood, and this uncertainty causes a similar degree of vagueness and confusion of thought. Among these is the word "substance,"¹ the derivation of which indicates that it designates something which stands under and sustains, supports, or upholds. The substance of a thing is that reality² on which dependence can be placed, that which endows

¹ The word "substance" is derived from *substare*, compounded from *sub*, meaning under, and the word *stare*, meaning to stand; thus, literally, the word means to stand under, to support, to sustain — that which stands beneath and, as it were, supports the appearance.

² Real is from *res*, meaning a thing, so that the words real, reality, realist, and realism may not inappropriately be described as "thingish." In an attempt to arrive at precision there came into existence the phrase "thing in itself," which originally meant "the object as it is," independent of all else. The real is the actual and is clearly allied with existence, or that which exists.

it with reliability. Substance underlies all manifestations of reality, enters into all things, gives them stability, and makes them what they are. It is the essential of that which is not material, the vital part of that which is spiritual. It has been described as an independent reality subsisting of itself; it is the reality and constituent of all that exists (45); or, that because of which each thing has its quality of reality and continuity. Negatively speaking, substance is that essential without which not anything exists, as life in animate beings, intelligence and power in mind, presence in all existing realities.

III. Every one is accustomed to the use of the terms of the senses, has more or less carefully studied them and understands them; but men in general are not familiar with the terms of non-materiality; and substance, as the word is here used, is not in any particular materialistic,¹ and it cannot be represented nor thought of in the terms of the senses, thus making its definition extremely difficult. Another reason why the word "substance" eludes definition is because of its universal presence in a seemingly

¹ Swedenborg hears one of his spirits in heaven say: "Here in heaven all things are *substantial* and not material, . . . we who live here are spiritual men, because we are substantial and not material." — *Conjugal Love*, sect. 207.

endless variety of manifestations, and the most familiar things are often the most difficult to define.

112. The word has a peculiar history. Recognizing that all visible, material things, however stable and enduring they may seem to be, are constantly undergoing changes of some sort, and also recognizing that there is an unchangeable and eternal substratum in all real things, and desiring a word that would designate this sustaining reality, those who had perceived these conditions coined the word "substance," intending to limit its use to this special class of non-material objects. But as most people considered material objects to be the unchangeable, permanent, and lasting ones, the word was seized upon and applied to the very things from which its originators intended rigidly to exclude it. In this way it lost the intensive inflexibility of meaning which was given it at first, as well as its exclusive application to the special class of objects for which it was provided; but those who perceive what the word was intended to designate will have little trouble with its meaning. They have only to restore it to its rightful place and then steadfastly adhere to its correct interpretation and application.

113. God is spirit, and the spirit of God is His substance (105), meaning by this the same that

men mean when, in speaking of the things of materiality, they say that the substance of the rod is iron; therefore, in the domain of God, spirit and substance are one — substance is spirit and spirit is substance (107). Since God is first cause (54), He is the substance which constitutes all existencies (32), pervades the whole universe, is its sole constituent element (44), and the one infinite reality.

114. Because God is infinite, His substance is infinite and also all; hence, there is only this one infinite substance, with its varying manifestations. Man has long been searching after that which is substantial; in the one substance of the infinite God he will find it. From Him alone do all things derive their real substance. God is the existent, unchanging substance of the whole universe which altereth not and passeth not away; which is forever and forever — infinite, everlasting, eternal. He, and He alone, endures.

XV

TRUTH

115. "What is truth?" This question which Pilate asked in mockery of the Christ had already been a question of the world for centuries, and it has been constantly echoed from end to end of Christendom, but not yet has it received a reply that is satisfactory. Both religion and philosophy have attempted an answer, but the variety of their answers makes jangling discord, and science, with much show of confidence in her own solution, only adds to the confusion; but through all these answers runs a note of harmony which the trained ear can hear and which gives hope for the future. Truth continually evades satisfactory definition, but so do substance, existence, life, principle, and other essentials of God; nevertheless, man has cognitions of these which are invaluable to him.

116. The history of the world from earliest times is a history of contention about truth and right. There has never been a practical question that men

have not ranged themselves on opposite sides regarding it. Witness the great contests between nations on the field of battle and in the political arena — everywhere men earnestly contending, each confident of the truth and right of his own ideas; in legal tribunals all over the world men stake their property on their confidence that their opinions about personal affairs are true and right; and contentions wax hot among religious sects, where creeds held by some to be most sacred are vehemently denounced by others who just as sincerely believe them to be wrong. Everywhere these contentions go on, and so great is the confusion about what is truth that there is not in all the world an error which some do not think is right, nor is there a right action which some do not condemn as wrong. These differences exist between the most intelligent, earnest, and sincere persons in all the world; each is sure that he is right and that the other is wrong; and they create such confusion of ideas it is no wonder that even among broad-minded men, as well as among those who look only at the surface of things, there are many who seriously doubt whether there exists any such thing as absolute truth.

117. Three errors contribute largely to this confusion. One is the failure to perceive correctly (21); another is the failure to reason accurately about what

has been perceived; and the third, which is as important as either of the others, exists in the fact that, without being aware of it, men attach a quality of variability to what they call truth, so that a course which they look upon as wrong at one time or under one set of circumstances, they hold to be right at another time or under other conditions.

118. Men are learning that those who hold opinions contrary to their own, no matter how important the subject, may be just as sincere as themselves, therefore the confusion is not so great nor is the antagonism between contending partisans so bitter as it once was; then, too, the vast majority of the human race has an instinctive feeling that absolute truth is not a figment of the brain, but a positive reality; and, having found a fragment of it, the possession of this fragment adds confidence and zest to the pursuit of the whole. In the day of complete success of this search after absolute truth — for success must eventually come — all human relations will be changed, error will have disappeared, and harmony, which is ever an attendant of truth, will everywhere prevail and this world will appear new.¹

¹ "Wherever we seek the truth, we mean by it something which in itself belongs absolutely to the structure of the world and excludes its contradiction without any reference to individual

119. From the entity truth comes the quality true, and so intimately related are truth and right that the sincere questioner never fails to recognize that whatever is true is right, and on this fact he bases his ideas. Right always depends upon truth for its condition of being right, and therefore must conform to it. Exact truth is the foundation of all rightness; hence, whatever is true is right because truth is always right. But this does not settle the difficulty, for we are immediately confronted with the original question, "What is truth?"

120. Thus, behind all cognitions and behind all attempts at definition and description still rises the question of the thing itself, and, conscious of the immediate presence of a vast something which is intimately connected with all ideas of right, the world is continually asking, "What is truth?" The nearest approach yet made to an answer is the declaration, "truth is that by which a thing is what it is," but that expression conveys very little definite in-
preferences. I may not have the truth, but the truth I am aiming at is not meant as something which I and others like, but as something which absolutely excludes any value in its opposite. . . . I may have formulated a statement which fits provisionally a given situation, but if all that I call truth were of such a relative and provisional type, there would be no truth whatever." — HUGO MÜNSTERBERG, *Science and Idealism*, p. 24.

formation. Much like this is the statement that truth is the innate reality of existence or being. By uniting these two answers, however, we get a ray of light from the one infinite reality, God, who makes all things what they are, who is both cause and constituent of all realities (114), who bestows upon them that undefined and undefinable quality which makes them real and without which they would not be true, who is Himself wholly true, the one reality of all realities, and therefore the truth of all. Each item or statement of truth, however far it may seem to be removed from other items of truth, is in entire and absolute harmony with each and every other one; therefore the word "truth," in its larger and more comprehensive meaning, includes all truth as one, and cannot have a plural form — all truth is one as God is one. In this meaning of the word, God is truth, because in His infinity He embraces within Himself all that is true; therefore He is all of truth — He is truth itself.

121. The infinite God is unchangeable (114), therefore truth must be unchangeable as well as eternal, and consequently right is equally unchangeable. There can no more be two kinds of truth than there can be two kinds of straight lines; truth is its own unmixed self alone, for that is not truth which is one part truth and the other part something

else; neither can that be truth which is not the same to-day that it was yesterday, nor the same that it will be to-morrow; and the same is true of right. This unchangeableness of truth means that what is right at one time for one person is right at all other times for all other persons, and conversely, what is wrong at one time for one person is wrong at all other times for all other persons.¹

The idea of right must not be confounded with the idea of wisdom. It is never either right or wise to do wrong, but it is often wise for one person to refrain from doing what is both right and wise for another to do.

More than two hundred years ago Cudworth said, "Truth is the most unbending and uncompliant, the most necessary, firm, immutable, and adamant thing in the world;" and his words are as correct to-day as when they were written. Absolute truth exists, and it is an entity in itself, whether or not it is recognized by any human being, and whatever may be the opinion of any one man or of all men concerning it; and no one will benefit either himself or another by doing wrong, nor can he make the slightest

¹ The word "right" is here used in its strictly moral signification, but not with any reference to questions of ability to do, expediency, propriety, convenience, or policy.

progress toward perfection by doing those things which vary from truth.¹ If men would recognize this and accept it, and make inflexible truth the rule of their daily living, many of the difficulties between them would disappear.

122. Truth pervades the universe, and its unchangeableness is one of the peculiarities that make it so wonderfully simple. The axiom illustrates this, for the axiom is a statement of fundamental, universal, unchangeable truth expressed in the simplest form; it also illustrates the ability of man to perceive truth which he can neither explain nor define; so, also, truth is of a strictly fundamental character, eluding definition and known through perception or cognition alone.

The commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," is another example of this unchangeableness. It relates to one certain and specific act, and it is without modification or exception; therefore change of circumstances or of conditions does not affect it. It is true or it is not true; if it is true, it is always true for all men under all circumstances; and if it is true to-day it was true yesterday, and will be true to-morrow and forever; and this applies to each item of the Decalogue.

¹ See 41, and its footnote.

123. There is not any such thing as relative truth except as an expression of truth relates to some special object or act; but a change in that object or act does not change the truth nor in any way affect it. There is never any "relative truth," if by that term is meant a truth which is changed by change in the objects or acts to which it has been applied.

One may say with exact accuracy and truth, "It is now five o'clock," but before the final word can be heard it has become an instant later; the declaration is not correct for the later moment, but its truthfulness has not been changed, because it was made for one particular instant of time, and for that instant it remains forever true.

Similarly, one may say that a tree is fifty feet high, and that continues to be the truth, though the tree may grow much taller, or may be broken off, and although there may be other trees of various heights. The language limits the declaration to the height of one tree, at one particular time, and it does not apply to any other tree nor to any other time; hence the condition of the tree at other times, or the condition of other trees, does not change the truth of the statement.

124. God is truth and God is infinite; then truth is infinite also. God is substantial — the real, the

unchanging substance (114), and whatever is true must also be real, substantial, and enduring, for firm, unchangeable truth is the foundation and the substance of all things and constitutes their reality. Because there is truth there is reality; where either is there is the other also (120), for they are one and the same.

Truth pervades all existence and is the power that holds the universe together and binds it to God; therefore truth is an essential both of God and the universe.

125. God and truth are ever the same. The opinions of men, and men themselves, may change; God and truth never. Whatever one may say or think of God or of truth does not change either. All the erroneous thoughts, conceptions, or beliefs which have been held in the entire history of the race have not caused one least variation of God nor of truth, and all that ever will be held will not affect them. Men have imagined and have believed a thousand errors; truth was untouched. Men have thought God was angry, wrathful, vindictive, changeable; their thought about Him did not make Him like their thought in one iota. Their opinions did not change anything but their own attitude toward Him and the truth. When men think they have found the truth,

they make that the one reliable thing on which they depend; if, later, they discover that what they thought was truth has failed them, they at once reject it as untrue and renew their search for the truth itself; that dependableness which results from unalterable permanency is always the final test. Truth is the unchangeable criterion by which opinions or conduct must be tried either here or hereafter; there is no other criterion, and this remains forever, for God is the absolute, exact, eternal truth.

Truth is the one basis of morality, and the sooner man accepts this proposition as a practical working basis, acquaints himself with the truth and abides by it, the better for him in every way. He need make no difficult problem of it; he has only to know that truth is unchangeable, and then, in all cases, to think and act in accord with that knowledge, having no other wish but to do right — that is all. Adherence to truth has constituted the real greatness of men in every age of the world and in every station of life.

126. In the statement, "God is truth," is the answer to Pilate's question, but man finds this answer only as he comes to know what God is. It may be said that knowledge of God is unattainable; but from earliest infancy until now, from the most

ignorant to the most enlightened, mankind has always known something about God (57); to-day more is known about Him than ever before, that knowledge is progressing with constantly increasing rapidity, and at some point in the future the practical solution of this most essential of all man's problems shall finally be reached.

God is truth and the one first cause. Every one of his expressions must be true because it is an expression of Himself, and since the cause exists in its effects, whatever He causes must be an item of truth itself. Therefore the word of God is not only an expression of truth but it is truth itself. Then Jesus gave a correct definition, and also a complete answer to Pilate's question, when he said to the Father, "Thy word is truth." ¹

¹ John xvii. 17.

XVI

EXISTENCE

127. It is a fundamental proposition that God is (56), but this is only another form of declaring that God exists, because to be is to exist, and, in their deeper meaning, each of these expressions is an equivalent of the other; then existence is actual being at a certain moment; a state of life actually manifest now without reference to any other time; while continued existence is actual being at each succeeding moment.

Existence has been called an invisible substance in nature, "a something which is"; in His infinity God is the essential of all that exists, and therefore He is existence itself; consequently the stream of His existence is continuous and has no limit (84).

Care must be taken not to be so far misled by the poverty of language as to confound mere inanimate things with the essential of existence. We may say that an inanimate object, as a stone, exists, but it does not appear to possess that inner something

which constitutes life and which is the reality of existence.¹

128. We need look for existence only in the substance of God Himself and in whatever is derived directly from Him; and because God could not be without existence, then existence must be both co-existent and coterminous with Him; therefore it never had a beginning nor can it ever have an end any more than can the infinite God (84). God's infinite existence is that which enables us to perceive Him as an entity or reality, and it is one with substance just as substance is the very spirit of God (113).²

¹ The word "existence" is from *existere, ex*, meaning out from, or out of, and *sistere*, to place or set; thus it means to place out, to set forth, or to stand forth; or as a noun, that which is set forth or that stands out separate or by itself. By derivation, existence is closely related to substance (108).

² "The total possibility of existence is so vast that no simple formula, nor indeed any form of words, however complex or complete, is able to sum it up and express its essence to the exclusion of all other modes of expression." — SIR OLIVER LODGE, in *Life and Matter*, p. 74.

"Finally, ultimately, in the last analysis, the mode of God's existence is inscrutable (impenetrable, undiscoverable — cannot be searched out). No man is competent to offer an exhaustive account of the manner in which God exists. As the Scottish poet has said, 'I know not my own being, how can I know Thine?'" — DR. G. A. GORDON.

129. Man recognizes existence as a fundamental element of himself, that enduring substance which is his essential constituent, and without which he would not be (110). Indeed, existence is the reality of man as it is the reality of God. In this, as in spirit (109), there is an intimate relationship of God to man and of man to God which is beyond the power of words to express, and yet this relationship is more or less definitely perceived by every one who has turned his thought toward God and introspectively upon himself. Because of this consciousness of our own immaterial existence we become aware of it in others and also in the infinite being whom we call God. Even the child, without being consciously aware of that existence, knows something about it and acts upon that knowledge.

130. Existence finds its natural and unavoidable expression in the simple and oft-repeated words, "I am." Because of their frequent use, man forgets much of their tremendous significance, and fails to recognize that they go down into the very origin and essential of his being, tell him what he is, and emphatically declare to the world the great fact of his existence. In the simplest possible form for expressing the thought, the child says, "I am going," unconsciously meaning, "the I-am of me is going"; and

this expression brings out clearly the relationship of the declaration, "I am," to existence. The "I-am" is existence; and this expression is a declaration of that fact by every one who uses it, just as every motion made by a man is a silent expression of power.

131. According to the story in the Hebrew scriptures, God himself made use of this expression to explain to man the mystery and character of His own being.¹) For ages the whole human race had been asking, "Who and what is God?" The affairs of the Israelites had come into a critical state, the deliverance from the thralldom of Egypt was to be undertaken, and Moses hesitated to accept the leadership of his brethren. In this crisis he asked God the old question, though he stated it in a concrete and national form:—

"Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, 'The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you'; and they shall say unto me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say unto them?"

This question, in the fulness of its meaning, touches all the underlying questions about God. A name defines and describes as well as designates, and ever since Newton gave the name "gravitation" to the force that causes the apple to fall, men think

¹ Exodus iii. 1-17.

they know what it is, although in naming it he did not in the least explain it. Especially among primitive peoples the name is accepted as more or less descriptive of the real or supposed character or essential of that to which it is applied. This peculiarity attaches to all Hebrew names, but it is more pronounced in the earlier days of their history. In the five books of Moses this is prominent, and especially so in Genesis. Every name had its meaning, descriptive of the person or of some characteristic or incident connected with him.

In conformity to this idea, Moses asks for his people, and, unconsciously, not for them alone but for the whole race and for all time, "What is His name?" In the designation, "The God of our fathers," they already had at least a partial answer to the question, yet Moses is now asking, if not for a description, at least for some suggestion as to the character or essential of Him, which shall be set forth in His name. The question is nearly equivalent to the universal inquiry, "What is God?" In response came that great answer which more clearly defines and describes God than any other expression in the Old Testament — perhaps more fully and clearly than any single phrase ever uttered: —

132. "And God said unto Moses, 'I AM THAT I

AM'; and He said, 'Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, "I AM hath sent me unto you."'"¹

The designation is, "*I am that I am.*" The second pronoun is not necessary to the correct and complete translation, and leaving it out does not change the meaning, but strangely intensifies it. Then the expression becomes, "*I am that am.*"

Another form of the verb may be used: "*I am that is*"; the verb "is" or "be" signifies to exist, and that word may be used here; then the expression becomes, "I am that exists." If we change the verb to the noun, the expression becomes, "I am existence." These forms are all included in the original expression without any violation or warping of its meaning. Then the direct answer to Moses' question is this: God is existence itself.

Then follows the message which God directed Moses to deliver to the Israelites: "Say unto the children of Israel, 'I AM hath sent you.'" In this sentence "I am" becomes a noun and the nominative of the verb hath sent; "I am" is a declaration of existence, therefore it might properly read:

¹ Exodus iii. 14.

The Revised Version has the following rendering in the margin instead of "I am that I am," viz.: "I am because I am," or, "I am who am," or, "I will be that I will be." Instead of the last "I am" the Revised Version has in the margin, "I will be."

“Say unto the children of Israel, ‘Existence hath sent me unto you.’” This Existence, or “I Am,” is the one, infinite, self-existent Being (87) who is existence itself (127). “I Am” is not a name, for He is nameless; no name can encompass Him; but that which is beyond name or description finds its simplest and most tremendous expression in these two words, common in one form or another in every language that has ever been spoken, and used by every one who has ever lived — “I am.”

133. Thus the old declaration which once was such a mystery puts on a clear meaning, full of glorious, scientific truth, radiating the very light of God Himself. By means of this declaration, man’s understanding takes hold of the very essential of God, and through that essential expresses his own relation to God and the relation of God to himself — a relationship of the closest and most intimate character and which touches the deepest perceptions of truth.

Great as this proposition is, and seemingly greater because of its simplicity, it comes to man through the language of his every-day life. Every one, even the child, affirms his lineage and unconsciously declares his relationship and his similarity to God, when he says of himself, “I am.” If he but has the wisdom to discern the meaning in these words which

are on his lips every day, man may see the deepest truth of himself and his existence — that existence which is a spark of the infinite existence, the omnipresence itself; and if he will only listen to that voice without sound which reverberates throughout the whole universe and whispers in every consciousness, he will hear the “I-am” speak to him as He spake to Moses; for God is no respecter of persons. To use the homely but significant phrase of another, “God has no pets.” He speaks to every one of His children, and each may hear as clearly and repeat His words with as much confidence as did Moses when he came down from the mountain.

“I am” is only a faint expression by man of the infinite first cause shining in him and through him, its consequence. Were it not for the fact that the cause exists in its effect, man could never be able to say, “I am,” for he would not be — would not exist. However much he may think that he denies Him, or however much he may deny the images, whether mental or material, that others may have set up, no man can live and wholly deny God.

XVII

LIFE

134. A definition of life has not yet been made that is satisfactory even to those who have attempted it. No definition is large enough to include the whole nor minute enough to set forth its particulars, nor have terms yet been found which correctly describe it. To find life we must look beneath the surface, into that inner place where the eye does not see nor the ear hear, and must discover that which the painter can never portray and which words can never describe — that which is present in every action, is everywhere in constant activity, and animates the entire universe. These things defy definition and baffle all attempts at description.

135. The scientist examines solids and liquids, impalpable gases, and most obdurate minerals; he explores the distant suns of other systems than ours, and tells us of what they are composed; he theorizes learnedly of ions, and of the invisible ether; he has something definite to say of all these,

and of innumerable other wonderful things, but confesses his ignorance of life, which is the most universal of all; and, though he attempts to produce it by the combination of chemical simples, yet he leaves the discussion of it chiefly to the theologian and the student of religion. Though man has a more definite consciousness of it than he has of a thousand other things which are well known, yet at the end of all investigations he can only say that the nature of life is unknown and that he can neither describe nor define it. Life is a mystery to the most intelligent, and through his own experience, the child knows as much about it as the philosopher or the man of science.

136. Because life cannot be numbered among those things that have been defined, described, and tabulated, it remains almost entirely a subject of cognition or consciousness alone. In strange contrast to this apparent impossibility of definition and description is its universal cognition by all human beings and even by the whole animal world. The child, as well as the man, through this cognition, knows something of it, and the least things that live perceive it clearly and know its peculiar differences from those other things which do not seem to have life. This universal perception is proof as positive

as that of the axiom (26) that, even in the absence of definition, description, or perception by the senses, life is a definite entity, with its own qualities and characteristics as real and enduring as any known to man.¹

137. Beyond question every man perceives life; why, then, have we no words for it? We can only say "it is life," and there we halt. We are fully aware of its universality, and yet we are lost in contemplation of it, dumb before its simplicity and majesty, its beauty and its glory, its variety and apparent complexity. It is one of those sublimely simple things which we cannot define, but which, because it is so universally recognized, needs neither definition nor description. Like all really great things, life is magnificently simple, and yet, in its expression, it varies so wonderfully that neither in the same species nor in the same individual does it appear exactly the same on two occasions.

138. Perhaps the most successful attempt at definition is Webster's. In trying to define something else

¹ "Whatever life is or is not, it is certainly this: it is a guiding and controlling entity which reacts upon our world according to laws so partially known that we have to say that they are practically unknown, and therefore appear in some respects mysterious." — SIR OLIVER LODGE in *Life and Matter*, p. 117.

he says, "Spirit is life, or living existence," a combination of words that sends a gleam of comprehension a little farther into the darkness, though really bringing one only a little clearer understanding of either spirit or life than he already has in the recognition of his own spirit and his own life; but the association of the words in the definition forces upon his attention the great truth that in God life and spirit are indeed one. Then, too, the words compel acquiescence in the truth that existence is also the substance of God (128), hence His life, or His spirit, is indeed His living substance — His living existence, and therefore in Him the four — life, spirit, existence, and substance — are one. Thus we advance a little in knowledge of each of these essentials, and, consequently, a step farther in our understanding of God and of life. Though it is all intangible, invisible, and non-materialistic, yet there is nothing more real or more substantial, and nothing of which man is more completely aware than he is of life.

139. Every cognition that man has ever had indicates a most intimate relationship between life and existence, as illustrated by the fact that whenever any created thing apparently ceases to live, then, to man, it ceases to exist. But existence is also the

substance of God (138), therefore, in this meaning of the words, life, existence, and substance are identical, and the course of reasoning which applies to one applies to the other also (127).

140. God is, and every perception that man has of Him reveals Him, not as inert, but as active. As first cause (54) He acts (91); and all action, in that meaning of the word which distinguishes it from mere motion is the result of life and is an expression or manifestation of life.¹ Mere motion is the result of some antecedent motion which has passed over into a new form (36). Man recognizes this difference in his own movements and in all the movements about him. That lives and has life which, without being acted upon by anything else, takes the initiative, acts from within itself and of its own volition or choice, and sets into motion either itself, or external objects, or both.² God does this, therefore He lives and is life; and, being infinite, the life of Him must be infinite also; hence that life is without beginning and without end.

141. Since God is life, the infinite God and the infinite life are one; then life is not merely a species

¹ See Appendix C.

² Kant says that life means the capacity to act or to change according to an internal principle.

of energy, nor is it a phenomenon of matter; instead, it is the antecedent of energy and it is incomparably superior to all phenomena. This statement is contrary to certain schemes of philosophy, but, nevertheless, it must be correct because God, who is life, is the first cause or source and originator of all. Then God's life is the one life and the life of all life; He is the living God, the living life, the life of all that lives.

XVIII

MIND

142. Whenever a manifestation of cause and effect is examined, we find that it appears to act in accord with certain fixed and unchangeable laws. In obedience to gravitation, the unsupported stone falls just the same, whether harmlessly on the ground or upon the head of a man; yet, throughout the great whole there is found an adaptation of each part to other parts, circumstances to conditions, construction to purposes, means to ends, so wonderful that it compels the conclusion that infinite perception and consciousness must include the whole universe. That causation and inflexible law are in exact harmony is supreme evidence of the intelligence that directed this adaptation; and if we keep before us the principles which govern the relations of cause and effect, we are forced to conclude that in establishing this harmony there must have been a complete and perfect perception and understanding of the whole in order to adjust the parts to each other and the law to the parts so

as to produce this beautiful order. The inflexibility of law, when considered in connection with this wonderful adjustment, constitutes unquestionable evidence of the action of infinite perception directed by infinite wisdom, because either lawless variation or the conflicting inflexibility of undirected law would unavoidably produce destructive confusion; but order is found everywhere, and because this order is understandable, the inference is unavoidable that it is the result of intelligence; and nothing less than infinite intelligence can account for this marvellous adjustment of means to ends.

143. Without the presence of intelligence, acting in connection with first cause, it is impossible that this result could have been attained. One need but to glance at the wonders scattered so lavishly everywhere to find confirmation of this proposition. Who can comprehend or explain the intelligence shown in the structure, action, and life even of a blade of grass which we thoughtlessly crush beneath our feet? Then how much less of a world or of a universe! It required untold years to enable man to understand the mechanism of our own little solar system, — only one of the lesser wonders of the universe, — and all the discoveries about it have been made by mind and are expressed in the terms of mind. If there was a

plan, infinite intelligence must have made it, and then must have directed its execution; but it is of small importance whether or not there was a plan, as we human beings recognize plans, since there is not any way of understanding and explaining the conditions of the universe except by means of intelligence.

If the thoughts about creation are limited to questions relating solely to cause and effect, even then the great first cause must have been actuated from the very beginning by an intelligence immensely beyond man's farthest imagination. A measureless system, for system it is, with all its component parts, some mathematically infinitesimal and others so large as to be immeasurable by man, each with its simple or complicated part to perform, and all moving in such wonderful harmony, cannot have had either origin, development, or continuous existence except in accordance with an intelligence so much more extensive than itself that it was able to include the whole of infinity in one comprehensive glance.

144. It is a noteworthy fact in the history of religion and philosophy that every reasoner, whatever the degree of his understanding, has ascribed the quality of intelligence to the originator of created things. In the old Hebrew philosophy wisdom is represented as having fashioned the universe; and,

in their religion, the Lord God of the Israelites was invested with intelligence so far above human comprehension that man was not allowed to question His decrees. The most uncivilized peoples, as well as those of Babylon, Egypt, Greece and Rome, believed that their gods knew what they were doing and that they acted in accord with intelligence based upon that knowledge. In all times it has been the same, and the more intelligent the individual or the people, the greater was their estimate of the intelligence of their gods and the more did they venerate and adore them. Plato and Aristotle, with all their followers and imitators, recognized this condition either directly or indirectly. Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Kant, and Hegel, all more or less positively express the idea that the Originator possessed intelligence beyond our comprehension; and very few of all the great thinkers of ancient or of modern times have attempted to discredit this idea.

145. The strength of this proposition is revealed by a consideration of its negative. To deprive the Creator of intelligence would be to destroy every idea of God which man has ever had. If we could imagine Him divested of intelligence, He would seem to us no god at all. Even the ignorant barbarian, who worships an image of senseless wood or stone,

sees in that idol the representation of a being whom he believes to be possessed of an intelligence far superior to his own. If this belief were destroyed his worship would cease. Intelligence has always been recognized by every race or tribe of men as an essential requisite of every god which man has ever set up. In an attempt to illustrate the minute inclusiveness of God's knowledge, the ancient Veda declared that He counted the winking of men's eyes.

146. God, the creator, being infinite, His intelligence must also be infinite, because it must be as universal and as all-inclusive as He is. According to the definition of infinity (78), God's infinite intelligence necessarily includes the whole of knowing. If there is anything He does not know, then He is not infinite in intelligence; if there is any intelligence, perception, or knowing that is not His, then, again, His intelligence fails to be infinite; therefore He must possess the whole of intelligence and must perceive and know all that is from the least to the greatest. Not the slightest thing can happen to the least living thing that He is not fully aware of — not even to the electron, which is so minute that there are a thousand of them in a single atom. This must include the knowing of everything that now is in all the vastness of the entire universe, and all that has been

since what is called "the first inception of things"; and it must also embrace the knowing of all that ever is to be in that continuation of existence which is without end.

This intelligence must also include self-consciousness, or the knowing of Himself, who is at once the sum and cause of all. Were it otherwise, His intelligence would be neither universal nor infinite, because not to know Himself, though He might know all else, would be not to know all. Infinite knowing cannot be less than this; therefore God's infinite intelligence is the all of knowing; hence it follows that God is omniscient.¹

147. Man recognizes a something connected with himself which he has named intelligence, and he perceives the relation that this bears to another something within himself which he calls mind. When a man's mind acts, that action is succeeded by a mental condition, and this is the condition of knowing, or intelligence; mind is first and is the cause; intelligence is the product or consequence of the action of mind.

Mind and intelligence are as inseparable as are

¹ The word "omniscient" is from *omnis*, meaning all, and *sciens*, meaning to know; hence the word means infinite in knowing, knowing all; or the all-knowing.

light and color. As color is produced by the action of light, so intelligence is produced by the action of mind, and it bears a relation to mind similar to that which color bears to light. Without light there would not be any color, and without mind there could not be any intelligence. There could not be motion without something to move or to be moved, and intelligence does not exist of itself any more than motion does. Intelligence depends for its existence upon something other than itself, and that something is mind.

148. God is the eternal first cause, originator, and creator (52-54); He is underived and self-existent (87); therefore in all His essentials (90) He must be primary. Then whatever God is cannot be the result of the action of anything else, but, like Himself, must be underived, self-existent, and primary. God is mind, and intelligence is the result of mind action, therefore intelligence is neither primary nor self-existent; consequently, though He is intelligent to the extent of being omniscient,¹ it is not correct to say that God is intelligence.

149. Every one recognizes that God is intelligent, and that if He were not so He would not be God (145); but without mind and its action He could not

¹ See Appendix D.

be intelligent, therefore mind is one of His essentials; hence God is mind. God is infinite in intelligence, and since intelligence is a product of mind and results solely from mind action, and because the mind that produced infinite intelligence must itself be infinite, then God must be infinite mind.¹

150. God is life (140), and God is mind; then mind and life are one in Him, coexistent and inseparable.² But life is identical with existence, and existence is an essential reality or substance of God (138). Then mind also is substance, so that Descartes was correct when he said, "mind is *substantia cogitans*" — thinking substance.

151. The action of the infinite mind in perceiving, in cognizing, or in being conscious of all that is, results in perfect knowledge, perfect wisdom, and perfect understanding; therefore knowledge, wisdom, and understanding are results of the action of mind, derive their origin from mind, and, like intelligence, are secondary to it; therefore, although they

¹ "The possibility of our arriving, as individuals, at a universal truth, presupposes a universal mind in which that truth inheres." — BRIERLY in *The Eternal Religion*, p. 238.

² "It is an axiom of biological science that there can be no life without mind. In fact, there is no distinction between life and mind that is not, in the last analysis, merely verbal." — THOMAS J. HUDSON in *The Law of Mental Medicine*, p. 222.

are qualities which are inseparable from Him, they are not essentials of God, and while it is correct to say that God is perfect in knowledge and in wisdom, it would not be correct to say that He is knowledge, nor that He is either understanding or wisdom.

XIX

PRINCIPLE

152. Men recognize what they call rules, and these may be described as forms of words setting forth the way in which certain things should be done, prescribing the method for accomplishing certain results, or formulas for the regulation of conduct. They may be made by any person or group of persons having or claiming authority; and they may be purely arbitrary, or they may depend upon their reasonableness, or upon some condition, law, or principle for their validity.

153. Laws occupy a higher position than rules and are more important. One class of laws is man-made for the guidance and control of human action and conduct; these laws are often indefinite, variable, conflicting, full of exceptions, and are, in fact, only a higher or better class of rules. Another class, called laws of nature, sets forth the way in which natural objects act, and these depend for their usefulness upon the accuracy of their conformity to the actions

of those objects to which they relate. The word "law" suggests the idea of control, but these "natural laws" do not control anything; they are only descriptive of the uniform course of those natural objects which are themselves controlled by principles. Wherever these laws of nature are fully understood, it is found that under any given conditions they never vary and never have any exceptions. They derive this quality of invariability from the fact that they are in exact accord with what are called natural principles, thus showing that the laws of nature conform to principles; and it is a significant fact that experience teaches that those man-made laws are best which are most nearly in accord with the unchangeable principles of morality.

154. Man recognizes that law prevails throughout all nature, and with every enlargement of his observation he perceives more clearly that all things move, act, and exist in compliance with controlling principles. Sometimes the word "principles" is used as an equivalent for the word "laws" in its larger and more inclusive meaning; and this is correct, for, as action is an expression of life (140) and power (91), and as intelligence is a manifestation of mind (147), so law, in its integrity and probity, is an expression or outcome of principles; and as all action in nature is

only a manifestation of the power of God, so principles are an outgrowth, effect, or emanation from one infinite principle.

155. The word "principle" has in itself a much wider, deeper, and more primary signification than has either the word "rules," "laws," or "principles." As in man there is a faculty called memory which does not admit of the plural form and from which proceed memories, so there is one infinite principle which has no plural and from which all principles proceed. From principles are derived laws, and from laws come rules, all claiming a common origin or derivation from principle itself; principle is behind them all, sustains and supports them all, gives them their power, validity, and even their existence. Each of these principles must be in entire harmony with principle, one with it, and a constituent of it, so that the infinite principle itself is one, as are all the essentials of God.

156. Principle is a guiding and directing element, regulating all objects and all actions, and partaking of the nature of a controlling cause. Since cause is actuated by intelligence (143), it must move in accord with principle, because it is principle that keeps the action of all things in their harmonious relations to each other. Thus, principle is inseparable from

cause, standing at the foundation of things, and, in fact, determining and regulating all things.

This is illustrated wherever the word is used, as the principle of virtue, the principle of mathematics, the principle of gravitation, meaning that by which they are determined or regulated. It is the basic element which makes virtue, or mathematics, or gravitation, what it is. Principle and cause are so intimately associated that cause acting without principle would result in such destructive confusion that not anything could begin, or having made an attempt at beginning, could continue; and, on the other hand, principle without cause would not act. Each is necessary to the other, and in their ultimate essentials the two are one. Then, since God is first cause, it follows that God is principle.

157. In ordinary affairs, and in all purely external conditions, especially wherever questions of policy, desirability, or advisability, are prominent, there is so much doubt and uncertainty that men find exceptions to every rule. So often have these exceptions been spoken of as either right or wrong (even though they contain no element of morality) that men have learned to expect exceptions to every law as well as to every rule, and have come to believe that even principles may sometimes have their

exceptions and variations. They even attempt to impose their exceptions upon principle itself. This gives opportunity for errors to enter into their reasoning, and the result is erroneous conclusions and consequent erroneous, and sometimes vicious, action.

Man has taken his first lesson in the inflexibility of principle by observing its course and its results in mechanics and in the exact sciences — the only places where its rigorous sway has been clearly perceived and consistently accepted and followed. There are many other similar lessons yet to be learned.

158. It has been discovered that all things in nature are controlled by principles, and that there is no variability nor exception connected with their actions. Within the domain of the exact sciences this is seen most clearly, hence the conclusion is legitimate that principles never vary, are without exception, and that, whenever they seem to vary, that variation is the result of the action of principles not yet discovered or of those not yet understood. Since this is true of principles, it must also be true of the infinite principle from which all principles are derived, for the reason that every effect partakes of the nature of its cause.

An axiom is a statement of a principle, and it never

has an exception nor a variation. Two straight lines never enclose a space, and one is always one, regardless of the mistakes we make in our reckoning. It is because of our failure to attach immutability to principle that humanity makes mistakes in its reasoning, its conclusions, and its morals. Man may make exceptions, or he may vary his course in order to accomplish a desired result, or to accommodate himself to apparent circumstances; principle, never. Principle is as large as the race, as wide as the universe, as infinite as God is, for God is principle (156); He is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever; anything less than this would be a violation of principle and thus its destruction.¹

159. Perfection of action is seen wherever principle is observed, whether in materiality, mind, or morals. Because principle controls gravitation, it always acts in precisely the same way throughout the entire universe, whether on this earth or the farthest orb; whether holding a satellite or a sun in its place, or swinging them through their courses;

¹ So deeply is the consciousness of the inflexibility of principle implanted in the understanding, that in the usual forms of expression men speak of the exception to the rule, but of the violation of principle. The phrase, "the exception to the principle," is very rarely heard.

whether drawing a stone to the ground or forcing the smoke to rise. It is the same with light. The spectroscope has revealed the fact that the inconceivably rapid vibrations of light, under the guidance and control of principle, always and everywhere move with the same unvarying and absolute exactness, whether piercing the shades of night, shining in the slenderest, faintest line of the spectrum, or enveloping a sun in the effulgence of its glory.

Although manifesting an inconceivable variety of expression, the same immutability, inflexibility, completeness, and perfection attend everything controlled by principle; thus, from the very beginning of beginningless existence, through all its endless duration and throughout the illimitable universe, God is Himself forever the same.

160. It often seems necessary to violate a principle, or, in other words, to do what one knows is wrong. This apparent necessity is never caused by the requirements of principle or right, but always by ignorance of some of the attendant circumstances, or by failure to perceive different methods of action on the part of him to whom such violation seems either necessary or advisable. We often see this illustrated in the actions of others who have less knowledge than ourselves of the conditions by which they

are surrounded. There is always some better way than by the violation of principle, for in the face of all allurements and temptations — in the face even of possible disaster — strict adherence to principle and exact right will always bring the best results, because there are not any exceptions to the principle that right always produces right and that wrong always produces more of its own kind (41). In the enforcement of man-made laws, ignorance of those laws does not relieve one of a penalty; neither does ignorance of surrounding conditions, nor even of principle itself, save one from the results which inevitably follow a violation of principle and right. May not Emerson have had this in mind when he wrote, "Nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principle"?

161. Principle controls and determines what is true and right (156), therefore truth and principle are inseparable; what we call truth, if it is without principle, is not truth, nor is it even true, and that which is not true cannot be principle. An expression of principle is an expression of absolute truth, for principle is the very truth itself; then truth and principle are one; but God is truth (120). Then God is principle, and as God is infinite, principle is infinite also; and as, in His infinity, God is omnipresent,

principle is also present everywhere; thus proving in another way that God and principle are one (156).

Truth never changes (121), and this confirms the proposition that changelessness is a quality of principle (158). If at any time principle varied from its course, even in one particular, that variation would destroy the harmony of its action. But principle is perfectly harmonious with itself, therefore it never varies, but moves forever on in its immutable course, eternally the same; and whatever is not the same to-day that it was yesterday and that it will be to-morrow is not principle, nor does it present the appearance of principle (159). This entire absence of exceptions or variations proves the absolute perfection of principle.

XX

GOOD

162. Principle seems necessarily to be cold, harsh, unyielding, and even tyrannical in its action; and there is no possible escape from its infinite, unvarying, unrelenting power, which, with inflexible changelessness (158), goes straight on forever in a steady, unwavering course. This is the manner in which principle acts; and God is principle (156).

This immutability of God and principle was fully recognized by those men who gave form to the earlier theological ideas of the Reformation. The violation of principle seemed to them to leave no alternative but punishment. They were hard, unyielding, and unrelenting because they had decided that truth (122) and right (121) and principle and duty were equally so; and from their point of view they were correct. Rigorously faithful to their conclusions, they were as inflexible and as unforgiving as were their ideals. They were persecuted, and it is easy to see why they persecuted those whom they

thought were in the wrong. It was a rigorous and exacting age. Because of their fidelity to their view of the stern and unbending justice of God, they had no mercy and spared neither the evil nor the weak — not even themselves, nor those whom they loved better than themselves. Those old heroes saw the absolute rightness of principle with such terrible distinctness, and heard so loud and so clear the call of what they thought was duty, and were so intent on the truth which they did see, that they had neither sight nor hearing for anything else; yet, through their seeming heartlessness shines the grandeur of their sincere, stern, and unflinching loyalty to their conclusions as to right and principle. Their eyes were blind to the beauty and the glory which were so near, and all their errors were caused by seeing one part of the vision to the entire exclusion of the other.

163. As those old creed-makers believed, principle always moves in unvarying, unaccommodating straight lines (159); but, even because of these characteristics, it is also true that one part of principle cannot in the slightest conflict with any other part, and all must be in perfect harmony throughout; nor can principle conflict in the slightest with any of the results of its own action, hence between principle and its results there must also be perfect harmony.

A paraphrase of the old axiom applies here: Things which are harmonious with the same thing are harmonious with each other; therefore each result of the action of principle must harmonize with every other result of its action. This means the perfection of harmony throughout principle and all that it produces, even throughout the entire universe; and if this statement were not correct in every particular principle would not be principle. It was these harmonious relations, and the vitally important conclusions which they necessitate, that those heroes of old failed to perceive, just as do many in these days.

164. Harmony is a product of the action of principle, and therefore is not self-existent nor primal; neither is it an entity or thing; it is only a relationship existing between two or more things, disappearing if either of them disappears. Therefore we cannot say that God is harmony, because whatever is of Him must be primal and self-existent in its nature.¹

165. Principle, acting, produces harmony, and the result of harmonious conditions is peace; therefore harmony and peace are necessarily inseparable. God is principle, and it follows as a necessity that He is entirely harmonious with Himself and with all

¹ See Appendix D.

that He produces (163); that all His actions are in entirely harmonious relations to each other and to all that is from Him, and this harmony of God Himself results in that perfection of peace in which there cannot be anything to disturb or to make afraid; and this is "the peace of God which passeth understanding."

In the contemplation of this universal, all-pervading peace, we may well wonder that we perceive so little of it when always we are in the midst of its fathomless ocean which has neither surface nor shore, and which is as infinite as God is. Like those sailors on the broad Amazon who were perishing for water, we need only to recognize the truth regarding our environment to be abundantly supplied and satisfied. We must remember, however, that this peace is neither the peace of stagnation, of resignation, nor of despair, but it is the peace of continuous, harmonious, and hopeful life and activity. There is no other peace like God's peace, and there is no other activity like His ceaseless, effortless action (96).

166. Whenever the relations of an object to a person are harmonious, perception of the harmony, whether one is conscious of it or not, produces awareness of something which he calls goodness and which appears to him to be a quality that belongs

to the object and to emanate from it. He explains these relations satisfactorily enough for himself by saying that the object is good; that is, the word "good," when applied to an object or person, indicates that the relations existing between the speaker and the person or object spoken of are harmonious.

But the quality of goodness has another and a far higher origin than any question of relationship. Whatever may be man's relation to others, so long as he conforms his own thoughts and actions to principle and truth, he will manifest positive qualities and conditions that will be found to be absolutely good if tried by the unwavering standard of right (121); and these will be wholly independent of the recognition of others and also of any inharmonious attitude or relation of others toward him; furthermore, they will be in perfect harmony with all the qualities derived from truth and right which others manifest toward him; and this is perfect goodness.

167. In ordinary usage the words "good" and "goodness" indicate a quality which may be increased or diminished. This arises from the fact that usually objects are called good which do not seem to be wholly good, but which include both good and the appearance of bad. Thus, we speak of one man as good, not meaning that he is without faults, but

knowing that he would be a better man if that which appears to be not good were separated from him; in the same way we speak of another man as better, because the proportion of good qualities manifested by him is greater than by the former; and, for a similar reason, we speak of a third as the best of the three. In each man there is positive and unconditioned good, but it is in combination with appearances which we recognize as not good. This necessitates the conclusion that we might separate the good from the appearance of badness so that they would stand each distinctly apart from the other, on the one hand bad only, and on the other good which is wholly good — absolute goodness alone, without any possibility of its being either less or more good.

168. It has been declared that God is infinite and all, and it has been shown that all that is real is of Him, exists in Him and He in it (110, 114). As first cause He exists in and through all that He has caused; as substance, or spirit, He is that which constitutes all realities (113); as the infinite life, He lives in all that lives (141); as principle, He is that which creates and directs all (156). All the results of God's action as principle must be in perfect harmony with Himself and also must be in harmony with each other, thus producing perfect harmony

throughout the whole (163). This harmonious relationship exists between God and all His manifestations or expressions, and man's recognition of absolute goodness depends upon his recognition of this harmonious relationship. The origin of goodness relates back to the origin of all, and this origin is first cause or God (45), who is thus shown to be absolutely good. God is omnipresent, and, though His goodness may have innumerable varieties of expression, it is a manifestation of Himself, and must be omnipresent also. Then every relationship of God to man, and every relationship of man to God, is good.¹ The mind that has once perceived comparative goodness should not stop until it has some conception of the absolute good, for good is not indeed good unless it is absolutely good; and every advance in the perception of absolute good shows an equal advance in the perception of the harmony existing between man and his Creator.

169. Principle is changeless (158); right is always right, wrong is always wrong (121); neither the place, the circumstance, nor the actor can change the character of the act. It is constantly asserted and believed

¹ This perfectly harmonious condition was recognized by the writer of the first chapter of Genesis when he declared that the Creator saw that all that He had made was very good. — Gen. i. 31.

that God is good, yet thousands who make that assertion sometimes attribute to Him acts which any human legal tribunal would pronounce infamous. The poet Whittier recognized and stated this truth clearly and with startling force when he wrote:—

“ Nothing can be good in Him
Which evil is in me.”

If it is good in Him, it is good in me; if it is evil in me, it is evil in Him. Men forget to apply the same inflexible standard of right to the statements concerning God that they apply to their brother man and to every circumstance and condition connected with him. When they do thus apply this standard of right, they will establish a better criterion for themselves and also aid in establishing one for every other human being.

God is principle, and the action of principle cannot result in anything less than absolutely perfect harmony (163) and perfect goodness (168); therefore He must be perfect in Himself and in all His actions; hence His relations to us must be perfectly harmonious and absolutely good. By this principle we must decide the truth or falsity of whatever is said of Him; **GOD IS ABSOLUTELY GOOD!**

170. That God is good, in the meaning here given to the declaration, is a modern idea. Certainly the

gods of Assyria, Babylonia, Egypt, Greece, and Rome were not good; nor were any of the gods of the more ancient and uncivilized peoples; neither can we say that, tried by this standard, the Lord God, as pictured in some of the narratives of the Old Testament, was absolutely good, because at times he was changeable, angry, jealous, and cruel — qualities which we do not call good in our neighbors, however much we may overlook them in ourselves. Indeed, we need not go so far back, for the mental image of God set up by the earlier creed-makers did not fall far short of the Lord God of the Old Testament; yet, it must not be overlooked that each of these ideals contained much of good, and that they corresponded closely with the highest opinions of the followers of those ideals. As perceptions widen, men's opinions change, and with every advance in the character of their ideas of morality, they attribute less of evil to God. When, from their ideas of Him, all thought of evil has been eliminated, men will have attained a far higher ideal and will have gained the strongest possible incentive to dismiss all error from themselves.

One of the strongest and most hopeful signs of the times is seen in the fact that a criterion of absolute goodness has at last been raised in the world. As this idea gains a place in the minds of men, the per-

ception that God is absolutely good is sure to follow; and in the proportion that they purify their ideas concerning Him, they will strive to purify their lives and to manifest their true and real character which was received by them as a direct gift from "Our Father which is in Heaven" — and what imagination can picture the changes and the blessings that will follow!

Our appreciation of goodness is limited only by our perceptions, enlarging as they enlarge; and our delight in objects which appeal to us as good varies exactly as our recognition of their goodness varies, and this depends upon our understanding of what constitutes goodness. It is the same with our veneration and love for God; the increasing recognition that He is the absolute perfection of goodness itself, the source and fountain of it all, is a direct and powerful agency to lead us upward toward better things.

171. Because God is principle (156); because principle must, in all its characteristics, be perfectly harmonious with itself and with all it produces (163); because, as principle, in God Himself there is only perfect harmony; because, as the first cause and the cause of all, God is the one producer or creator of all (32, 54); and, because the cause exists in its effect and the effect in its cause (41), consequently, in God Himself and in all that He has caused

there must be the quality of perfect and unconditioned goodness.

God is infinite in every particular, therefore not anything that is of Him or from Him can ever be lost or terminated; consequently all good is as eternal as He is and cannot be either lost, destroyed, or terminated in any way.

172. Harmony would not be harmony if it contained the remotest note of discord. Were aught else to be combined with principle, however close the resemblance, the combination would not be principle (160). The same is obviously apparent in each of the essentials of God. What would life be in combination with death? or power in combination with something which claimed to be antagonistic? Although exhibiting in itself an innumerable variety of expressions, or manifestations, each essential is unchangeable and inflexible, and displays in itself entire completeness and absolute perfection. Not only is this true of each essential of God, but it is also true of each quality of Him, as has been conclusively shown of both harmony and goodness. In God is the union of all these, and because He is principle, all are in perfect harmony, and, in all His expressions and manifestations, He is absolutely perfect — yea, in His infinity, God is perfection itself.

XXI

LOVE

173. The most nearly perfect relationship recognized between man and man has been named love, and the reasoning concerning it is the same as that in connection with goodness; in fact, love and goodness are so closely akin that it is difficult to consider them separately.

God is principle (156); the action of principle produces perfect harmony (163) and goodness (168), and these are the foundation and the essential conditions out of which love springs into existence and becomes the highest, best, and most ideal expression of perfect harmony which man has ever observed or experienced. Love is a direct outcome from that great foundation which no man laid (62), and which those rugged logicians of former times (162) failed to recognize in its completeness, and therefore, in their reasoning, they did not give the rightful place to harmony, goodness, and love; consequently their conclusions were as erroneous as their basis was incomplete.

174. These three products of principle — harmony, goodness, and love — so different, and yet so closely related that one cannot exist without the other, lead in all human affairs and constitute the goal toward which all man's efforts are directed. Goodness is a quality which man recognizes in some form or degree in every object or person, whether animate or inanimate, while love is his own attitude toward a person or an object.

175. It is often said that God is love; but He is more than love, for He is the cause, the originator, the producer, and the creator of that goodness which is lovely and lovable and which inspires love. He is also the creator of that intelligence which enables man to perceive and appreciate those good qualities; He is the creator of the ability to love; and, above all, He is the creator of that which loves and of love itself. It is all from Him and from Him alone; the line is direct from God through principle, harmony, and goodness, to love; therefore love is divine.

176. When considered by itself, there does not seem to be any love in principle, yet God is principle, and, through the harmony which results from His action as principle, He is the creator of love. Just as first cause is greater than all its consequences, so in every way the Creator is greater than that which

He has created, as much greater as the infinite is greater than the finite; greater in love and greater in loving. The whole cosmos is only one mighty token of His love! "High as the heavens are above the earth," the Psalmist said; and again, "Far as the east is from the west" — not less incomprehensibly beyond man's farthest imaginings is God's love.

177. In Paul's letter to the Corinthians, written in his divinest strain, are immortal words about love; but Jesus loved more than Paul did, and he comprehended love better, therefore his words mean much more. Those who have studied them are amazed, not only by his words, but by his deeds which interpret and enlarge their meaning beyond measure, and our comprehension must fall far short of the matchless love from which they sprang! Can man, then, who fails to understand the love of Jesus, the son, comprehend the love of God, the Father? As well might he attempt to measure infinite distances with a surveyor's chain.

Jesus tells us to love our enemies, and that in doing so we shall be children of our Father in heaven.¹ What can be the quality, the intensity, the

¹ Here is his statement stripped of its explanatory illustrations: "But I say unto you, Love your enemies. . . . That ye may be

depth of God's love if, even in loving our enemies, we become only as children in loving! Was it not through such loving and by such love that Jesus recognized his own sonship? and he said, "Follow me." Then this must be the path which shall lead every man to the recognition of his own sonship; and when the heart of man is so filled with love that he loves even his enemies, he will realize that God is indeed his Father, as Jesus said, and will joyfully claim his own divine birthright.

As the man long confined in a dungeon may forget that the sun shines, so one who shuts out all the warmth and joy which love for his fellow-man will bring may lose all perception of the divine within himself; but he has only to open his heart and to persist in using his own divine consciousness to become continually aware of this divine love, for it is a vital, living existence within him only waiting to be given recognition.

178. This divine love, infinite as God is infinite, perfect as God is perfect (172), pure as God is pure, itself the very essence of perfection and purity, must be everywhere present, filling and permeating all

the children of your Father who is in heaven; . . . Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." — Matthew v. 43-48, Rev. Ver.

that is; and it must be the quality which colors the whole expression of God's omnipotence and omnipresence.

The infinite God loves each of us with all this exhaustless love which so immeasurably transcends the grandest conception that man ever had in his most exalted moments — loves each with an individual particularity far exceeding in its distinct separateness any special love which a human being can possibly bestow upon another. In the recognition of the infinite fulness and completeness of this love of God there cannot come to any one a sense of lack; and the knowledge that others receive equal love, with all its blessings, will immeasurably increase one's own joy in the Father and gratitude to Him for His loving goodness. This is life indeed, for man only lives in love and as he loves; and this is not only to live but to learn of God.

179. Our idea of principle entirely changes when we recognize that harmony, goodness, and love are products of its action. Although it is principle still, and has neither variation nor exception, yet we now recognize that it is the firm but tender clasp of everlasting and infinite love, and the results of its action, whatever appearances they may present, are always inspired and directed by love. Knowing what it is,

and that we can depend upon it at all times and in all ways, we rejoice in it and are glad that it is ever the same, yesterday, to-day, and forever.

In this knowledge, our view of God becomes the view that Jesus presented — the loving Father who does not compel, but who draws us with the strong cords of His own love; who does not judge nor condemn;¹ who is not to be feared, but who is always to be loved with all one's heart, with all one's soul, with all one's mind, and with all one's strength — not as a duty, but because, knowing Him to be what He is, one cannot help but do this. In proportion as our attitude toward God is changed we ourselves are also changed, and thus, step by step, we shall "put off the old man and put on the new," until, eventually, we shall awake from our dream and find that we are in His likeness; and then we shall be satisfied.

180. By recognition of this truth man is relieved of the old fear of punishment. That belief rested on what is only half the truth of principle (162), and was born of a failure to recognize that the action of principle can never produce discord, but, because of its own inherent qualities, must always result in harmony and love. Harmony never punishes, for

¹ John v. 22.

punishment always brings discord both to the one who receives and to the one who inflicts it; love does not punish, for it forgives and teaches forgiveness even unto seventy times seven, and forgiveness removes every appearance of either the necessity or advisability of punishment.¹

The source or cause of all punishment is in the error solely and not in God, nor is it in principle nor in any of its consequences. Jesus explained this fully in the metaphor in Matthew vii. 17, 18.

181. There is another relationship which love bears, not only to man but to the whole universe: God is power, and power is the ability to act (91); but power without an incentive might remain inactive forever, and the same is true of each of the other essentials of God, because not one of them contains any quality which would move it to act; while love, because of its own nature, cannot do otherwise than choose to act for that which it loves. Therefore love furnishes every essential of God with an incentive for its action; take that away, and those essentials might revert to inactivity; but in God's infinite love

¹ That this is the spirit of the Father is shown by the following: "God sent not His son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." — John iii. 17.

Jesus said of himself: "I came not to judge the world but to save the world." — John xii. 47.

there is motive sufficient for them all. His love is the one impelling, stimulating motive which sets the universe into activity and maintains that action in exact accord with the impulse of divine principle and harmony.

Each of God's essentials, peculiarities, and characteristics contributes the whole of itself to each of the others (190); so love gives the whole of itself to power; hence love is coexistent in power and coextensive with it, so that for all activities it is as though power were itself love, and the result of the action of power is the same as though it were the result of the action of love itself. This gives a new aspect to power, and furnishes a reason for a change in man's idea of it as complete as the change in his idea of principle.

182. As man comes into the full realization of this transcendent truth, he will perceive that love is the controlling element of all life and of all activity, and he will look out upon a new man, a new earth, a new universe, — will be permeated with a new idea of God Himself, — and will become conscious of the fatherhood of God, of his own sonship, and of the brotherhood of man, as living, vital facts.

XXII

GOD IS ONE

183. It has been clearly shown that God is infinite (78), that there is only one infinite (79), and that God is one (80); yet, in the progress of the discussion, each of His essentials appears to be a separate infinity. Every one has a clear cognition of these, each distinctly a manifestation of God, clearly defined, apparently standing apart from the others, and each infinite. To some minds this may seem to indicate that there are several infinities, but if this were correct, it would flatly contradict the broad, basic proposition that there is only one infinite.

184. The difficulties connected with this subject come largely from an unrecognized attempt to apply to God the same kind of thinking and reasoning that we apply to material objects. God is spirit, and spirit, unlike matter, is not subject to measurement of any kind; neither is the union in Him of His constituents, both with Him and with each other, like any combination of material things, any

more than spirit is like those things which we perceive by means of our senses. This difference is so complete that nothing material can ever illustrate the spiritual; blackest darkness might as well attempt to represent the blazing noonday sun.¹ Some of the most serious mistakes in man's thinking about God have arisen from the attempt to apply ideas of materiality to spiritual conditions.²

185. It has been said of God that He is infinite and eternal, and also that He is omnipotence, omnipresence, substance, spirit, existence, reality, truth, life, mind, principle, individuality, and being; He is each of these and all of them together; and over and above all, He is an undefinable and inexpressible something without which neither He nor any one of them could possibly exist; all these are essentials of Him (90) and are closer than any relationship can possibly be, and though when each is looked at by itself it seems distinct, yet they are all one in Him and with Him.

186. The appearance of separateness arises solely from man's inability to perceive these essentials as a whole. If, at one glance, man could perceive them all as the infinite mind perceives them (143), he

¹ See Appendix F.

² For further discussion of this subject, see chap. XXXVI.

would instantly become aware that, without any destruction or modification of either their identity or their individuality, all these essentials, in the immense variety of their manifestations, are only one, with neither division nor separateness between them.

If confirmation of this oneness were needed, it would be found in the fact that in these many essentials, and in all the variations of each, there is no contradiction between them, nor is there any interference of one with another; but instead, there is perfectly harmonious interaction. God is indeed one, and in this larger recognition the idea that there is more than one infinity disappears.

187. To human perception the manifestations of power and presence (100) appear diverse, and man has given them names in accordance with his cognition of them, but the things themselves, of which these manifestations are only the outward appearance, are only one. For illustration: man manifests himself by moving his hands, and he also moves his feet. These two motions appear entirely distinct from each other, but each is an indication of power (90), and power has a vast number of manifestations which are far more distinct from each other than these two motions appear to be; but all power is one, and these motions are only evidences of the action of the

one power, and that power is an expression of the man himself. Man also manifests himself by means of his presence. This presence appears to be entirely distinct from his power, yet each is only a manifestation of the man, and he recognizes that both power and presence are one in him, and that they are inseparable from him; he also recognizes that, with all his component parts, and all his manifestations, he himself is also one.

188. In general, power and presence are two essentials which seem entirely distinct; but power, being infinite (93), is everywhere existent, whether active or not, and its presence must be wherever it is; hence its presence is also infinite and everywhere existent. But both are non-materialistic (184), therefore we must reject all thought of space in connection with them. As two distinct and separate thoughts (which are also non-materialistic) may consciously occupy one man's mind at the same instant of time, so two essentials, both of them infinite, may occupy the one infinity at one and the same time.

Thus it becomes evident that power and presence are not only inseparable but each is indispensable to the other; that the existence of power necessitates the existence of its accompanying presence; consequently power and presence are coextensive and co-

existent, and hence are not a compound but are one.¹

189. This relationship between power and presence (100) is neither exceptional nor peculiar; but it illustrates a condition which is universal among all the essentials of God, because presence accompanies each essential, has the same relationship to it that it has to power, and in God each essential is one with each of the others, and all are united in the one infinity.²

190. Thus examination shows that without resultant destruction, absorption, or loss in any way, each

¹ To coexist is to exist together, at the same time, each with the other; to be coextensive is to have the same extension, each with the same limits; therefore, entities which are coexistent and coextensive both occupy the same space at the same time.

² God is one, and the universe is His expression of Himself, and therefore is an expression of His unity. Beneath all the varied phenomena of life there is a real, even if imperfectly comprehended, unity. This is manifested in the divine harmony which pervades the spheres and shines through materiality. The spectroscope tells us that the same chemical elements that exist in our own earth are also found in the stars; the vegetable kingdom, in all its variety of forms, is pervaded by this same unity, and it is so apparent in the animal world as to cause scientific men to believe that all animal life descended from one common ancestor. Modern science is finding there is the same life in both the animal and the vegetable kingdom. Suppose we acknowledge that the one progenitor is God, who is the first cause and cause of all.

of the essentials, characteristics, and peculiarities of God contributes the whole of itself to each of all the others; each is coexistent and coextensive with every other one and with them all in combination; individuality unites them all, and principle moulds them into one harmonious whole, so that their reciprocal and individual relationships constitute a oneness of each with all and of all with each, and thus each is coextensive and coexistent with God Himself. All are one and that one is All — the one infinite Being who is God.

XXIII

INDIVIDUALITY

191. God is one (80), consequently He is an individual, and in His infinity He comprises within Himself all there is (65); therefore He is the one complete individual. In His all-inclusiveness there is not anything which is destructive of individuality, therefore there is not the slightest reason why God should not be an individual; on the contrary, in the fact that He is spirit and mind there is abundant reason for the supremest individuality (101). All who believe in a god of any kind recognize their god as individual; the teaching of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation inculcates this idea, and so does Jesus, the Christ.

The immensity of infinity seems to make it difficult for some to understand this, yet the transition in thought from the small and simple to the large and complicated is easy. The grain of sand is one, and so is the rock, the mountain, the world, the solar system, or even the universe; and God, who is infinite

and includes all, is also one (190). Man is so familiar with the meaning of the word "one" that, even in contemplating God's overwhelming immensity, he should find little difficulty in understanding and recognizing that God is one; and in this indivisible unity lies the basic fact that is indispensable to individuality. There is no lack of reconciliation between the individuality of unity as seen in the atom or the pebble and individuality as perceived in the infinite (189).

192. The universality of individuality in the immense number and variety of created things is most remarkable. The minutest electrons combine to form atoms, atoms unite to form molecules, and these to make still greater organisms; and so on through a vast series of units, increasing in size to satellites, worlds, suns, systems, and the universe, each, from the smallest to the greatest, with its own peculiarities of individuality that distinguish it from every other one, however closely they may resemble one another. There are countless leaves on countless trees, and these have succeeded each other through uncounted years; they are only leaves, and yet an examination of them all would show that each has its own peculiarities wherein it differs from every other individual leaf. Similarly, were it possible to examine each component part of the whole world, or even of the uni-

verse itself, that examination would not reveal a single duplicate. Each might be compared with each, atom with atom, world with world, system with system, and though harmony pervades the entire universe (163), there would never be found a duplication; and so pervasive and universal is this condition of individuality that each one maintains, unimpaired, its own distinctiveness.

193. Man recognizes in himself peculiarities of individuality which are more than the mere condition of being one and indivisible; something entirely different from the class of peculiarities already referred to; something which confers upon him qualities distinct from either external appearance or mere condition — indescribable, but cognizable; something not limited to outward appearance of form or materiality, for it gives distinct varieties to both mental and spiritual qualities.

Man also recognizes in himself an indivisible something which, in the midst of the multifarious changes of his materiality, endows him with a continuous identity, so that, however many or extreme those changes may be, he remains the same individual that he was before. He is a spiritual being, with characteristics entirely distinct from materiality and not dependent upon it nor subject to its variations. These constitute

the essential and enduring of man, confer upon him his identity, endow him with the higher qualities of individuality, and make him an individual in the essentially distinguishing characteristics of the word.

194. God is the one individual, using the word in contradistinction to the word "person."¹ Though the words "individual" and "person" are closely allied and have many points in common, yet, in many particulars, they have wide differences in meaning. They are sometimes used interchangeably, and often one is erroneously substituted for the other; thus, in speaking of God, the word "person" is sometimes used, even in most important writings, where accuracy demands the word "individual." When both the similarities and the differences in meaning in these two words are clearly understood, little confusion need arise from their indiscriminate use, because in most cases the context will show the meaning intended. An examination of the derivation will assist to a better understanding of their meaning: —

195. The word "person" comes from the Latin *persona*, which was the name of the mask which Roman actors wore to hide their identity from the audience — an outer covering that enveloped and

¹ See Appendix C.

concealed the man within. Another most important distinction, and one not to be forgotten, is that the person is divisible. In this meaning person is that divisible covering which conceals one's true identity — conceals the reality of us. We meet, see, and recognize the *person* at one glance, but we can only know the *individual* through association.¹ In the meaning which this derivation suggests, the infinite God is not a "person" in the remotest degree, nor is He personal.

196. Individual is from the word *individuus*, *in*, meaning not, and *dividuus*, meaning divisible; hence, literally, the word means not divisible. Since the person is divisible, this quality of indivisibility can only belong to that which is not of materiality; therefore, used as a noun, individual must designate a single, indivisible and spiritual one; and with this belongs continuous identity, or that which distinguishes one from another and enables each to perceive that he is distinct from others and that

¹ "Our bodies wear out; the particles are in a continual flux, each giving place to others and being constantly discarded and renewed. . . . The body which finally dies is no more truly representative of the individual than any other bodies which have been gradually discarded *en route*; . . . The individuality, if there is one, must lie deeper than any particular body." — SIR OLIVER LODGE in *Hibbert Journal*, p. 295.

always he is himself. In this higher meaning of the word, individuality belongs only to intelligent beings.¹

God is the one infinite individual. With all the characteristics of a single being, God possesses the qualities of indivisibility, continuous identity and infinite existence, therefore they belong by birthright to man, and cannot be separated from him.

197. We may well thrill with awe as we think of ourselves as individuals, but how immeasurably this feeling increases when our thoughts turn toward God and we recognize Him as strictly individual, with all the word implies! Yet, sometimes we seem to miss something in Him which we are seeking for. This may be because our recognition of His infinity overshadows our perception of His oneness and His identity. Perhaps our difficulty may come from our inability wholly to eliminate the tangible from our idea of individuality. We are like the little child who wants to feel the touch of his mother's hand, though fully assured that she is present with him.

¹ It is not intended to condemn any special usage of the two words "person" and "individual," but to make definite their meaning as used in this book. The meanings here indicated are, by some writers, reversed, but the reader can nearly always discover from an examination of the context the idea which the writer had in mind.

198. The individuality of man includes continuous identity, comes to him direct from God, and is dependent upon that which is surpassingly excellent in Him. Since God possesses and manifests His essentials in their absolute perfection (178), we must recognize that He is not only individual but, because of His infinity, of His condition of being one, and of His character as first cause and cause of all, He is the transcendent individual from whom comes all the individuality of the whole creation, from that of an electron to that of the universe itself, for nothing exists without this quality in greater or less degree. God, in and through all, yet over and above all, surrounding it, permeating it, and constituting it, but neither separate nor separable from it — the one real individual, the infinite One who includes all within Himself; the one God whose identity is from everlasting to everlasting, unchanging and eternal.

XXIV

BEING

199. "Be" is a substantive verb meaning to exist, and it is impossible to separate the word in any of its forms from the idea of existence, because, in the broader meaning of those two words, whatever is exists, and whatever exists is (127); therefore "be" indicates a general state of existence, and if "ing" is added to the verb to indicate a continuous going on of existence, the two make "be"-*"ing,"* or being, and this word is used as the name for continuous, active, individualized existence. Thus the form of the present participle becomes a noun to denote that which, in its most inclusive form, constitutes the active essential of each individual — that actuality of existence which is found in every living thing, constituting the real and the true individual. Each man recognizes the essential reality of his own substantive existence as a living, spiritual being.

200. We say, God is; but "is" is only another form of the verb be, and consequently, instead of

saying that He is that which is existing, or that He is existing, we say that God is “*be-ing*”; or, in the usual form, God is being.¹ Then He is the infinite, individual Being—a term which includes all of individuality and also includes something which seems more definite. He is the individual who is life, spirit, substance and power—the one infinite, spiritual Being, the Being who always was, is and always will be.

201. When we say that God is a being, we seem to express a certain definiteness and reality of individuality which, though existing just as fully in His other essentials, appears to us as less prominent in them. We might hesitate to ask inflexible principle to help us even in our effort to do right, though we well know that both principle and power render most efficient assistance when we place ourselves in accord with them; but ordinarily we do not associate power, principle, truth, substance, or presence with individuality, although each contributes largely to it. It has been our habit to look upon these chiefly as abstractions, with little or no quality which we associate with personality; but when, in our minds, they come into connection with our idea of God, they take a new relationship because of their oneness with His

¹ The two forms are fairly parallel: God exists, God is *existing*, God is existence; or, God is *be-ing*, God is being.

other essentials. In thinking of Him as being, we pass out of the domain of abstract and intangible goodness, power, and law, into a realm where we come into a more direct and intimate relationship with Him, so that in our consciousness we are able to approach Him closer than when we think of Him as individual or as God. This may come from the fact that we are accustomed to speak of each other as beings, and this association of certain ideas with the word makes for us a difference in its meaning which places it on another and perhaps more definite plane.

202. In relinquishing the idea of a personal God (195) many feel keenly that they have lost their Father, who is far more dear to them than any earthly parent could possibly be. This sense of loss comes from the fact that, in abandoning the idea of God as a person, they have also rejected His individuality, and now recognize Him only as principle, in which they see only impersonal law (153). While such an extreme position is correct in part, it is erroneous in that it does not include the whole. God is indeed principle, but principle is more than law (155, 156), and God is not an abstraction. He contains within Himself all those essentials which have been enumerated, but He and they are one (190); He is an individual (198), and He is the being in whom each essen-

tial harmonizes with every other (165), so that in these perfectly harmonious relations they are at last all one, and that one is the individual Being who is perfectly free (97) and who lives and loves; who is good, powerful, true, and substantial.

To a certain extent man partakes of all of these qualities and essentials, and through the recognition of this fact he perceives that in the depths of his own nature he is in reality a being. Since man is a being and God is the infinite Being, then, notwithstanding His immeasurable superiority, their relationship is that of being to Being; thus God does not seem so far off, and we begin to realize that the poet expressed somewhat of positive truth when he wrote:—

“ Closer is He than breathing,
Nearer than hands and feet.”

Every phase of our aloofness from God is of our own making and is our own mistake. Not only does He always surround and enwrap us closely in His infinite presence, but that presence is within us and is the essential constituent of our real selves (101). When we perceive this and realize the wonderfulness of it all, there comes a sense of immeasurable gain over former beliefs. God is not a limited personality, and we have seen how His essentials, each in the

fulness of its own individuality, unite with each of the others, forming a perfect unity (190), thus constituting one great whole — the infinite One who embraces all within Himself and who is the one complete and perfect individual Being.

203. If to our thought of God as a Being we unite those qualities which belong to Him as first cause (54), and if we also bear in mind the relationship of the cause to its effects (44), we shall see that as first cause or originator He includes all within Himself (32), and that out of the divine substance of Himself He evolved every creature; therefore He is the Being of all beings, the Self of all selves. From a contemplation of these ideas there at once dawns upon us the reason why Jesus called Him Father and taught us to call Him Father also. Blessed are we to call this infinite Being "Our Father," for this title brings us nearer to Him than any other, and as a metaphor it expresses our true relationship to Him better than any other words, although in its reality this relationship is inconceivably closer, more intimate, and more enduring than any human relationship between parent and child; and the limitless love which God bestows upon us is as much greater than the love of any human parent as infinity is greater than the finite (178). Though we may not know how to love good-

ness or principle or substance or power, or even how to love love itself when separate from the individual, yet here is the Being who loves us so and is so absolutely good to us (168) that we cannot help loving Him as soon as we gain even a faint idea of the love with which He loves us and of His goodness to us.

204. But God is mind (149) as well as being, and because He is infinite His perceptions are all-inclusive; therefore He knows all the things which are (146). Hence at all times He must be minutely conscious of each and every one of us, and He must know each one better and more completely than that one knows himself; therefore it is not exaggeration to say, as Jesus did, "that even the very hairs of your head are all numbered." This only illustrates the general fact that each particle, not only in each of ourselves but in all the universe, is perfectly perceived and known by Him and has its abiding place in His infinite mind; in His infinite knowing it is impossible that a sparrow, or even the minutest creature that lives, can "fall to the ground" without His attention.

205. In the recognition that this Being, God, our Father, thus infinite in perfection (172), intelligence, and knowing, is not only infinite in love but loves each of us infinitely (178), we perceive that there

must be the closest possible relationship between ourselves and Him, and there comes to us the consciousness that He is approachable by ways which would be impossible to us did He not comprehend us so completely. We can understand, also, that as His children, we are not too small nor of too little consequence for Him to heed us when we go to Him with our wants which appear so important to us, whatever they may be to Him.

Jesus understood this, for he said, "your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him." Because of this declaration some have asked, "then what need of prayer?" Let such consider how the heart of the loving human parent is gladdened when his child comes to him with its requests, though its every want is already known by him. God is our Father and, knowing His great love, Jesus said: "If ye know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things unto them that ask Him."

206. That power which not anything hinders, which acts without effort (96), and is coupled with perception and intelligence that include the entire universe in a single microscopic and all-comprehensive glance (146), is united with all the qualities and es-

entials of the infinite Being, and can never be at a loss for means by which to accomplish any object (96, 97) without the violation of law or principle and without disarrangement or disturbance of existent conditions. This being true, the belief in prayer and its efficacy is neither foolish nor unreasonable, for it rests upon a secure foundation; and the faith of human beings of all the ages (for there have always been men who prayed), has not been misplaced, however ignorant they may have been or however crude or erroneous were some of their ideas. This belief in prayer has been a stupendous and existent fact all through human history, and it has been an equally stupendous influence in the lives of countless human beings. They may not have been able to give a reason for their faith, but there was something in the hearts of the most stupid and simple, as well as in the hearts of the keenest and most cultured, which was more nearly true than all the learning and astuteness of those who were without this faith in prayer.

XXV

A SUMMARY

207. In the preceding pages we have discussed some of the essentials (90), qualities, and characteristics of God, but it is not for a moment to be presumed that we have considered them all. God is infinite; each of these essentials is infinite in itself and in the variety of its manifestations, and there may be an infinite number of which man is wholly unconscious. It is impossible to catalogue infinity, and presumption would have reached its limit if any man should dare to think that he had discovered and labelled all the essentials of God. Man's knowledge does not extend beyond his cognitions (20), and he would make a fatal mistake if he thought to restrict God to the limit of his own perceptions, and looked upon Him as possessing only the various essentials, manifestations, relationships, and attributes that he is himself aware of. But whether they are known or unknown, whether they are many or few, God immeasurably transcends all man's ideas of Him; therefore any

definition or description must necessarily be incomplete.

208. However many there are that are unknown, however different they may be from the known, and however they may vary among themselves, yet, as a basis for our conclusions and as a guide to our actions, we can rely with certainty upon those which have been perceived, because not one conflicts with any other, nor does one modify the intrinsic nature of another; besides, since God is principle (156), it follows that, however many unknown qualities, relationships, or essentials there may be, they must harmonize with the ones already known just as the known harmonize with each other; consequently the result of accurate reasoning from the known will never conflict with the unknown.

209. In attempting to understand God, man speedily becomes aware that the vast unknown far exceeds all that he has perceived, and, in the mental reaction which follows, he is prone to plead that God is unknowable, or, at the most, that our knowledge of Him must remain uncertain. On the other hand, there are some, even among the most devout, who declare that the more vague, visionary, and indefinite are our ideas of God, the more reverent and worshipful will be our attitude toward Him — as though

man's imagination might exceed the grandeur and sublimity of God's infinity! and as though in its reality there is not enough to engage all our reverence and adoration! This must be a mistaken attitude, for ignorance inevitably causes greater error and more confusion, while a clear understanding of even a fragment of truth will lead to further knowledge, better understanding, and a wiser course of conduct. The more we know of God the closer we shall come to Him, the more we shall love Him, the better we can order our own lives, and the more nearly shall we worship Him in spirit and in truth. When we note the progress in the past it adds to our confidence in the future. What has already been accomplished furnishes the basis for further attainment and greater certainty; and, though the rate of progress may seem slow, yet it is steadily increasing, and this is an earnest of greater and more rapidly increasing attainment in the future.

210. From the beginning of the human race, every man has had some idea of God, however fragmentary or distorted it may have been (57). Aided by the efforts of his friends, by instruction from miscellaneous sources, by the general and special opinions of the society in which he moves, by the thousand and one influences which surround him, all modified by

his own peculiarities, each man has made a mental image for himself, has set it up in his own mind, and has called it God — it *is* his god. From time to time he has taken from it or has added to it some peculiar idea of his own which, to him, makes it superior to the god of any one else. These man-made images differ from one another as much as men differ, and possibly some of them are as far from the truth as are the idols of semicivilized and savage peoples.

211. The perceptions which man has of God necessarily fail to include the whole, and it is inconceivable that some are not erroneous. God is infinite, and just as ratio disappears if the comparison is between the largest conceivable number and infinity, so the largest possible apprehension that man can have of God can bear only small comparison to Him as He is; but there is positive advantage in an earnest, persistent endeavor to attain a correct apprehension because, though God may not be known in His entirety, yet, by searching after Him continually, more and more will be learned of Him.

212. In that old book whose origin is lost in the mists of antiquity, Zophar said to Job: "Canst thou, by searching, find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" Evidently the intention was to convey an emphatic intimation of

impossibility, and too long the world accepted this. Job did not attempt to reply to this pessimistic insinuation, neither did he perceive the inestimable hopefulness in the counsel of Eliphaz when he said, "Acquaint now thyself with Him and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee."¹ Although, by searching, man may not find out God to the uttermost, yet he may acquaint himself with God, may learn something about his own relationship to Him, may gain valuable cognitions of Him, and thereby may attain knowledge which is beyond price.

The whole world is continually inquiring after God with the hope that possibly they may learn more than is now known, and with the certainty that the knowledge they already have justifies their belief in Him. Unnumbered hosts have believed in Him so implicitly that they have gladly laid down their lives for what they thought was His cause, and vast numbers more, if they felt called upon, would do so now.

213. Perhaps Spencer never knew how closely he followed in the wake of the old drama when he made the declaration that God is unknowable. This statement is clearly self-contradictory, because it asserts positively that at least one thing is known

¹ Job xi. 7; and xxii. 21.

about God — that He is unknowable. The non-existent is the only unknowable. The really unknowable is also unthinkable and unmentionable. In further contradiction of himself, Spencer said, "Amid all the mysteries by which we are surrounded nothing is more certain than that we are ever in the presence of an infinite and eternal energy from which all things proceed." Evidently he had acquainted himself somewhat with the "unknowable God."

214. Those who, out of the deeps of their own experiences, say, "If I had to reason out God I should never know Him," may have a more intimate knowledge of Him than the most careful, accurate, and scientific reasoners. Some unlearned persons have been intensely aware of God's immediate presence, and have had most wonderful visions of Him which were denied to the wise; and in their simple lives, which perhaps were despised by others, they may have lived nearer to Him than those who prided themselves on their mental superiority. It needs neither great attainments in learning nor great reasoning power to see God. Jesus says that beatific vision is granted to the pure in heart, "for they shall see God." Purity, not wisdom, is the requisite; whether one is learned or unlearned is of

small consequence. God is truly revealed through simplicity and purity like that of the child, for "of such is the kingdom of heaven," and with thanksgiving to the Father, Jesus said: "Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." In this fact lies an explanation of the wonder that from prehistoric times there have always been those who have known God, and who have loved, and have worshipped Him.

215. God is spirit, and it is by spirit that He is discerned. There are spiritual experiences which are of vaster and deeper importance than any possible effort of the intellect or of the reason. An intellectual view of God, at its best, is only partial, and must contain inaccuracies; but through his spiritual nature man always has the means by which intellectual experiences can be enlarged if insufficient, or corrected if erroneous. There is that feature of man that he calls life, distinct from materiality, and beyond the definition or description of science or philosophy (134); yet every child has some knowledge of it. There is also that which man recognizes as presence, which defies measurement by rule or determination by the balance; which is not laid bare by the incision of the knife, nor discovered by the

search of the microscope; yet it is within the experience of every one. Then, too, there is that experience which comes to every one in the form of love, so that he who has loved knows that he never fully lived until he loved, and knows, too, that there is no real life without love. Life, presence, love, and many other realities, intangible, yet just as definite, are from the same divine source, and all are within that common experience which is the heritage of every human being. They are always with him for examination and study, and because they are of God, man may know more and more about Him. It is only necessary to turn away from outward things and become consciously aware of his own spiritual nature and being for man to learn of that infinite spirit which is God; but in doing this let him always beware lest, by calling that spirit which is not spirit, he fall into the worst and most dangerous mistakes. The way truly is straight and narrow, but it leads to an untold wealth of spiritual truth and experience.

216. Thus far this discussion has been largely from an intellectual point of view, but the spiritual is so immeasurably beyond the mental that in mastering the intellectual one has scarcely touched the hem of the outer garment; the infinite domain of spirit is still to be explored. What has thus far been set

forth about God is only the beginning; just as the paddling of the ancient savages about their own rivers and shores was the beginning of those modern maritime achievements that have encompassed the globe; just as the knowledge of the ancient star-gazers was the beginning of that knowledge of astronomy which man shall yet have. God has not hidden anything of Himself from man; God is not unknowable, nor is He afar off, even though He is beyond the ken of the intellect alone and cannot be defined by words! and it is for man to go on asking questions, with unwavering confidence that sometime they will be answered. Then let each of His children take heart, listen, and be guided by that spirit who, without sound, is ever speaking to his consciousness — listen to that God who is his Father and who, out of His divine substance, has endowed each one of us with the constituents of His own Being.

Whoever has consciously lived in His infinite presence possesses an experience and has a knowledge as much greater than can be communicated by wordy discussions as the knowledge of light gained by one instant of sight is beyond all the words that can be dinned into the ears of a blind man. Then let each stand in awe before the higher qualities of the spiritual — even before himself as a spiritual being; let

him ask to know that which cannot be told because it is beyond speech; let him ask reverently and in humbleness that it be granted him to perceive the glories of spirit; let him ask with entire confidence that his request will be granted, perhaps not at once, perhaps only after long waiting; but granted it will be, because no one who asks for these things aright ever asks in vain.

PART FOURTH

MATERIALITY

XXVI

GENERAL PROPOSITIONS

217. Thus far attention has been given largely to the consideration of spiritual realities, all of which are centred in God and radiate from Him (32). The search after a foundation (6) led directly to God, and having arrived at the certainty that God exists (56), it was necessary to follow the lines of spiritual action as they radiated from Him, because God is spirit, and from spirit only spirit can come (41). The eternal truth that God is infinite and all (78) has thus far rightly furnished the basis of our reasoning and controlled our conclusions; but, even in the midst of overwhelming proof that God is all (65) have come suggestions provoking questions distinctly divergent from the subject.

It is almost inevitable that the human mind should wander from consideration of the spiritual when other things seem to thrust themselves forward so persistently, and so continually demand attention.

Because many are deceived by these questions, they must be considered; but in pursuing this investigation the basic propositions already established are followed without deviation.

218. We have experienced the difficulty of defining spirit, and are immediately confronted with a similar difficulty in connection with matter. Aristotle heads the list with "*ule*," literally wood, or that of which a thing is made, which certainly lacks definiteness. Descartes went a little farther than this, for, among other terms, he calls it "the purely sensuous part." G. H. Lewes, in his *Problems of Life and Mind*, calls it "The Felt," and he says, "all our knowledge of matter is in Feeling." Huxley says, "All that we know about matter is that it is the hypothetical substance of physical phenomena." If, to those among whom Huxley ranked, matter is only the basis for a hypothesis or a conjecture, all others may well be expected to have little positive knowledge about it. Kant says, "that which in the phenomenon corresponds to the sensation, I term matter." Thompson (Lord Kelvin) and Tait, in *Natural Philosophy*, briefly define it as "that which can be perceived by the senses." Most other definitions, however involved they may be, include some equivalent phrase and point more or less defi-

nately to the same idea; while no less an authority than Hoffding declares that modern materialists for the most part confess that we cannot know what matter is in itself.¹

Whatever its definition, matter is something which we become aware of through the medium of the senses and, when investigated further, it will appear that our knowledge of it is primarily, if not solely, derived from that source; although, of course, to this must be added the conclusions resulting from comparison, experience, and reason.

219. In accord with the popular understanding, spirit and materiality are wholly distinct in every characteristic; and this understanding cannot be disregarded because, both in general and in all particulars, it is in harmony with the very nature of things as mankind is aware of them. Spirit is not matter, and the spiritual is not material. One is visible, the other invisible; one is tangible, the other intangible, and neither possesses any quality in

¹ Because this discussion applies to that large group of apparent qualities which has been supposed to belong to matter or to constitute it, it seems advisable to use the word "materiality" instead of "matter." To use the word "matter" might mislead some into thinking that the non-existence of everything is intended, — of the reality of things as well as their appearance, — but this discussion does not apply to realities.

common with the other; we learn of material things from one source and of spiritual things from another; that which tells us of materiality knows nothing about the spiritual, while that which deals with the spiritual is silent about the material. Intelligence dwells in spirit, for God is spirit (105) and God is mind (149), but materiality, when separated from all else, does not possess either intelligence, consciousness, or feeling. God, spirit, mind, on one side, and materiality on the other, constitute an irreconcilable duality. Black and white do not contrast more positively. Descartes expressed this difference with equal positiveness: "Matter is substance which has extension but does not think; spirit is substance which thinks but has no extension." Not one of the terms by which materiality is expressed applies in the remotest degree to spirit; and, however we may juggle with words or with thoughts, the spiritual and the material, in themselves, still stand in exact contrast.

The universal consciousness of every man compels the conclusion that I, in my being, am as invisible and as intangible as God is. My body is visible and tangible, but *I* am not my materialistic body; *I* am more and other than my body.

220. Throughout all discussions in the previous pages the fundamental proposition that God is all

and infinite (78) has remained steadfast; the propositions that God is one (190), and that He is spirit (105), life (140), and mind (149) have remained equally steadfast, and the same statement is true of each of His essentials (90); but not one of these essentials has in the least degree any of the nature, character, functions, or peculiarities of materiality. The succeeding arguments and their conclusions rest for their foundation upon these propositions, and, though we are examining a subject entirely distinct from any that has preceded, yet we are pursuing, without deviation, the same line of argument that we have followed thus far. All the reasoning is in the simplest and most direct form of the syllogism; therefore, if these fundamental propositions are accurate, the conclusions must be correct.

221. The first argument to be presented is based on already ascertained facts concerning God, all of which unite in the harmonious propositions that He is all (65), that He is infinite (78) and omnipresent, or *literally and exactly present everywhere* (101); but it is a universal recognition of all men in all the ages (20) that God is not matter nor is He material, but that He is spirit or spiritual (105, 109); then, since it is impossible that there could be more than all, spirit must be all there is, and all that is must be

spirit; therefore there cannot be any materiality; hence materiality must be unreal and non-existent.

Besides, God is the one existent reality (113) from which all things proceed (32, 41, 54, 114), and since there is not any other source from which anything could come (41, 113), and since He is not material, therefore it is impossible that there should be any materiality.

Exactly the same reasoning applies to life; for however closely they may appear to be connected, it is beyond question that life and materiality are entirely distinct. This is readily seen in the fact that spirit, life, and existence are the same (138), and while life may give to the material body the semblance of its own activity, this condition no longer appears when what we call death has separated the body from life. God is all (78) and He is life (140), but neither God nor life are material.

God is infinite mind (149), which results in infinite intelligence (146). Mind and intelligence are wholly distinct from materiality, and they do not manifest any of its conditions, qualities, attributes, or peculiarities; materiality never becomes mind and mind never becomes materiality. As Bradford says in *The Ascent of The Soul*, "There is no evident kinship between a thought and a stone, between love

and the soil which produces vegetables, between a heroic choice and the stuff of the earth, between spirit and matter." These propositions relating to the non-existence of materiality include every essential of God as they include life and mind, for not anything material pertains to God, nor is there any connection whatever between the things of God and the qualities or peculiarities of materiality.

222. The difficulties that arise in connection with this proposition are as simple as the reasoning which sustains it, and are the same which man's progress toward the understanding of truth has always had to meet and overcome. One of these is long-continued mental habit, for the thought which has been accepted for ages, or even for a lifetime, maintains its hold tenaciously. Since those days before history or any existent legends began, the world has unhesitatingly and without question assumed the reality of materiality, and the mind is so accustomed to that idea that instinctively and without reasoning it springs to the defence of old thoughts, old opinions, and old creeds. It ridicules, but does not answer arguments, and those who adhere to the old propositions make it difficult in a multitude of ways for others who otherwise might see the reasonableness and accuracy of the new conclusion.

223. The second and greater hindrance arises from the fact that, in the vast majority of cases, mankind accepts without question those statements of the senses which at every point so conclusively contradict the proposition that there is no materiality. It finally becomes a question whether, denying the senses, we shall accept the carefully considered and well-established propositions relative to God and acknowledge the non-existence of all that differs from Him, or whether, accepting the testimony of the senses, we shall acknowledge the existence of materiality and reject all the propositions about God. The question is vital, for, though not ordinarily so recognized, the essential of the two propositions is this: that God is all and that there is no materiality; there is no halfway place. We cannot have both God and materiality. The human mind usually rebels at the thought of rejection of materiality, but does this without any consciousness of what is involved in that rejection.

224. In this question of the acceptance or rejection of the sense perceptions history repeats itself. There was a time, not so very long ago, when the wisest men believed our little globe to be the centre of all things, and that the starry heavens and the whole universe revolved around it. Then there came

a man who was able, in imagination, to get off the earth and out into space above the plane of the solar system whence, looking down upon it, he could examine the movements of all the planets as they circled around the sun. He contradicted sense perception, and his statement was attacked from every point except the single one of reason. He was told that he was wrong because "any one who will look can see the sun, moon, and the stars move around the earth." Then followed many years of earnest discussion, mingled with persecution, before his statements of fact were generally accepted. This was the first, and up to the present time, the greatest defeat of the senses, though it has been succeeded by many minor ones. To-day objectors say as they did then, that "any one who will look can see that materiality is real"; but no one now questions the accuracy of the astronomical idea so bitterly combated three hundred years ago, and the final result in this case will be the same as it was in that.

Our basic proposition is as correct as that of Copernicus, and all attempts to refute it are strikingly similar in source and kind to those of his day. The argument is also correct, and, despite doubt, denial, ridicule, or persecution, this proposition will stand as that one stands. God is all and God is spirit.

The spiritual is forever, while the material is only for its day; but as men did then so also they do now — they do not listen to reason, and allow the sense perceptions to contradict the spiritual; but history will again repeat itself.

XXVII

SIGHT

225. The argument by which we have reached the conclusion that there is not any materiality need not stand unconfirmed. The chief objections to the accuracy of that proposition arise from the testimony of the sense perceptions, and it is from the same source that we derive all knowledge of the existence of materiality. This places them in the front rank of importance, and an examination of the methods by which these perceptions are produced will enable us to judge of their supposed accuracy and reliability. For this purpose we will call attention to a few of the representations made by the sense of sight which are universally understood to be erroneous.

Looking at the sky on a clear day, one sees what appears to be a beautiful, solid, and material blue dome overarching the whole earth.¹ Not any such

¹ According to the history of words, for unnumbered ages the sky was believed to be solid. "The Hebrew word, *Rakia*, translated firmament, means something beaten out like a plate of metal,

thing is there; and the same is true of the beautiful rainbow which looks as though it were as solid as the tree beneath its arch. A straight stick, partly in the water and partly out, appears to be bent at the surface of the water, but we know that it is not bent. The stars appear like glittering points of light spangling the sky, when in fact every one that is visible to the naked eye is a world larger than our own. Our sight deceives us about all these appearances, but having learned the real conditions, though our eyes continue to tell the same old falsehood, we no longer accept their tale.

In the morning we see the sun, beautiful and glorious, rise in the east, move in majesty through the heavens, and at evening set in splendor in the west; at night we see the moon and the stars follow the same course; and all the time we see the earth motionless. For an untold number of years men believed these to be the facts; but now they know that all these appearances are exactly the reverse of what really occurs.

The Ptolemaic and Copernican systems of astronomy are just in point: At first, men reasoned from in-

and this is the way the sky was conceived by the Hebrews, Babylonians, and other ancient peoples." — *Book of Genesis in the Light of Modern Knowledge*, p. 81.

complete and erroneous perceptions and constructed a theory which seemed to explain appearances, but additional facts were observed, until finally Copernicus showed the solar system from another point of view; it was found that things were not in any particular as the senses reported, and previous ideas were slowly abandoned.

The eyes of mankind for a time deceived the whole world, but in these particulars, and in many others, men have learned to discredit their sense perceptions. They have also found that it makes no difference how long nor how thoroughly a person may understand both the error and the fact, the senses continue to tell the same story; and even on the part of the wisest, no effort of either intellect, will, or imagination, nor of all combined, is able to make the appearance any whit different. The sky still appears solid, the stick in the water looks crooked, our eyes continue to tell us that the stars are merely glittering points, and the whole heavens appear to revolve around a motionless earth; and this condition must continue until the spiritual perceptions are so depended upon to guide us that we constantly perceive the reality which is beyond every one of these false appearances.

226. Lawyers, whose business in the court-room is to find the facts, have a maxim to the effect that

the unsupported evidence of a witness who has been proved false in one thing cannot be conclusively relied upon in other things. We should not base such a sweeping decision as this upon the authority of a legal maxim alone, but, rather, upon the results of an examination of the methods of the senses. Sight, because the careful investigations of scientists have made its methods so well known, is first in order. Let it be understood, however, that this investigation shall be kept strictly within the bounds of the accepted terms of the natural sciences.

227. We think we see light in the flame of the lamp. What is the fact? The chemist tells us that something called combustion is going on in the flame, that this is all contained within the limits made by the surface of the flame, and that it all ceases at that boundary. Here appears a distinct something within the flame, limited by it, and ending at its surface. This is the first process in connection with seeing the flame.

228. The optician tells us that a series of waves, undulations, or vibrations in the surrounding ether begins at the surface of the flame and ends at the optic nerve at the back of the eye. One end of this series touches the outer surface of the flame and the other end touches the optic nerve and is stopped there

as the waves of the ocean are stopped by the rocks of the shore. This series of vibrations is limited by these two points, and they do not pass from the flame to the eye, but move almost exactly at right angles to a line which would extend between the eye and the flame. They are erroneously called "rays of light," a name that has come down from the discarded materialistic theory which held that minute particles passed from the flame to the eye; but they are not light, neither are they a constituent of light. This is the second process connected with seeing the flame.

229. These vibrations come in contact with the optic nerve, and a series of motions in the nerve follows. This nerve motion extends to the end of the nerve tissue, but, because it is a motion of that tissue, it must stop where that tissue ends; thus, at the extreme verge of materiality, this series of processes must cease. It began with a motion in the flame, continued with the vibratory motion in the ether, and concluded with the termination of the motion in the optic nerve. Each of these three processes is materialistic, and each is entirely distinct from either of the others.

Thus far we do not *see* anything nor do we have any consciousness of light, yet here we must stop because we have reached the outer limit of material-

ity; hence we must recognize that matter does not *see* any more than does the pane of glass through which the light passes.

230. Between the nerve and the mind there must be something different from either, which in some way is affected by the nerve motion as the nerve is affected by the vibrations of the ether.¹ This unknown "something," which furnishes the connection between the last of the series of material motions and the first of the mental actions, which is perception or consciousness, we will call, for convenience, sensation,² using that word to indicate that which, when taken note of by mental perception, gives the consciousness of light.

231. These two, sensation and perception, are entirely distinct, both from each other and from either of the three motions of materiality. Nerve motion was followed to the extreme verge of materiality, therefore this "something," which we have called

¹ "We have as much reason for regarding the mode of motion of the nervous system as the *cause* of the state of consciousness as we have for regarding any event as the cause of another." — HUXLEY'S essay "On the Hypothesis that Animals are Automata," *Collected Essays*, p. 238.

² This name, sensation, is purely arbitrary, and is used here for this purpose only. It must not be confounded with the mental faculty that is designated by the same word. See Appendix G.

sensation, must be entirely non-materialistic, and perception is an action of mind wholly distinct from matter and contrary to it in all its characteristics. The light is not in the flame of the lamp, nor in the vibrations of the ether; neither is it in the motion of the nerve, for it is only by mental perception — the last action in the series — that we see. Thus, at the last analysis, and in its essential reality, seeing is an action of mind.

232. This examination of the method by which we see compels the conclusion that until we reach sensation there is no such thing as that which we understand as light, and even that is not materialistic in its character. Combustion, the vibrations of ether, and the nerve motions are materialistic; while whatever that may be which we have called sensation, certainly the act of perception is entirely mental. Whatever may be occurring in the flame, not anything is there which in any way corresponds to what we understand light to be; then, to that extent, the testimony of the sense of sight is inaccurate — the light is not in the flame.

233. The vibrations of ether which finally result in consciousness of light vary in length of waves and rapidity of motion, and the resulting consciousness changes, in accordance with these variations, from

one color to another. The shortest waves and the highest rate of motion are followed by consciousness of violet; the longest waves, which move with the slowest rate, are followed by consciousness of red; while the other colors are distributed between these two. Thus the different colors depend upon the rapidity and extent of the invisible movement of an invisible medium. At least one stage of the process toward seeing, as illustrated in the seven colors of the rainbow which gives us so much pleasure, consists entirely of varying rates of vibration of the ether, or nothing but invisible motion.

In the particulars of vibration our sense of sight does not tell us of things as they are, nor does it report all the vibratory movements, for, outside the range of these that have been considered, are others of the same character but of different length and speed, of which it does not give the slightest information.

234. When a prism is held so the light that passes through it falls on a sheet of white paper, all the rays which are refracted by the prism are reflected by the paper, and it appears to be colored like the rainbow. By removing either the paper or the prism the colors disappear, showing that they do not belong to the paper but are merely reflected by it. In every case of reflected light the color of an object sustains exactly

the same relation to the object that the rainbow colors sustain to the white paper. The color does not belong to the object, nor does it in any way inhere in it either as a quality or condition.

What, then, is really the fact about an object which, for instance, we say is red? According to the accepted laws of optics, the rays of light from some luminous body fall upon an object whose condition is such that it reflects, or throws off from itself, all the red rays but none of the others (just as the white paper reflected all the rainbow colors), and it appears red because those reflected rays extend from the object to the eye. The only difference between the two lies in the fact that in one the source of the light (the prism) is movable and in the other it is stationary. If the source of the red rays could be moved, the result would be the same in both cases.

If a painter were to dash red paint upon a surface so constituted that it would reject every particle of the red paint, we should not call that surface red, but that is exactly what the object in question does with the red rays of light; it throws them all off, or reflects them, so that nothing that is red remains with it or belongs to it; therefore the object itself is not red. Paradoxically, we may say that the reason why it

appears red is because it is not red, for if it were really red it would not reflect any red rays, and we should necessarily see it as some other color. This is the condition in all cases of reflected light or color. The color does not belong to the object nor exist in it any more than the prismatic colors belong to the white paper. Again the sense of sight fails to report conditions as they are.

235. The sensations of light and of color may be produced where there is no light at all by anything which will bring about a condition in the optic nerve similar to that caused by the vibrations of the ether falling on the end of that nerve at the back of the eye. Every one, after looking at some bright object, has continued to see it after closing the eyes, or has seen colors in the dark, or with the eyes closed, or "has seen stars" because of a blow on the head. Anything which will arouse this special action of the nerve will result in a sensation of light and color, although there is neither.

236. It has been shown, that outside our own consciousness there is not any such thing as light as we recognize it, that there is no light in the flame of the lamp, and that color does not exist where we have supposed it to be. All may be summed up in the statement that not one thing is as we see it; or, in

other words, that our sense of sight does not report anything correctly, and that there are many things of which it does not tell us anything.

Thus the accuracy and reliability of sight, popularly recognized as the most important of all the senses, are discredited at every point, and its testimony is deprived of all value unless corroborated by other and independent evidence (225).

237. It has not been said that there is not anything in the flame, nor has it been said that there is not anything in the various motions and actions mentioned. There cannot be either motion or action without something to move or to act, and each thing which we see has a reality of its own, else there would be no appearance to cause us to be aware of it. There is a motion that is real in the flame, another in the ether, and still another in the nerves. From these motions we derive the sensation of sight, but it is conclusively evident that neither light nor color resemble in any particular either of these existent realities, yet, though we do not see it, a reality is connected with each of these.

238. These facts of science thus show conclusively that what we have looked upon as qualities of matter included under the terms of color are not in the object where we have supposed them to be, and

do not form any part of those objects with which they appear to be connected, but exist solely in our sensations. Thus disappears one group of those qualities which is included in what is universally known as materiality.

XXVIII

HEARING AND OTHER SENSES

239. The method of hearing is closely similar to that of seeing. Some kind of vibratory motion occurs in an object, as when a bell is struck; then follow vibrations in the surrounding air, as the vibration of the ether succeeds combustion in the flame; through the mechanism of the ear these reach the auditory nerve, causing motion peculiar to itself, the resultant sensation follows this motion, the mind becomes aware of the sensation, and then the sound is heard which is attributed to the bell. Something occurred which was limited strictly to the bell, but it was not sound, as sound is understood by us, for there was not any sound until after the action of materiality ceased and the mind perceived the sensation that followed the motion of the auditory nerve.

This motion of the nerve is the immediate cause of the sensation, and whatever gives rise to this nerve activity produces what we perceive as sound. Every one has experienced "noises in the head" which take a multitude of forms and which are not due to

anything outside of the body, but solely to some motion of the auditory nerve. We might expect that if these sound vibrations of the air passed a certain rate of speed they would make us frantic with their noise, but, instead, if they are more rapid than thirty thousand in a second, we become wholly unconscious of them.

Professor H. J. Jones has well said: "The retinal expanse in the eye is as idealess of the nature of the tree or the house whose images are impressed upon it as the looking-glass with the same images. The tympanum of the ear, with all the auditive apparatus, is as unknowing of the nature and cause of sound as the wall is in the case of the echo, and this is true of the rest of the organs of sense." Sight is not in the eye, nor hearing in the ear, but both are in those sensations which are beyond either. In the strict meaning of the words, the eye does not see nor the ear hear; but *we* see, and *we* hear.

Our ears do not report any more accurately than do our eyes, for they do not tell us of anything as it is. *Something* occurs in the bell, or in the string of the violin, but it is not what the ear says it is. Thus disappears from all objects another series of those qualities which have been popularly supposed to constitute materiality.

240. The method of tasting is similar. An object is placed in the mouth where it comes in contact with the gustatory nerve of the tongue and causes in that nerve a motion which extends to the limit of the nerve tissue. Beyond the nerve is the sensation of taste, and beyond this is the mental perception of it. The only difference between this process and those of sight and hearing is that the thing tasted comes in direct contact with the nerve, so that there is only one form of motion between the object and the sensation. But the taste is not in the object; and thus vanishes another quality which has been supposed to belong to materiality.

241. It is the same with smelling. Particles from the rose come in contact with the olfactory nerve, the sensation results, and the mind becomes aware of it as a perfume; but the perfume is not in the rose.

The method of touch is closely similar. The hand touches an object, and by just the same kind of process we perceive that it is smooth or rough, hard or soft, as the case may be; but these qualities do not reside in the object itself any more than do color or perfume, for, like the others, they have no existence outside of sensation.

242. It is the same with consciousness of heat and

cold. The heated body causes certain vibratory movements in the ether, and these come in contact with special nerves distributed over the surface of the body; these heat vibrations set up a motion in the nerves, and this motion produces a sensation which the mind perceives and which has been named warmth, or heat. Just as we are unconscious of the more rapid light and sound waves, so we are also unconscious of the more rapid heat waves. The physiologists say there are special nerves whose motion is followed by the sensation of heat, as there are other special nerves for seeing and for hearing, and that there are yet other nerves whose motion, when the speed of the vibrations falls below a certain rate, is followed by the sensation of cold. That sensation indicates that what we call heat is diminishing, but not that a new actor has come upon the scene, for what we call cold is not an entity or thing, but merely the absence of heat, just as darkness is only the absence of light.

Although there is an action in the object which consists of motions of its particles among themselves, this motion is wholly unlike any idea that we gain from our sensations of heat and cold, so that in this particular the sense perception is as erroneous as are those of sight and hearing; neither are heat and cold,

as we understand them, qualities of materiality, nor do they have any existence outside of our sensation.

243. Weight is another quality supposed to belong to materiality. We become aware of it because of the muscular motion which is necessary to prevent an object in the hand from falling. This motion, perceived in every case of lifting, produces a peculiar movement in the nerves connected with those muscles, and this nerve movement results in a sensation which the mind perceives, and we say the object is heavy or has weight; but this "weight" does not belong to the object nor form a part of it.

What we call weight is caused by the attraction of the earth, or of some other body, and is a measure of that attraction. If an object said to weigh a ton at the surface of the earth where the attraction is all on one side should be taken to the centre of the earth where its attraction is equal on every side, its "weight" would disappear. Or, if the same object should be carried from the earth directly toward the moon, its weight would steadily decrease as the distance from the earth increased, until it arrived at a place where the attraction of the moon would exactly balance that of the earth, and again it would not "weigh" anything. If it were then carried farther toward the moon, the attraction of the moon would overbalance the in-

fluence of the earth, and the weight would then be a measure of the attraction of the moon.

Thus weight does not reside in any object, but is purely a measure of attraction. Although no one knows what attraction is, yet all are agreed that it is wholly devoid of materiality, is exterior to it, is not a quality of it, is constantly varying according to the size of the objects and the distances between them, and is itself entirely beyond any perception by the senses; yet it is that which keeps all the heavenly bodies in their places and gives them their multifarious motions. This demonstrates conclusively that weight is neither a quality nor a constituent of materiality.¹

244. All that we know of resistance is through some form of nerve motion resulting in sensation. If we attempt the removal of an object, or if we press against it, we become aware of a sensation similar to that experienced in overcoming weight. Thus, resistance occupies the same position as the other qualities supposed to belong to materiality, which we have already examined and which have been found to exist, as we recognize them, only in our consciousness.

✓ 245. Thus, we have made a careful examination of the methods by which each of our senses brings

¹ See Appendix H.

us information about those peculiarities, qualities, or conditions which, combined, constitute what is known as materiality. Not one of these qualities, as we are conscious of it and understand it, exists outside of what we have called our sensations (230), not one is itself materialistic, and not one is in any particular like that which we have supposed it to be; and, according to the accepted facts of physical science, our consciousness of it is entirely unlike that which, through our sensations and perceptions, caused that consciousness. Not only is the testimony of the senses entirely false, but it is woefully insufficient. The assertion made at the outset has been fully sustained, for the evidence of the senses has been discredited at every point. Like the ghosts of the earlier ages which vanished at cock-crow, the last of that group of qualities which has been supposed to constitute materiality has disappeared and, literally and exactly, there is not any such thing.¹

¹ John Fiske, in his *Cosmic Philosophy*, says, "We do not know matter, but we know a group of coexistent states of consciousness which we call the perceptions of resistance, extension, and color, sound, or odor."

Professor Josiah Royce, in his *Spirit of Modern Philosophy*, says: "We don't know by sight any things in themselves. We see only the show world in its sense forms."

Professor Charles S. Minot, S.D., in an address to the American

246. This is not the whole of our indictment of the senses. Not only do they falsify everything, but it makes no difference how their errors may be detected, how thoroughly their falsehoods may be exposed, nor how completely the facts may be revealed, still, without the slightest wavering, they continue to adhere to the original story, and it is useless to expect anything else of them.

A person need not be discouraged nor discomfited by this persistence of the senses in their falsehoods. In the every-day association of men the stories of the habitual liar are soon taken at their real value, and no one is deceived by them; and though every one *sees* the crook in the stick, the motion in the stars, and the immovability of the earth, yet every one knows that these and many other appearances are not as they seem to be. Men pursue their way undisturbed, though they continue to talk of sunrise and

Association for the Advancement of Science, said: "Objectively colors do not exist, and there is no sound in nature external to ourselves. Always the report of the senses is unlike the external reality. Our sensations are symbols merely, not images. . . . Perhaps science has achieved nothing else which has done so much to clarify philosophy as the demonstration that the objective phenomena are wholly unlike the subjective sensations."

Even Kipling makes one of his people say, "There are many lies in the world, and not a few liars, but there are no liars like our bodies, except it be the sensations of our bodies." — *Kim*, p. 436.

sunset, knowing that the sun neither rises nor sets. When the more complicated conditions connected with the sense perceptions are as well understood, they will be treated with the same indifference, though the senses continue to misrepresent just as they do now. The one thing to do is to learn the facts, then rest in that knowledge regardless of what the senses pretend, knowing that the time is coming when every one will perceive things as they are.

The worst aspect of this situation is clearly set forth by W. H. Thomson, when he says, "Despite all evidences of the imperfections, if not of the untrustworthiness, of the senses, most people will promptly reject whatever is not verified by them, as if they constitute the sole foundation of belief" (222).¹ But the world is daily improving, knowledge is increasing, and the time is not so far distant when this great question will be decided against the senses just as the astronomical problem was decided in the centuries that are past.

247. There is another count against the senses, the most serious of all, and one in which all else may well be forgotten: God is the one greatest fact of all existence, for He is existence itself; of more importance

¹ W. H. Thomson, M.D., LL.D., in *What is Physical Life, its Origin and Nature?* p. 178.

to man than all else, for God is all; yet the senses are entirely silent about Him and about everything connected with Him, or belonging to Him, not even telling us that God exists or that He ever existed. All our knowledge of Him comes entirely from other sources.

248. All the information which we derive from the senses has passed through the physical medium of the nerves, and this condition of unreliability attaches to whatever this intermediary has been connected with. As precisely the same conditions apply to all sense perceptions, therefore the testimony of our senses regarding all bodily sensations, of whatever character, whether of pain or of pleasure, is subject to the same defects, and their report of our bodily conditions is no more trustworthy than their report concerning other things. Within what each recognizes as his bodily limits, however, it must be true that there are existent realities, just as there are outside those limits, and also there must be means and methods by which the real man may become correctly aware of these realities both of himself and his surroundings.¹

✓ 249. That which, in obedience to our sense perceptions, we call materialistic, never stands alone,

¹ See Appendix I.

but is always connected with certain realities. In this way matter appears somehow connected with spirit, and, similarly, the sense perceptions are mingled with the spiritual perceptions. The spiritual man is the real being, and, because he is in God's image and likeness, he is intelligent, self-conscious, and conscious of his surroundings. This spiritual being becomes conscious of himself and of his surroundings by means of his spiritual perceptions; and since the spirit is the reality and is without defect, therefore these perceptions and the consciousness which is thus derived is real and without defect also.

Our senses are entirely silent about these realities except to ascribe to them those unreal qualities which we have supposed to belong to and to constitute the materiality of things. They correctly represent that there is a reality in each case, but they leave us in entire ignorance regarding that reality, and have set up wholly fictitious images, and have endowed them with pretended qualities and conditions that are wholly non-existent. That which they say exists does not exist at all, while they do not say anything about that which does exist.

It may all be summed up in the statement that our senses do not tell us anything nor do they know anything about spirit and its realities. Neither is it

possible that spirit has any knowledge of that which we recognize as materiality, because materiality is wholly non-existent.

250. This general subject has been examined from two exactly opposite points of view — from the most rigorous statements of science relative to the methods by which we derive our knowledge of materiality, and from a consideration of spiritual facts (221). These two rest upon distinctly different foundations, have not one thing in common, and are opposed to each other at every point; yet the conclusion derived from one is exactly the same as that derived from the other. The result is entirely conclusive, and there is not any basis in the present knowledge of mankind by which it can be reversed; neither is there any other basis besides these for an examination of the subject. What we understand as materiality is not a reality; it is non-existent.

In all this it is to be especially noted that it is only those apparent qualities which constitute what we have been accustomed to call materiality that have been found to be unreal in themselves and non-existent; that there has not been any denial of the reality of the ultimate object nor of its actions; nor can there be, for they are real, possess real qualities of some kind, and *their reality is here most positively affirmed.*

XXIX

THE PROGRESS OF NATURAL SCIENCE

251. In the infancy of the natural sciences all propositions were based on sense perceptions. As experience and knowledge increased, these perceptions began to be questioned; next they were subjected to corrections on some lesser points; and then, with the enlargement of observation, the scientific attitude began to change, though slowly, and for the most part unobserved by scientists themselves. The first great overturn followed the presentation of the Copernican system of astronomy. The contest was long and arduous, but the reasons for the new propositions were based on incontrovertible facts, and finally those special tales of the senses on which the old Ptolemaic system was founded were overwhelmingly proved false and it was abandoned.

Matter, accepted without question as a reality, was finally resolved into "ultimate atoms," which played a most prominent part in those days, when all theories were purely materialistic, and all things were sup-

posed to be composed of minute atoms of matter. At last investigation showed that the "rays of light" were not flying atoms of matter, but were vibratory movements of invisible ether; the theory of heat quickly followed. Thus two strongholds of materiality were overthrown, and the theory of an invisible ether, without weight, resistance, or other apparent materialistic quality, gradually came into prominence.

252. Investigators increased in numbers and in activity, and examination into the peculiarities of vibratory motions was vigorously prosecuted. The constitution and character of matter were examined at every point, and always with more or less damage to accepted theories. One class of investigators reached the conclusion that matter is only a mode of motion. Those who objected to this theory said, that if it were pressed too far, it would finally result in the ridiculous proposition that matter consists of "non-matter in motion," which would be pure motion with nothing to move — but motion without something to move is impossible.

Another class presented the idea that matter consists solely of points of force, "points" being a concession to the atomic theory; but force is not material any more than is energy. Mathematics had created for its own purposes a point which had neither

length, breadth, nor thickness, but place or position only — this furnished small standing-place for gross materiality.

Another class, very respectable both in numbers and in ability, argued that we experience nothing in matter but “energy-factors,” and that all material bodies are merely aggregates of energy; but energy is not matter, nor is it even material. Ward, of the University of Cambridge, England, declared that matter cannot be known apart from energy, and that “every physical quality we distinguish, every physical change we observe, every physical measurement or comparison we make, relates to energy, to the ‘life and activity’ of the physical universe; not one refers to the supposed vehicle or receptacle, ‘the body, as it were,’ of that activity.”¹

Though often spoken of lightly or in ridicule, yet the idealism of Berkeley exerted an influence far greater than has been acknowledged in scientific circles. In the progress of investigation, the atom continued to hold its sway over the great body of scientific men, although but little of materiality was left except mass, and mass, reduced to its precise meaning, includes little beyond inertia. Thus, the one unalterable quality of matter was found to be

¹ *Naturalism and Agnosticism*, p. 157.

inertia, or that which prevents a body from moving when at rest and keeps it from stopping when in motion. An authority no less eminent than Balfour, when president of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, said that in explaining matter they only succeeded in explaining it away.

Though Huxley reached his conclusions by a method largely different from that of others, and though he did not make positive assertions, yet he said, "What, after all, do we know of this terrible 'matter' except as a name for the unknown and hypothetical cause of states of our own consciousness?" And in another connection he said, "I am utterly incapable of conceiving the existence of matter, if there is no mind in which to picture that existence." And in yet another connection, "Our one certainty is the existence of the mental world."

Though we might wish Spencer were not so hopeless, yet he indorsed the same idea when he said: "The concept we form to ourselves of matter is but the symbol of some form of power absolutely and forever unknown to us; and a symbol which we cannot suppose to be like the reality without involving ourselves in contradictions."¹

Theory after theory has been presented. Change

¹ *Principles of Psychology*, Vol. I, p. 159.

is continual. Knowledge is not the same any day that it was the day before, and in that which relates to materiality what is accepted to-day will not be given credence to-morrow. Drummond illustrates this in his story of a celebrated Scotch professor, who, on being installed in a new position, was asked what books in his science should be removed, answered, "All that were published more than ten years ago."

253. At last, investigation of the vibratory movements resulted in the knowledge of the Röntgen rays. This marked a new era, but was quickly followed by other discoveries even more wonderful and more revolutionary.¹ Even the atom, which had held the allegiance of scientific men for more than a century, was found to be not at all the "ultimate particle" which they had supposed, for it was learned that each atom comprised within itself a system made up of thousands of other particles, all in rapid motion about each other; these they named electrons, and they now hold the position of what may be called

¹ The whole discussion is well illustrated by the statement of the Professor of Physics in one of our colleges who told his class that the discovery of the X-rays had demonstrated that matter does not occupy space; but he had no answer for his pupil who responded, "Where, then, is matter?"

the ultimate constituent particle.¹ Each electron is a bit of negative electricity, and each system of revolving electrons is itself surrounded by an envelope of positive electricity; these electrons and their envelope constitute what was so long supposed to be the ultimate atom of matter.

According to the present position of modern science, the atom, which is the foundation and constituent of matter, is nothing but electricity, positive and negative; but, *what is electricity?* When this question is correctly answered, it will solve the problem of materiality; but as yet investigators can only say, "We do not know."²

254. Science is now progressing more rapidly than ever before. Each change is made because of the discovery of new facts. This is progress; and it is significant that its direction is away from the material and toward the immaterial; away from the dictations of sense and toward the requirements of reason.

¹ Sir Oliver Lodge gives an illustration of the size of an electron: "If an electron is represented by a sphere an inch in diameter, the diameter of an atom of matter on the same scale is a mile and a half;" and he says the distances between electrons in an atom are "as great, relatively, as the distances between the planets in the solar system." — *Modern View on Matter*, p. 9.

² R. K. Duncan, in *The New Knowledge*, p. 188.

All these later discoveries have been made independently of the sense perceptions, and largely in defiance of their reports; and they reveal conditions of which the senses do not tell us anything. Scientists who so long followed the direction of their sense perceptions have, to a large extent, abandoned that leadership. The facts have slowly driven them from point to point until at last, notwithstanding their long and faithful allegiance to materiality, they have frankly taken refuge behind acknowledged ignorance. They do not know what either force or energy is, nor even the cause of inertia, which is their last quality of materiality, — and this intangible, — although they think it is purely electrical in its nature. Thus, electricity seems to be the last constituent of materiality left to them, and they not only do not know what electricity is, but if they put their hands on it it will kill them!

All present indications of science point in the same direction — toward something other than materiality. The final result can be nothing less than an acknowledgment that in the pursuit of materiality they have followed a phantasm, an error, a nothing — that matter is not in any particular a reality.

XXX

REALITIES

255. A careful consideration of truths connected with God and His undisputed qualities and essentials has resulted in the irrefutable proposition that there is not any materiality (221), and that proposition has been met with the counter statement that it cannot be correct because every one is aware of the existence and presence of materiality. The challenger neither questions nor denies any of the statements or arguments on which the conclusion is based, but rests his position solely upon the general results of sense perception, forgetting that when he accepts the two declarations so often heard, that God is infinite and that He is spirit, he admits the basis of the proposition which he so stoutly denies.

In response to this denial we have carefully examined the methods of the senses themselves, bringing to that examination only the fully accredited propositions of physical science; and this has resulted in the complete overthrow of all the testimony

of the senses. This leaves intact the conclusions concerning God and spiritual existencies, and it also leaves uncontroverted the accuracy of the contributing propositions and arguments.

256. At this point the "practical person" may inquire, "If our senses do not tell us the truth, why do they so seldom fail us when we so universally depend upon them?" The answer is very simple: Though not endowed with either visible or materialistic qualities, yet, the real object is in the place where the material object appears to be, and it is this reality upon which we depend; the appearance merely points out the location of the object. Our sense perceptions are not aware of the reality, though they recognize that something is there which points toward it; misled by them, we think that the unrealities are real and that our dependence is upon them, when, in fact, our dependence is upon the unseen reality and not upon its shadow which we see.

257. Since there is only one reality, and that the infinite reality of the infinite God (110, 113), then this which seems so obscured by these unreal appearances cannot be anything less than that reality which is the divine substance and which is all the reality and all the substance there is — the substance of the divine life of God (139). This divine presence

(100) is the secret of our interest in all that we see; it is this which constitutes the loveliness, beauty, grandeur, and majesty in all nature about us, and it is this that moves us to admiration, awe, and even worship; it is Something flashing out of the inner — a revelation of God Himself. God alone is real and substantial (113); He exists in all His innumerable manifestations, and when we are divested of the sense perceptions, we shall perceive both Him and all His manifestations as they are.

258. We, ourselves, appear to be dual — both spiritual and material. Our senses tell us that we are composed of matter, and in a vast majority of cases we think of ourselves as material, deal with ourselves as though we were material, and even believe ourselves to be material, just as we think of the clod or the stone, only we think them more wholly material than we are. This tale of our senses is false in this as it is in everything else. The materiality of man is unreal and non-existent; the spiritual of man is real and existent; and were it not for this spiritual reality, there would not be anything for the senses to misrepresent, nor would there be any appearance of a material man.

When we declare that the universe is spiritual and a manifestation of spirit, we do not, in any meaning of

the words, say that it is not substantial, nor that it is a shadow, a dream, an illusion. On the contrary, because it is spirit, it is the substantial, the real, and the enduring substance and existence, for God is substance (113), and God is existence (127), and as first cause, all came from Him and is the effect of His action (32); hence His substance is the constituent of the universe (44) and of all therein.¹

259. We have a consciousness of our spiritual nature, and the more we become aware of it and the better we apprehend it the more we prize and exalt it. The spiritual is real and eternal; at the most that is ever claimed for materiality it is changeable and transitory. We see great beauties in the world about us — in the earth, the sea, the sky — because somewhat of the beauty of God's spiritual earth and sea and sky shine dimly through the veil with which our senses have enwrapped them; and the more we understand the real, the more are we conscious of the spiritual shining through the material appearances. We distinguish it in the play of the facial muscles, the gestures of the hand, and even in the

¹ "The idealist is the true realist, grasping the substance and not the shadow. The man of sense is the visionary or illusionist, fancying things as permanencies, and thoughts as fleeting phantoms." — ALCOTT.

most common motions of the body in walking, standing, and sitting; we perceive it in the flash of intelligence in the eye, the steady illumination of deep friendship in the face, the gleam and glow of love in the whole being. These all differ from materiality, for they are governed, controlled, and manifested by spirit; they are expressions of the spirit of the man, and, though seemingly mingled with materiality, they are as distinct from it as is light from the darkness through which it is shining.

Not anything is lost by divesting both ourselves and everything else of our belief in materiality, for that which seems lost is in itself nothing. All there is comes from the one substance of first cause (32), and God is first cause (54), and God is life (140); or, as it is expressed by John, "All things were made by Him," and "That which hath been made was life in Him."¹ That life is the constituent and reality of every man, for the Infinite Beingspoke them all into conscious existence, out of His own life gave life to them, and out of His own mind endowed them with understanding; therefore, whatever the appearance, all realities must be of that divine life which is God's life and of that substance which is God's substance.

¹ John i. 3, 4; Rev. Ver., Margin. See chap. XL.

260. Man is in God's image, and in accordance with the principle of individuality (192, 198) there are as many manifestations of this image as there are individuals; hence, though all are of the divine substance, and though each life is of His life and expresses some phase of it, yet in all the universe there are never two alike. God is the infinite Being, with an infinite variety of aspects, and the race in all its variations, during all the ages, will not exhaust nor manifest them all. We are always to keep in mind that God, first cause, is the cause of all, and all that which hath been made must be of the one substance (41).

261. There is one great variety called human beings — those children of God who are also children of men; and there is another great variety called animals. These, in all their variations, are also consequences of the same first cause, and must be from the one sole and original source (45), for, we must remember, "That which hath been made was life in Him." Like man, they seem to be materialistic; but as in man, so in them, that appearance is not real; there is in each a real life, the sole constituent of which is from the life of God, which is the life of all that lives (41).

262. The same reasoning applies to another great

class of manifestations of life — the vegetable kingdom. Though almost hidden by the appearances of materiality, yet in trees, in flowers, in grass, and in all vegetation, as in animals and in man, we perceive varieties of life. We see the tree as material, yet we also perceive that it has life; and because God is first cause and all, there can be only the one infinite life; then the life of the tree and of all vegetation must also be a manifestation of that one life. If we allow our imagination to picture these multitudinous varieties as expressions of the one life, more than ever shall we feel to bow in reverence before their Creator, God.

263. Investigations show that even metals and minerals, and, so far as examined, all inorganic bodies, make a similar response to tests for life, as do the muscles of men and animals and the fibres of plants.¹ It is not the materiality of the metal or the mineral that responds to these tests, but it is the reality of them, the life of them, which is existent and real; the materiality of both metal and mineral, as of all other things, is non-existent.

264. Nor do we stop here. Modern biologists are

¹ See *Response in the Living and Non-Living*," by Y. C. Bose, M.A. (Cantab.), Sc. (London), Professor Presidency College, Calcutta.

declaring that, like the corpuscles of the blood, each microscopic atom of the physical system is an organized, living being, each with its own intelligence, acting in accordance with its own choice, in discharge of its own chosen activities, for which it was designed by the infinite Creator as much as man was designed for the place he fills. In line with this, and in harmony with the idea of life in all inorganic matter, the biologist tells us that the particles of which the rocks are composed are also living organisms, each, with intense activity, living a life of its own.

This sounds very much like a continuation of the theory of monads first propounded by Bruno more than three hundred years ago, and afterward modified by Leibnitz. Certainly beneath them all is one fundamental idea, however they may differ in its development. In the presence of these facts, who shall say that even the electrons, those minutest of all discovered things, which are endowed with the most intense activity, are not also individual, living, spiritual beings?

265. Further than this: since all the minute organisms which constitute living beings are themselves living beings, and even the atoms which constitute the rocks are also living beings, we are brought to the inevitable conclusion that this world and all the

worlds, our sun and all the suns of the whole starry universe, are living beings also.¹

There must be a guiding principle in each individual existence, whether large or small, a purpose for that existence, and a harmonious relationship of each to each for carrying out the one central idea which actuates the whole. So, also, there must be a guiding principle for each of the heavenly bodies, for each system, and for each system of systems; even the universe itself must be one great unit, an interrelated whole; must be one great living organism, God in it all and the constituent of it all, from the minutest contributing organism to the whole organized universe. While we may be able to grasp only a faint understanding of it, yet, as Henry van Dyke, in *The Other Wise Man*, says, "it is better to follow even the shadow of the best than to remain content with the worst."

✓ 266. There is a lesson in all this: From the least

¹ No less a person than that great pioneer in astronomy, Kepler, who saw so deeply into the secrets of the planetary system and its worlds, believed that the earth itself is a living body; and Professor Royce, of Harvard, says in his *Spirit of Modern Philosophy*, "The whole universe, including the physical world also, is one live thing, a mind, and great spirit, infinitely wealthier in his experience than we are, but for that very reason to be comprehended by us only in terms of our wealthiest experiences."

conceivable electron to the great whole of the entire universe, not one, though living for itself, lives for itself alone, but each, in its own world, whether large or small, exists for all and all for each; and in this is the divine harmony of the universe. Man, who looks upon himself as the crowning object of creation, is only a part of a living whole, and in common with the minutest atom that lives for him, he also lives for each of them and for the unnumbered and numberless organized beings of whom he has never heard any more than the electrons may have heard of him.

267. As the spiritual man is superior to the material man, so, throughout the whole creation, there is, in the perfection of the realities, a superiority and beauty of which we are largely unaware. Nature is now beautiful to our sight, but no one can tell us what we should behold if our spiritual consciousness were so open that we could perceive the sun and the stars, the seas and the mountains, as they are in the undimmed glories of their spiritual beauty and their absolute perfection, as God created them.

We delight in the beauty of the flower as we see it in its appearance of materiality, but what must be its spiritual beauty fresh from the mind of God Himself! When we shall finally perceive the living flowers themselves, in all the beauty of their God-

given reality, we shall forget what so delights us now. Not only in the flowers, but in all nature, the living, spiritual reality is vastly beyond anything which we now imagine.

Not one single thing that is real and good will ever disappear. Throughout the whole, each is a spiritual manifestation of the infinite Being who expressed them all; and each is in every respect as transcendently superior to its materialistic appearance as the spiritual being of him whom you call your friend is superior to the materialistic person whom you see. Extend this to the whole creation of which we have any consciousness, then, in imagination, add to it all that of which our senses are silent, and who shall tell us of the matchless beauty and glory of the existent realities by which we are surrounded!

“Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.” It will be a rending of the veil that hides the holy of holies; not as it was at Jerusalem, so that we may get a glimpse into an empty room, but so that we may have an undimmed vision of a universe filled with the divine glory of God Himself! Nor will it be for one man and for him only once a year; it will be for every one of God’s children in all the universe, and for every moment of unending existence.

PART FIFTH

ERROR

XXXI

GOD AND EVIL

268. As we look out upon the world we separate all things into two great divisions which, though they seem mingled in inextricable confusion, stand exactly opposite to each other. They have been called by various names, among which are good and evil, right and wrong, truth and falsehood, joy and suffering, pleasure and pain, health and disease, life and death. In primitive times, as far as history throws any light on these subjects, men had theories which accounted satisfactorily to them for the existence and character of the desirable things of earth, and some of these theories have continued to the present day; but with man's increasing intelligence and wisdom the questions connected with evil have steadily increased in mystery. As far back as the days of Job these problems were under serious consideration, and that

ancient book which bears his name furnishes an illustration of every position which has been assumed and of nearly every theory proposed regarding the origin, existence, and nature of evil and suffering. As the ideas about God became more coherent, as monotheism slowly developed, and as the recognition that God is good became stronger, more distinct, and more positive, the attempt to reconcile good and evil steadily grew more difficult, and evil became a greater problem than ever.

269. These, the greatest questions of the ages, enter into every form of belief, whether philosophical or religious; and erroneous reasoning and false conclusions about them have engendered antagonisms which have torn men and nations asunder and have deluged the earth with blood. The difficulties connected with this question are brought to a climax by the recognition that God is infinite, all-wise, all-powerful, and also wholly good (168). Why did such a God either create or permit evil? The thought that He is responsible for either its creation or its continuance provokes criticism, scepticism, disbelief, and open rebellion in the minds of the most intelligent, sincere, earnest, and right-desiring people, because these questions press sharply upon the problem of the ever-present appearances of suffering,

sorrow, and wrong. They are vital and intensely practical, for they directly concern the life and conduct of every member of the race. God is good, absolutely good (168); and it must be there is an answer which shall satisfy every mind and point a way whereby all questions about evil and error shall finally disappear. Right and wrong, good and evil, in all their forms and under all their names, are irreconcilable, and the question, why does evil exist, must be answered.

270. For the final solution of the vital problems which grow out of this question it is only necessary to examine the fundamental and irrefutable propositions concerning God, the first cause and creator; but in doing this we must adhere to those propositions with the same exactness, persistence, and confidence that we adhere to the basic propositions of the exact sciences. If we do this we can proceed, with the logical certainty of the mathematical processes, from a solid basis to a correct conclusion; and maintaining this accuracy and loyalty to our foundation, we may have the same unhesitating confidence in the results; nor ought we to meet with any more questioning from others than occurs in connection with a geometric problem. When this is done, the science of spiritual things will be as unvarying and as exact

as mathematics, and the science of morals will have no more deviations nor exceptions than does geometry. It is beyond doubt that this is attainable, and the world will never be satisfied until this accuracy is reached.

271. The argument proceeds along lines parallel to those in the discussion of materiality. At its beginning we again come face to face with the irrefutable propositions that God is (56), that He is all (65), that He is infinite (78), and that He is principle (156), which necessitate that other fact, that He is absolutely good — a goodness not diluted nor mixed with any contradicting or modifying qualities (168). These and other well-substantiated propositions constitute an incontrovertible basis, and if, without modifying them in the slightest, we hold undeviatingly and logically to them throughout all our reasoning, our conclusions must be sound and impregnable.

272. The reasoning is very simple: Since God is all (65) and He is positive and unconditioned good (168), then good is all there is; or, stated in the negative form, there is not any evil.¹ God is the first cause from which all proceeds, so that there is no other source from which anything could come (32), and He is absolutely good; therefore there is not any

¹ See Appendix K.

source nor origin from which evil or anything not good could come.

273. The same conclusion may be reached in another way. God is principle (156), and necessarily principle is entirely harmonious with itself and with all that it produces (163); therefore, in every particular, God must be entirely harmonious with Himself, with everything that pertains to Himself, and with everything that He ever produced or ever will produce. Then in all the universe there cannot be anything contrary to this condition of infinite, omnipresent, and perfect harmony and goodness (169); all that exists is good and there is not any evil.¹

¹ A quotation from St. Augustine's reasoning on this subject will show that the idea, so far from being new, was entertained by one of the most renowned of the Church Fathers. He says in his *Confessions*, published in the year 394, book vii, chap. 12: "And so, whatever exists is good; that evil whose origin I was seeking has no substantial existence; because if it were substance, it would be good. For either it would be incorruptible substance, and thus a great good, or substance corruptible, which could not be corrupted unless it were good. Therefore I saw, and it was made manifest to me, O God! how thou hast made all things good, and of course there is no substance which thou didst not make; and though thou didst not make all things equal, yet in this all are equal. Because each single thing is good, and at the same time all are very good; since our God hath made all things very good."

Athanasius, who was called "the Father of orthodoxy," and

274. There are many lines of reasoning which rest on the same basis, are similar in form, are equally accurate, and result in the same conclusion. God is all, and God is not only true but He is truth itself (120). Truth, which is one of God's essentials, is coextensive and coexistent with Him and is, therefore, one with Him (189). Then truth is infinite and all (124); consequently there cannot be any untruth, nor any error, nor any lie, and every appearance of this kind must be entirely unreal and non-existent.

The same idea may be stated in another form. God is all and, as the creator or first cause, He expressed all things out of His own consciousness, in which there is only good and perfection (172); hence, only goodness and perfection could be expressed by Him; therefore all that exists must be good and perfect.

275. The form of argument may vary with each variety of erroneous appearance; for instance, God is all and God is principle, but principle produces only harmony; then there cannot be any discord. Or, principle and truth are one (161) and infinite, therefore there cannot be any error. Or, the state-

who died in the year 373, said the same thing: "For evils must be called non-existent, but good is really existent, as having God for its true author."

ment may take yet another form: God is all and God is perfect (172), therefore there is not and there cannot be any imperfection; or, God is all and God is life; then life is all, and there is no death.

276. God is omnipotent, — able to do whatever He chooses (96), — but He is also wise (151), therefore He would not choose to create nor to permit a power that would oppose or interfere with Him; and God is the only creator (53, 54), He is absolutely good, and is our infinite Father (203), loving us unspeakably, infinitely (177). Consider what this means, and then ask yourself if He would send sin, suffering, evil, wrong, and misery upon His children! There is no other source from whence either of these could come, for God is all; He is both omnipotent and omnipresent, and nothing exists except in and through Him and by His manifestation. This leaves neither place nor possibility for any evil or error of any kind whatever; therefore, despite all these appearances which are so strongly supported by the testimony of the sense perceptions,¹ they must be totally unreal and non-existent.

¹ In an address delivered before the senior class in Divinity College, Cambridge, July 15, 1838, Emerson said: "Good is positive. Evil is merely privative, not absolute; it is like cold, which is the privation of heat. All evil is so much death or nonentity."

There is no mistake in our basic statement that God is all (65) and therefore infinite (78); neither is there any mistake in the declaration that God is absolutely good (168); to say less would be blasphemy. Then, beyond all question, everything that is is good, and the negative form of the proposition must be true also; all evil or error is non-existent.¹

277. God is both infinite and omnipotent; then there is no other power except His. If there were any other power He would not be infinite nor all, and therefore He would not be God (79). Thus we face the final dilemma: If God is, error or evil is not; if error is real, there is no God; both cannot be real and existent; the choice is between denying the existence of evil or denying God. There is no middle ground. Here we have the answer to the great question that is now pressing as it never did before — the solution of the otherwise insoluble question, why God either created or permitted evil.²

¹ See Appendix L.

² Dionysius, the Areopagite, one of Paul's converts, when he spoke on Mars Hill, "denies that men are evil by nature; denies, in fact, the existence of positive evil in the universe altogether. He cannot account for the presence of an active antagonistic principle after starting with a first cause perfectly good and powerful, from whence all things proceed." — *Two Treatises on the Hierarchies of Dionysius*, Introduction, p. 47.

XXXII

ERROR

278. In the last chapter we arrived at the certainty that in the reality of things there is not any evil; yet evil, error, wrong, falsehood, sin, suffering, and death, in all their countless forms, appear to all mankind on every side. In the discussion of materiality we met a closely similar situation, but, by an examination of its appearances and of their sources in the sense perceptions, we found that all those qualities which we group together and call materiality are wholly unreal (245).

An examination of the spiritual perceptions from basis to conclusion, and of the reasoning connected with them, has failed to find any defect either in basis or reasoning. Surely, then, there cannot be any question which of these two classes of evidence we should accept, — the false testimony of the sense perceptions, or the indisputable evidence of the spiritual perceptions, — and upon this decision the solution

of questions relative to error and evil may well rest;¹ but this is neither necessary nor advisable, because completely corroborative and entirely independent testimony exists in the character of evil itself.

279. Many names are used to designate those appearances which seem to stand in opposition to God and good, but few of them are large enough to embrace the whole class; therefore, for definiteness, it is advisable to use the word "error," which includes in its meaning the mistake, the wrong, the sin, the suffering, the falsehood, and whatever else is not good. An error is something different from what it ought to be; something which deviates from or is not conformable to accuracy, truth, or right, or which wanders from the true course; it is a mistake, an inaccuracy, a falsity; an expression or manifestation of untruth; therefore a lie.

280. A verbal lie is a type of all error. It furnishes an excellent illustration because it contains within itself the essentials of every error and is a subject of familiar experience which every one understands; moreover, it can easily be resolved into its elements

¹ This discussion was old sixteen hundred years ago when Plotinus asked, "Why does not man arrive at the truth?" Answering his own question, he said, "Because the soul is continually drawn away from the perception of divine things by external impressions."

and accurately presented in such simple terms that its analysis will have fewer intricacies and difficulties than would occur in the analysis of any other form of error. Let the illustration take a personal form, and let it be as entirely untrue as possible:—

281. “The last time Mr. Smith called on Mr. Jones he stole Mr. Jones’ book.”

Those who know Mr. Smith to be an honest man do not recognize in this statement anything but sheer falsehood; nevertheless, when analyzed, it will be found to contain within itself six indispensable items of fact and only one item of falsehood or non-fact. First, there is such a fact as Mr. Smith; second, there is such a fact as Mr. Jones; third, he has a book; fourth, he has a home; fifth, Mr. Smith came to his home; and sixth, he went away. If any one of these facts should be removed, that part which is untrue would become unbelievable. Thus, if there were no Mr. Smith, or no Mr. Jones, or no place where he lives, or if he had no book, or if Mr. Smith did not go there, or if he did not come away, then the error item of the story would be impossible, and the non-fact would no longer have a shadow of existence. All these facts are necessary to present to the mind the single non-fact — to make the lie seem to have an appearance.

282. If a person will bring into mental view the whole group of six facts so that they stand in the mind entirely distinct from the one non-fact, and, having done this, if he will then completely remove them from his mind and treat those six facts as though they did not exist, there will not be anything left of the non-fact; it will have disappeared into absolute nothingness, wholly beyond the reach of thought. The result of the separation of the lie from all else shows that it is so unreal and so wholly non-existent that it is unthinkable. Indeed, in order to think of it at all, it is necessary to have in mind certain realities or facts, and they must be kept in mind continuously, or the lie will disappear, and it cannot be restored to an appearance of reality except by bringing forward with it the necessary facts. Similar analysis of any error or of any false statement or condition will produce similar results.

283. At first the lie appears to be so important that it entirely obscures all else, and the listener thinks of it not only as a reality but as the only thing which has been stated; on the contrary, when detached from all else so that it might occupy the place of prominence which it claims, it at once and entirely disappears.

In a similar way we think of any error, whether

it be the fault of a child, the crime of a man, or a disease of the body, as of special importance, and it absorbs all the attention. Even trivial errors, like the scratch of a pin, the thoughtless and unintended remark of a friend, or even a bit of dirt on the hand, often induce discomfort which, for a time, excludes all consciousness of enjoyment. Each error occupies the same relation to things connected with it that the non-fact does to the facts, and when isolated it will also disappear. The simplest thought about the crime of stealing necessitates thinking about an owner, an object owned, another person besides the owner, and removal of the object by that person. Here are four items, each so indispensable that the absence of either from the mind makes all thought about stealing impossible. It is the same with thought about murder, for in that case there must be at least three items — the one who committed the crime, the action, and the person murdered; if one of these items is absent from the mind, thinking about the crime is impossible.

We can completely isolate any fact or item of truth, and it will not disappear as the non-fact does, and we can continue to think of it entirely by itself; but *it is an important peculiarity of every error, that it is impossible to perceive it when it is entirely disconnected from truth.*

284. President Hyde, of Bowdoin College, gives the following excellent illustration of the nothingness of evil: "The best figure for it that I know is that of a hole in the side of a boat. From one point of view the hole is a momentous reality. If not stopped, it will sink the boat and drown the crew. You must concentrate all your energies on stopping it at once. At the same time, the hole is, from another point of view, negative. It is the absence of the material that ought to be there. It is unfitness. It could not ever set up on its own account as something positive. It could not ultimately triumph and take the place of the boat altogether. A boat that should be all hole, nothing but hole, would be no boat at all. So a man who should be all bad would be no man at all. Badness can fasten on to men and work fearful havoc in them; but you can no more erect badness into a positive and permanent principle than you can make a boat all hole. When the poets try to make a devil, they have to put enough good qualities into him to float the bad ones. Milton's Satan is a strenuous, resolute, ambitious fellow, whom in many respects we cannot help admiring. A perfect devil, wholly bad, without a spark of goodness in him, is as impossible to conceive as a boat all hole and nothing but hole. A world wholly given over to the bad is as

inconceivable as shadow where there is no light, as universal debt in a community which has no property and no credit.”¹ Without the boat there could not be any hole. The hole depends upon the boat for its presentation of an appearance. So error always depends upon truth for its appearance, and were it not for the attendant truth it would not even appear to exist.

285. In connection with every appearance of error, whether great or small, even where it assumes the worst form of evil, truth is always present and necessary, as in the case of the verbal lie. Evil may seem to force itself upon our attention, but whosoever looks for the right and the good will find it, because without truth the evil could not present an appearance; and whatever reality or power error may be believed to have, God — the all-power — is always there in overshadowing and infinite reality. As there is never a shadow without sunlight, so there is never an appearance of error or evil without the truth or the good alongside; but the error is not truth, nor is the evil good any more than the shadow is sunlight.

286. When the lie about Mr. Smith was told (281), none of his friends for an instant believed it. To them there was no truth in it, therefore for them it

¹ *The Art of Optimism*, p. 25.

had neither influence, power, nor vitality. On the contrary, let the story be told to those who do not know Mr. Smith, but who think the narrator is a truthful person, and they will believe it. Notwithstanding its falsity, and solely because they believe it, *to them* it is true; therefore *for them* it contains all the influence, power, and vitality that it would have if it were true. But their belief does not change the fact, nor can it do so. Believing an error to be the truth never changes anything except the person who believes it.

Here are two groups of persons, those who do not believe the lie and those who do. With one group the lie has no influence whatever; with the other it has the same influence that it would have if it were a fact. This means that in every case, as in this, all the vitality, validity, influence, or power that error seems to possess arises from belief in it; and all its ability to perpetuate itself and produce more or greater error comes from the same source. Error is a reality to him who believes it, and it controls his actions exactly as truth controls them; to him who does not believe, it is nothing, for without belief it is dead.

If a true statement is made to several persons, some of the listeners may fail mentally to grasp all that is

said, others may infer certain things that were not said, and thus may have ideas about the statement which are entirely erroneous; yet each will think that his own understanding of the statement and all his ideas about it are correct. There is not any reality in those errors, but to each person who believes them they are real and true and they influence him the same as though they were so in fact; but not any one of the errors of any listener, nor all their errors combined, changes the facts of the statement one iota.

287. The straight stick partly in the water and partly out looks crooked. If the fisherman believes his spear-handle has been made crooked by thrusting it into the water, he will not hit his fish because he will use it as though it were crooked.¹ The man who believes the lie about Mr. Smith will treat him as though it were a fact, and, as with the fisherman, further and greater difficulties will follow. All the mistakes and wrongdoing of the whole world arise solely out of believing error to be the truth, and if we

¹ The old word in the Eastern languages from which our word "sin" is descended is figurative in its character, literally meaning, "a failure to hit the mark." Even the Greek "harmatia," which is translated "sin" in the New Testament, is from another Greek word which, nineteen times in every twenty, is also defined "failing to hit the mark."

could know the history of every wrong and of every crime, great or small, we should be able to trace it back to such a beginning.

288. Belief makes error all that it is; then it follows that, as the belief changes, the error also changes, and when the belief wholly ceases, the error disappears. But let it be distinctly understood that we are speaking of belief in error, and not of belief of truth, which remains unchanged whatever one's attitude may be toward it. Suppose a messenger comes with a telegram stating that your friend has been killed. If you believe it, that belief does not make it true, but it does make it *true to you*, and, by your belief, you are immediately thrown into the same mental and physical condition that you would be if it were true. Suppose that later a second message comes stating that the former was a mistake and that your friend is unharmed and well. If you believe this, by your change of belief you are at once restored to the same conditions that existed before the first message was received.

Had the telegram stated any other incident, the belief would have conformed to that statement. Had it said it was a sudden attack of illness, or the arrival of an unexpected guest, or a fire in a friend's house, in the same way the conditions, both mental and

physical, would have corresponded to your belief and would have varied as the belief varied. Error is to each person what he believes it to be; whatever the facts, the measure of the belief is the exact measure of the error, and as the belief changes, the error changes also. "Discordant thinking put out of mind, discordant results will not appear."¹ All this occurs regardless of any fact or truth that may or may not be connected with the belief.

It is only error that is changed by change of belief; belief or disbelief can never change either a fact or a truth, for truth is unchangeable (122). The belief of the whole world that the truth is not true does not make it untrue, nor does the belief that the untruth is true make it so. For centuries every human being believed that the sun moves and the earth stands still, but that did not change the fact. Man believed God to be jealous, vindictive, angry, and many other things of like evil and erroneous character, but their belief did not make Him so, but it did change the attitude toward God of those who believed such things of Him, making it distinctly different from that of the man who recognizes Him as love. Solomon said, "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he," — *so is the man*, — not so is the object of his thoughts.

¹ See *Right and Wrong Thinking and Their Results*, for further discussion of this subject.

The entire domain of error is as we make it by our beliefs, and does not exist outside of our own erroneous minds. Perhaps a distorted view of this condition suggested the theory that everything exists only as a mental picture in the mind, when in fact the whole universe of God's truth exists untarnished by the human mind and independent of it.

Throughout all its varying appearances, and notwithstanding the results which inevitably follow belief in its reality, the error, like the lie, does not exist. Belief makes the error all that it appears to be; but the belief itself is also an error — a mental illusion. When truth appears the error disappears, as does also the belief in the reality of the mental illusion.

289. Another illustration will throw further light on this subject and will show that error and wrong produce their own punishment. Suppose a man wishes to leave town and there is only one train to his destination, which leaves at nine. He believes there is another train at ten, and as that hour suits him better, he chooses that one. Because of his belief that train is just as real to him as the one at nine, else he would not choose it. Note the distinction: although the train is a reality *to him*, his belief that there is a ten o'clock train does not make one, nor

does it change anything but himself and his actions. At the station he stands face to face with the fact. In his recognition of the truth the untruth disappears, and a ten o'clock train no longer exists; but because of having believed an error to be the truth, he cannot reach his destination.

Out of his erroneous belief and as its direct consequence follow a series of inconveniences which are in the nature of punishment for having believed the error; and his own belief in the error was the sole cause of all these misfortunes. The cause exists in its effect, and therefore the effect partakes of the nature of the cause (34-44). If the cause is erroneous its effect is erroneous also, and sooner or later the result of any error or any wrong is recognized as undesirable, burdensome, painful, or even disastrous. This is in the nature of a penalty for the error, and it is inevitable. All punishment, except that inflicted by human beings upon one another, is the consequence of one's own errors, for it has no other source.

This is not a hard doctrine, because at the same time that it irrevocably fixes the responsibility and the result, it shows how the error and its consequent suffering may be avoided. That this principle is unchangeable is its virtue. Twice two are always four; and principle always acts in the same way,

whether in mathematics or in morals; having recognized the principle, man may shape his actions in accordance with it, and thus avoid the penalty and gain the victory.

290. Jesus is definite on this point: (*a*) "A good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but (*b*) a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit; (*aa*) a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, (*bb*) neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."¹ In other words, good produces good and evil produces evil, and this is in exact accord with the principle that the cause exists in its effect (41, 44). God is good and good alone (168), and from good comes only good, but never evil; therefore God never punishes. Punishment is always the fruitage of one's own error. This one fact relieves man of the thought and God of the imputation that He sends our suffering; and this is in accord with the teaching of Jesus. Good cannot produce evil, neither can evil produce good. Three general propositions sustain the position that one's punishment is always the fruitage of one's own error: First, it is the teaching of Jesus, the Christ, carefully elaborated by him, with his usual unequivocal positiveness; besides, it is the basis of many of his general

¹ Matthew vii. 17, 18; and xii. 33-35. See also entire context in both places.

propositions, and furnishes indirect corroborative support for many more; and it is never contradicted, either directly or indirectly, in any of his known acts or utterances.¹ Secondly, the broad principle that the cause exists in its every effect presents uncontrovertible philosophic proof of its accuracy. Thirdly, in a vast number of cases the difficulty can be traced indisputably to one's own acts; while most that is claimed to controvert the position belongs to pure assumption, and to that class of events whose source is beyond positive knowledge.

291. Although God does not punish, that fact does not introduce the slightest doubt of the certainty of punishment, for cause and effect conform to unchangeable laws which are derived from immutable principle. Effect will cease to follow cause only when eternal principle ceases to be principle; then, and then only, will there be any uncertainty about punishment and its exact adjustment to conditions, for "Whatsoever a man soweth that will he also reap," and "with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again;" and this law applies with the same inflexibility to the smallest details of one's daily life that it does to the most important; to the thoughts one thinks as well as to the acts one performs.

¹ See Matthew xii. 22-37.

XXXIII

CONTRADICTIONS

292. Like materiality, error, or evil, appears real, the world has long believed it to be so, with few exceptions the whole race still retains that belief, and to say that it is not real is to contradict what seems to every one a self-evident fact. To many who assert their belief in the unreality of evil, that belief is little more than theoretical, for they make it actual and practical only in certain special cases which are few in comparison with the many where they do not apply it.

Error appears to be something, but it *is* nothing, and right there is the contradiction which makes all discussion of the subject so difficult. Whoever attempts it at once finds himself in the anomalous position of dealing with a non-existent nothing as though it were a real something, for even in the thought of an existent "nothing" is a contradiction.

The only mental process possible in connection with the actual nothing is to think of something real

and then take that something away. Language follows the essential and fundamental methods of thought; consequently, there is not any ordinary word or phrase by which to designate the absolute nothing; instead are awkward combinations of assertion and denial which, if carefully analyzed and judged by the usual rules, are found to be meaningless.

The Irishman's definition is exactly to the point and accurately illustrates the unavoidable course of thinking: Two English scholars were discussing Irish acumen, when one declared that an ignorant Irishman would give off-hand a correct answer to any abstruse question. The first man they met was digging a hole in the street, and they asked him, "What is nothing?" With humor gleaming in his eyes, he promptly answered, "It is a futless stocking without any leg to it, yer honor." In this reply he correctly followed the exact line of mental procedure always taken in thinking on this subject. In no other way can one deceive himself into believing that he can think of an absolute nothing.

293. Wherever there is an attempt to express the entire absence of everything, contradictions inevitably appear. "Nothing," the word most used for this purpose, is an example; a "thing" is something

real and existent, but by the use of "no" we deny its existence; thus we say, it is a no-thing — nothing. It is the same with the prefix "non" (not one, or no one), used to deny the existence of that which is designated by the word to which it is attached. An illustration of the phrases used for this purpose exists in the simplest form of expression, "it is not." First we say "it is," and immediately contradict this assertion with "not," thus cancelling one statement with another. Every word or phrase that is used to set forth nothingness is constructed by the same rule, but we have become accustomed to these verbal contradictions and to our understanding of their meaning, so that we take no notice of them nor of the confusion of ideas.

294. So long as discussion deals with the nothing as though it were a something, no difficulty occurs, because that is the dominant thought about it, but the instant its nothingness is asserted the contradictions appear. This is caused in part by the attempt to make an accurate statement of the characteristics and conditions of error when, in their nothingness, there is an entire absence of all characteristics and of all conditions; yet, before any statement can be made, these seeming characteristics must be mentally erected into something which has some pretence

to reality. This is a contradiction of the whole proposition; therefore every discussion of the nature of error must unavoidably involve the one who attempts it in an inextricable tangle of self-contradiction. When this condition is understood, however, it should not cause any more confusion of thought than do the ordinary expressions which we all apply to the simpler and well-understood nothings.

Although evil is not a reality, yet, because such vast multitudes believe it to be real, and because even those who deny its reality continue to have the same sense perceptions of it that others have, speaking of it as a reality cannot be avoided. It is another case like the so-called red object which is not red (234), only discussion is transferred to a less tangible but vastly more important topic. The subtlety of the situation appears more clearly when we perceive that every time we speak of the object as red we make a misstatement in regard to it; and the same is true whenever we speak of error as real or in the terms of reality.

Were it possible once and forever to banish all idea of error from every mind as soon as the fact that it is unreal is recognized, every question concerning it would be answered, every doubt satisfied, and the whole difficulty at an end; but that seems no more

possible at the present time than it is for the eyes to see the quality or condition which really exists where they now see the red color; but in one case we understand the conditions and that satisfies us; when we understand them as well in the other, we shall be satisfied with that also, and all doubt will disappear. It is only by banishing belief in error from the mind that the difficulties and contradictions can be avoided.

295. Many who nominally accept the statement of the unreality of error and verbally acknowledge that it is non-existent, are still, though unconsciously, controlled by their former way of thinking. In the discussion of the subject there is no greater difficulty to be overcome than this unrecognized mental inconsistency. Having once made a decision, all thinking should conform to the accepted position. If a lie is an absolute nonentity (282), it is woefully inconsistent to acknowledge it as a reality, even to one's self; if it is a reality, it is foolishness to attempt to think of it as unreal; but if we conform our reasoning to the principle that God is infinite (78) and continuously adhere to that principle, it will correctly solve every problem connected with the subject. There cannot be any error (275), for God is infinite and God is all; therefore we must not admit any point in our

reasoning which rests on the assumption that there is error.

Out of this confusion and turmoil of error come the only arguments that have any weight against the proposition that intelligent design pervades the universe (142, 143), but all basis for such argument is destroyed by the clearly established fact that error is unreal. The elimination of the idea of error will clear the way for the perception of principle and of its perfect action through harmony everywhere (163).

296. No question connected with this proposition assumes more importance, nor are contradictions and difficulties more persistent, than those which arise in connection with the question of the origin of evil, and they have been discussed in various forms ever since man began to believe in its existence. In the Koran Mohammed says, "Whatsoever good betideth thee, O man, it is from God, and whatsoever evil betideth, from thyself it is," showing that he did not attribute the responsibility for evil to God.

The fact that the question, "Where did error or evil come from?" is so often asked by those who assume to accept the proposition of its unreality is proof that the conditions are not understood and that the proposition is not fully accepted. Whatever the questioner may think or say to the contrary,

he has a strong undercurrent of belief in the reality of error; therefore when he asks, "Where does it come from?" his "it" refers to error which, though he may not be aware of it, is to him a reality, at least while he is asking the question, and probably all the time while he is considering the answer. For the moment he has set aside the idea of its nothingness, has erected his sense perceptions into something existent, and has made the "it" a reality to himself. The same condition appears in every contradictory "nothing" — it seems to be at once both non-existent and existent.

He is trying to ride two horses at one time. In order to have an understandable and satisfactory answer, he must dismount from one and ask his question from a definitely fixed seat on the other. If the questioner were in the room with only one other person, he would not ask where a third person came from; and if such a question were asked, it would be sufficient to answer that there is not any third person present. So in this case error and evil do not exist, and there is not anything to ask about. The sole reason why the question appears necessary, or even possible, exists in the belief that "it" is real. Either "it" is, or "it" is not. When one accepts the proposition that God is all, and therefore that error

is non-existent (275), then let him put out of his mind all recognition of the reality of the appearance of error, apply this to the "it," and then the "it" will no longer appear to be existent. The question then takes the form, "Where does nothing come from?" which needs no label to be recognized as an absurdity.

297. Another may say: "I admit that error in itself is non-existent, but there is this appearance of error of which every one is aware; where does that appearance come from?" This is only the previous question in another form, but the questioner has erected into some sort of an existence to himself what he thinks is a new "it." This "it" is nothing; the appearance is an appearance only, the seeming is a seeming only. All are errors and are unreal and non-existent (275), and their origin can be asked about no more than can the origin of any unthinkable nothing (282).

298. Persisting, the questioner says, "But I can see the evil, and so does every one else, and I want to know where this which I see comes from." This is mere insistence on the previous question which has already been twice answered. The straight stick, partly in the water and partly out, appears to be crooked, but no one asks what made it crooked nor

where the crook came from. The rainbow appears to be a visible reality, but no one asks where it came from, though countless boys have chased the beautiful phantom. We are surrounded by unrealities which seem as real as does any appearance of evil, but no one asks their origin, because in one way or another every one has been convinced that they are not real. Neither is what is seen as evil real.

299. Still persisting, the question is asked, "But where did the first error come from, and how did it begin?" As well might one ask about the last error he himself made, and of which there are only two possible explanations; either it came from an antecedent error, or else it had no origin, as is unconsciously acknowledged by the not unusual admission, "I do not see how I came to do that" — that is, he could not himself find an origin for his own error of a moment before. If one attempts to follow an antecedent error to its source, he cannot find it because it did not have any source. In the same way comes every error, out of the nothing and the nowhere into an appearance which is itself non-existent; it seems to be something, but it is nothing.

300. "But what you fail to explain is the origin of the idea of error," the questioner asserts. Again the answer is simple — so simple that even the wisest

often fail to perceive it because they are entangled in the attendant contradictions. It has been shown that all error is unreal and non-existent (280, 281, 282); then every idea of error is itself an error and is likewise non-existent. This is in exact accord with the basic propositions. The inflexible principle that God is all (65, 78), and God is Truth (120), therefore there is not any error, must be applied to every form, appearance, belief, or idea of error.

This is the correct explanation of the condition, and when understood, it satisfies every doubt and answers every question by extinguishing them all in the recognition of the non-existence of error. Failure to understand arises from the questioner's own recognized or unrecognized belief in the existence of error, which obscures the truth and makes reasoning far more difficult.

At last we are asked, "Why do we believe lies? We reason them out perfectly, we think we do not believe them, we say that we do not, and then act as we would if we believed them all." We do this because we allow our sense perceptions to assert themselves, and, habitually yielding to their control, we follow their dictations; but neither spiritual progress nor peace lie along that road, and some day

mankind will waken to this truth, make a new Declaration of Independence, and throw off the bondage of powerless unrealities as they would a nightmare.

301. Those who believe in the existence of materiality and in the reality of evil, and at the same time also believe God to be their creator, must find in the extreme cruelty of both materiality and evil, as well as in the entire absence from them both of all consideration or feeling for any sorrow or suffering, an emphatic contradiction to all their ideas about the compassionate, beneficent, all-loving, or even humane care for His children by God, the creator of them and of the universe. Fire, the lightning bolt, the tornado, the earthquake shock, and the belching volcano are not emissaries of peace and good-will. The two are irreconcilable.

302. Considering the facts as they are ordinarily stated and understood, the crude reasoning and the fierce denunciation of the uncultured product of the streets of a great city seem justifiable. An accident had occurred which caused his innocent and unoffending friend excruciating suffering; he was told that God, the cause of all things, was responsible for it. In his blind and impotent sympathy for his friend, and filled with rage at the condition, he re-

torted, "Then damn God!"¹ That uncouth imprecation finds a responsive, if unrecognized, echo in every impulsive human heart that accepts the bald proposition as it had been presented to this crude boy. If they accept that boy's basis, they cannot deny that his logic was accurate, his conclusion correct, and his execration a natural outburst of a loving, impetuous nature.

The only escape from such a dilemma exists in the fact (for fact it has been shown to be) that materiality, error, and their attendant sufferings are neither true, real, nor in the remotest degree existent. It is only on this basis that God can be the all-wise, good, loving, and beneficent Being He has been represented.

303. After all this the questioning wrung from the depths of sorrow and acute suffering is the most difficult to satisfy, for it includes all questions, and we are not surprised that many ask, "But what of the errors that daily touch human life, that color it constantly, that warp, and twist, and torture? They are hardly to be classed with troubles that grow out of making mistakes, or with the little every-day occurrences — they are things of the heart, not things of the head." True; but they were things of the head before they were things of the heart, and they

¹ Told in "Rags," by Will Allen Dromgoole.

would never have been heart things if they had not first been head things. Because of the intensity of the anguish which demands to know, these questions are more difficult to answer, just as the unreality of these things of the heart is more difficult to realize; and by just that much more are they entitled to a correct and intelligible reply.

That infinite Being whom Jesus, the Christ, taught us to call Father, who, we are convinced, is good in the absolute purity of goodness, who loves us with a love that is incomprehensible to anything less than His own infinite love, who has given to us even the very love which prompts this question (177), would not inflict suffering on the child He loves; and surely it needs no argument to establish this statement, for the recognition which love gives to love is emphatic testimony to its truth. Did not Jesus, the Christ, say, "If ye know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more *your Father who is in heaven!*" A loving earthly father would not give his children stones and serpents; how much less would God, our heavenly Father! And there is no other source from whence they could come!

The very intensity of our sense of suffering hides the reality from our sight, for suffering of every kind always distracts attention from other things and rivets

it upon itself. We forget that we have seen how neither materiality nor any of the things of materiality exist (248), and this necessarily includes all suffering of every kind and all that is derived from it. All suffering, whether physical or mental, is caused by belief in materiality, or by belief in some other form of error; but the nothingness of error in every one of its forms has been clearly shown, therefore it cannot have any "source" nor any existence. Then, the suffering which calls forth these questions, though it may seem a heartless taunt to say so, is unreal and nothing; and, holding steadfastly to the principle that God is all and good, will surely bring recognition of this truth. Full recognition of this great truth, and power to enter into complete freedom from the bondage of physical and mental suffering, may be very slow of acquisition, for there are many things to unlearn and to be put out of mind; but many other far less important things are also difficult to master, yet each step forward makes the next step easier, and the gain of each individual lifts just so much from the weight holding others down. We hear much of the influence of the progress of the present generation on those who are to follow. In no direction is there certainty of such stupendous results for good to one's self and to succeeding

generations as in the work of laying the foundation for complete immunity from suffering, both physical and mental; and when that victory is won, mankind will indeed enter into the full enjoyment of its birth-right of freedom.

XXXIV

THE IMPASSABLE GULF

304. There are many who acknowledge that God is wholly good, yet they believe that error is real, and this belief makes imperative the necessity to present some sufficient reason or excuse for its existence, in order to escape the dilemma involved in the statement that God is its author or else that He permits it. These inconsistencies include the great problems of the moral world which so insistently clamor for solution, and under their pressure many attempts are made to account for the existence of error on some basis which shall excuse God if it does not justify Him.

305. Recognizing that God is all and that He is wholly good, they have no alternative except to acknowledge that all that is is also good; on this basis it follows that if evil is real, in some way it must be good. In attempting to explain their position, they say that evil is good which is out of place, or is not understood, or is in the process of development;

and they claim that it is a necessary element in the production of good, that it results in good, that it is indispensable for the development of the human race, that man could not have reached his present desirable condition without it, and that he would not continue to progress if it were removed from his path. Some go so far as to say that a state from which all error has been eliminated would be a "flat, stale, and unprofitable" condition of intolerable monotony.

306. It would be the simplest solution of the difficulty if the assertion that evil is good could be sustained, but such a statement is so wholly inconsistent with the character of evil that various attempts have been made to put the inconsistency out of sight. One such attempt is by claiming that evil is good out of place. This claim may divert the attention from the chief issue, but it does not remove the difficulty, because, being out of place is in itself an error, and the same questions which are asked about evil may be asked about good out of place, and they will present the same perplexities.

To say that evil is good which is not understood, or which is misunderstood, brings in another and a greater error than being out of place, and one which more earnestly demands explanation. This plea only substitutes one error for another, because to fail

to understand that which is good, or to so misunderstand good as to think it is evil, is a serious error on the part of the one most directly concerned.

To say that evil is good in process of development is a subterfuge of the same sort. If the evil is in the process of becoming good, then it is not now good but is evil still, and we are in the same position as at the beginning.

307. The quality of evil is so inherent in error of every kind that all attempts to show that it brings forth or produces good are equally futile. Error or evil produces error or evil and never produces anything else (41). The contrary opinion results from failure properly to analyze conditions, to disentangle good from evil, and to set each apart by itself. Only in that way can one decide whether any man was ever made better by doing wrong.

A thief is not changed into an honest man by continuing to steal, but by ceasing to steal and practising integrity. It was stealing that made him a thief at first, and persisting in the practice only creates hindrances to all his impulses toward honesty. It may be insisted that he afterwards became a better man; but this did not result from previous dishonesty, for that made him a worse instead of a better man. If all the efforts which he devoted to stealing

and to the avoidance of detection had been directed to overcoming the desire to steal, there would have been no lost ground to recover, and he would have been steadily advancing in the direction of honesty.

It is the same with every appearance of error; yet, an eminent divine, who, in his time, was known wherever the English language is spoken, declared in one of his sermons that Mary Magdalene was a better woman for having been bad! This statement illustrates the entire position, it occupies the very pinnacle of false conclusions on the subject, and its fallacy is sharply exposed by the conclusion which legitimately grows out of it as a basis, for if it were true, all girls should be educated to become Magdalenes. The error which here beclouds the understanding arises from failure to trace each effect to its proper cause, or else from an attempt to justify God in doing what it would be wrong for man to do (169).

308. The idea that obstacles and difficulties improve a man belongs to this class, and holds its place solely because of failure correctly to analyze conditions. Stated without entangling specifications, this is a claim that a disadvantage is an advantage, and is of the same sort as the more general claim that bad is good. It is closely allied to the plea so often made, that what is wrong at one time is, for some special

reason, right at another, though this idea is always carefully couched in misleading terms. It is neither the obstacles nor the difficulties that improve the man, but it is the efforts which he makes to overcome them. Remove these difficulties and let him make the same effort without them that he would have made with them and he will rise to greater heights than he would have reached if he were first compelled to devote time and energy to the removal of obstacles. The racer handicapped with a weight cannot go so far nor so fast as without it.

If the difficulties by which men are surrounded constitute an advantage, then the endeavors of benevolent people to remove obstacles from the path of the unfortunate are all a mistake, and the greater kindness would be to pile more hindrances in their way. On the contrary, investigation of each case will show that, instead of the adverse circumstances pushing the person into other and improved conditions, it was the desire for something better, united with ambition, determination, and perseverance — all qualities within the individual — that stimulated the necessary effort. This is evidenced by the fact that, among persons living under adverse conditions, only a small proportion make any marked advance, and that advance is curtailed by the time and effort

expended in removing obstacles. In the pursuit of knowledge all start in the same condition of ignorance, and it is the desire for more knowledge that induces a portion to continue their efforts even after having secured very great attainments. It is always the vision of some unattained good that inspires and stimulates ambition, and that continues to lead a person on long after the objects first desired have been secured.

309. The thought that sickness reforms men is an old error that arose in the times when men believed that God sent sickness as well as death, and both were attributed to "the inscrutable dispensations of an all-wise Providence." This belief, coupled with an instinctive desire to justify God in all His acts, made men try to find good in sickness; but the phrase "inscrutable decrees" is an unconscious confession of abject failure. When reform followed sickness, the reform was attributed to the sickness, although, in fact, the cause of the reformation was the good implanted in the person by the loving Father whom they so sadly misunderstood. The necessity for "defending" God with such blasphemy is rapidly passing away, for the spread of intelligence is convincing the world that sickness is the result of the violation of law, and is, therefore, caused by some previous

error. In every explanation made with the intention of showing that error is good the trail of the serpent drags behind.

310. The difference between good and evil is not merely one of words and definitions; it is a difference of essential characteristics existing in the qualities themselves. Truth and error, right and wrong, are seen to be absolutely distinct from each other when separated from all association with confusing circumstances and conditions. This difference is so complete that, in compliance with a law of thought and a consequent use of language, each has its own phraseology, and the terms are never transferable. In defiance of all attempts to explain away differences or to make a transfer of qualities, the phraseology remains forever as distinct as the ideas, and there is no method by which to eliminate one set of terms without introducing verbal contradictions which reveal the inherent character of both good and evil.

Those who declare that evil is good repudiate their own assertions by their acts, for they denounce evil practices as vehemently as do others, and they are as earnest as any one in their efforts to escape evil, thus unconsciously showing that behind their conscious thought there is the innate conviction and

recognition that evil is evil and that it is never good.

If this plea that evil is good or that it produces good were indeed true, it would entirely obliterate morality itself, because there would not then be any distinction between morality and immorality; bad would be the equal of good, vice of virtue, wrong of right, pain of pleasure, and so on through the entire list. This would be the inevitable result, if the position of those who attempt to justify God for creating or allowing evil were correct, and we must either accept this conclusion or stand squarely on the proposition that evil is non-existent; there is no escape from accepting one or the other of these alternatives. Jesus gave us the basis for the correct solution of this problem when he stated the unchangeable and fundamental principle that good produces good and never evil, and that evil produces evil and never good (290).¹ No form of error can ever result in any good, nor can it ever become an element in the production of good, nor can it ever be necessary or an advantage in the development of the human race.

311. Good and evil proceed along different lines, and each is entirely distinct from the other. Truth

¹ Matthew vii. 17, 18. See Appendix K.

and right are always true and right, and neither a change of terms, nor of thought, nor of belief, ever makes them anything else. Error and evil are always erroneous and evil, and neither what one man may say or may think, nor any change of conditions nor of circumstances ever makes them right; and there is no greater error than to miscall them.

Good produces good and never evil, and evil produces evil and never good, for the reason that the cause exists in its effect (34-41); therefore it is impossible that anything can ever pass from one to the other. There may be a mingling, as between light and darkness, but there cannot be any more union than between oil and water. The impassable gulf exists between truth and error as it does between spirit and materiality.

There is not any method by which God can be either justified or excused for producing evil; and, since there is no other creator, if God is responsible for all the infirmities, wrongs, tortures, and torments of anguish, both physical and mental, which evil seems to inflict upon mankind, one would be without blame for declaring that no devil that the imagination has devised has been painted as black as He is. But to say this of God who is absolute goodness (168), perfection (172), purity, and truth (120),

would be blasphemy of the worst possible kind. Our loving heavenly Father is neither directly nor indirectly responsible for the afflictions which seem to come from evil, nor for our belief in its existence.

Throughout this chapter we have proceeded on the basis of those who argue that evil is real, and it is only on this basis that the impassable gulf can present an appearance. According to this theory, on one side is the infinite God with all His existent reality; on the other side is the whole of error; and between them is the impassable "gulf," but from every possible point of view error is an absolutely non-existent nothing, therefore there is not any chasm, nor even a dividing line, for there is nothing to be divided — the infinite God is ALL. Because the error mind of the race seems conscious of error, it is continually battling for its reality, and this imaginary line is used here solely to help those who believe in the reality of error to comprehend the unchangeable distinction between the good and the non-good, between the reality and the unreality, between that which is and that which is not.

312. In the discussion of all questions of moral reform the recognition of the nothingness of error is especially valuable. Man is usually spoken of as good or bad, but he seems to be a compound of many

diverse units, some good and some bad. We speak of the man who formerly was said to be bad as having changed from bad to good; but this statement is not accurate, for a critical examination will show that not one of the units that compose the man has changed. He may have added good units, or he may have so effectually discarded the bad ones that they have entirely disappeared; but this is all that has occurred. There has not been any change in either profanity or vulgarity, but the man has laid them both aside, and cleanness of speech necessarily appears. Perhaps formerly he lied; the lying itself has not changed, but he has dropped it out of himself completely. Formerly he was a drunkard, but he has laid off that habit; and so on through the whole list of errors. He has dropped his errors, and they have disappeared into their own nothingness so that, unobscured by them, *the man himself* now stands before his fellows as he is; but not one thing in the man has changed. This is the simple but complete explanation of what is usually called reform. Thus it was with Christian in the great parable of Bunyan — when he let the burden slip from his shoulders it was gone, he did not know where.

313. The basis and explanation of progress or improvement is not found in the theory that error,

evil, or wrong is itself ever made in any degree less bad, nor that it is in the slightest proportion made better or changed into good, for both are impossible (310, 311). Jesus never asks a man to make himself over, but he does ask all men to abandon evil, and this they can do. The proportion between the truth and the error in a man is changed by the abandonment of error. It is not intended in this statement to undervalue the cultivation, enlargement, and multiplication of good qualities; that is important and must not be omitted, but the first essential is abandonment of error, and when that is done the other will take care of itself.

314. It is important to note that the line of demarcation between good and evil does not run between man and man, as has sometimes been supposed, but it runs through every man, for the worst man has some good in him and the best seems to have some evil. All good is of God — of His substance — and cannot be lost. All error is nothing, and cannot be “saved.”

315. The whole scheme of righteousness — of right doing, right living, and right being — is comprised in the single precept: abandon all error or wrong. Looked at from one point of view, this may appear to be purely negative, a “let-alone,” or a

‘do-nothing’ policy; but this is a mistaken idea, for if one complies with this precept, no way is open for him except the way of absolute rightness. If he stops lying, there is not anything left for him to do but to tell the truth; if he stops defrauding, he must respect the property rights of others; if he stops drinking, he must lead a sober life; if he stops doing wrong, then, perforce, he must do right. Compliance with this single precept would result in entire correctness of life, and it is worthy of special note that to do this does not require either contention, dispute, nor resistance of any kind.

The teaching of Jesus rests very largely on this basis; He never advises resistance of evil, but always counsels its abandonment. “Resist not evil” is one of his emphatic and unqualified precepts. Both directly and indirectly he admonishes men to abandon thoughts of anger, lust, covetousness, hatred, revenge, and condemnation, and wholly to discard all erroneous thoughts. He teaches that in this way absolute perfection may be attained, and this teaching is scientifically accurate, because total abandonment of erroneous thoughts will leave only the good ones, and their manifestation would be the manifestation of good and good only; and this is absolute perfection. This makes perfection not only a possibility, but

puts it within the reach of every one who is willing to make the effort to attain it. Thus becomes possible the complete fulfilment of Jesus' great declaration, "Ye therefore shall be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect."

316. In the abandonment of evil lies the great principle which should govern choice, judgment, and condemnation. The choice is between truth and error, good and bad, right and wrong, that which is truly desirable and that which is not desirable; and, whatever the circumstances, however strong the influences which surround one, the final question of choice rests entirely with the individual. He may allow his own judgment to be subservient to that of another, or he may neglect to use his own God-given powers of perception, but whatever attitude he takes, the choice is his own, and so, too, is the responsibility for results. As perceptions become clearer, the differences between truth and error are better understood, the ability to judge wisely increases, and choice is correspondingly improved. That which is believed to be right is more and more recognized and retained, while the erroneous is more and more "cast into outer darkness," where its identity and apparent reality disappear. This progress will not cease until the last error is rejected, and that rejection

will constitute the final condemnation when "the last enemy shall be destroyed."

Man sees an object which seems to him to promise good, and he pursues it, but after a time experience shows him that it is not good, and therefore he no longer wants it; he is the judge, and he judges it and condemns it. From item to item this will go on until, in the light of truth, — the light which the Christ sheds over the whole world, even the "light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world," — the last error will be recognized and gladly cast away.

This must be man's own work, for Jesus, the Christ, says, "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the son."¹ This has been interpreted to mean that all judgment is the work of Jesus, the Christ, but Jesus also says, "*I* judge no man,"² which distinctly refutes this interpretation. He also said, "Judge not, for with what judgment ye judge ye shall be judged,"³ — showing clearly that man is not to judge his fellow-man. What, then, can the words "but hath committed all judgment unto the son" mean if not that

¹ John v. 22.

² John viii. 15; John xii. 46-48; John iii. 16, 21.

³ Matt. vii. 1, 2.

each one — each son of man — is to sit in judgment upon his own life, his own acts? that both judgment of himself and condemnation of his own errors are man's own work?

317. Although error has no existence beyond that resulting from a person's belief in it (286), and although that belief is itself an error, these facts do not abate one tittle of its pernicious character. In so far as one has made it real to himself it is to him error, evil, sin; and it is to be avoided, abandoned, let alone, with the same sincerity and persistence that it should be if it were indeed a reality, because, having made it a reality to himself, for himself the error must follow the course of all reality and obey the inflexible principle that the cause exists in its effect; therefore, while persisted in, it must continually bring forth to him more and worse evil.

Its nothingness affords no escape for him who believes it to be real, and, say what they may, excuse themselves as they will, assert their unbelief in it with all the emphasis possible, those who indulge in wrong of any kind do so because they believe it to be a reality; and they cannot abate the least jot of its recompense. Their belief has made it all that to them it appears to be, and their belief will make its

fruitage equally real to them; they must harvest their own crop, drink to the bitter dregs their own cup, whether the world knows of their wrongdoing or whether all knowledge of it is buried in the inmost recesses of their hearts.

XXXV

GOD AND REASON

318. In the discussion of mind its duality has been suggested, and we have now arrived at a place where we can make a closer examination of that duality and of other propositions connected with mind. It has been established that God is mind (149) and that He is infinite, and therefore His perception, cognition, and consciousness must also be infinite, and because of His perfection (172) these actions must be perfect.

319. In His omniscience (146) God must perceive perfectly all that now is, not only as a whole but also each individual item by itself alone, and this must include consciousness of self. Because God is infinite, He perceives all that ever has been throughout the entire continuity of beginningless past existence, and all that ever will be in all the endless continuity of future existence; therefore, because the infinite mind of God is absolutely without limitation, all the past, all the present, and all the future are always before Him as Now.

The same conclusion would result from a consider-

ation of God's presence (99), which, because it is infinite (101), is now, always has been, and always will be, equally present at every instant everywhere; therefore, again we say that everything, whether of the past, the present, or the future, is always before Him; and what is true of mind and presence is also true of each of God's essentials.

320. Because of this infinite and perfect perception, which includes the whole of each object and of each action or event, from its inception to its completion, there is not any possible cause, occasion, nor opportunity for reasoning; consequently all operations of the mind of God must, so far as they can be known to man, be comprised in perception, cognition, and consciousness. By perceiving, God knows all and is eternally conscious of the beginning, course, and completion of every object, action, or event; therefore it is a logical necessity that He does not reason.

321. God, first cause (54), is the only source (32). Then man, produced through the action of God, does not possess anything which he did not receive from God (44); therefore, because reasoning is not from God, it does not exist in man; consequently the real mind of the real man perceives, cognizes, is conscious, but does not reason.

322. Thus the duality which seems to pervade the

universe also appears in what man calls his mind. He has a mind of truth, which is real, existent, and derived from God; he appears to have another mind that seems to reason and to perceive error (282), which we will call the error mind to distinguish it from the real mind. Because man does not perceive the whole of an object or event from its beginning to its completion, he deems it necessary to reason about it, thereby to arrive at conclusions for himself regarding what he has perceived. Here, again, appears the gulf dividing the real from the unreal, the true mind from the error mind.

323. This conclusion may seem to destroy the whole structure which has been so carefully built up by means of what men call reason, but examination will show that perception occupies the important and dominant position in this process, for reasoning depends entirely upon perception for its effectiveness. The structure is not destroyed, but the fundamental importance of the process is transferred from reasoning to perception.

At the beginning it was shown that in every case the foundation underlying all mental processes is something perceived (6); it was also shown that the essential of all evidence and of all proof is perception (20); and these two propositions include the whole.

324. The syllogism is the type and the simplest of all logical forms, and it includes the essential of all reasoning processes; but reasoning depends so entirely upon perception that every step in its course must be ratified by it, and perception must finally crown the conclusion with certainty.

As in all reasoning, every syllogism begins with the declaration of something perceived (28). Thus we begin with the declaration, "God is." This is only an assertion about a perception. The second step in the process is the declaration, "God is all"; and this also is an assertion about a perception which constituted the conclusion of an investigation (65). Then, third, is the declaration, "God is good"; our connection with this proposition began with the description and perception of absolute goodness (167) and ended in the perception that God is good (168). Place these three perceptions in a group, — "God is, God is all, God is good," — contemplate them in unison, and there follows a fourth perception, "All is good." This last is ordinarily called a conclusion, and is regarded as the result of reasoning; but even if that were correct, it is still true that unless this result and its relations to the three preceding propositions are perceived in the same way that evidence and proof are perceived (13), the concluding declara-

tion would be a meaningless blank; thus showing that perception is the one fundamental, constructive, and conclusive factor, giving life and power to the basis, the process, and the result. Without perception neither of these steps in the process could exist, and there would not be even the beginning of a syllogism.¹

325. The old fable of the two knights and the shield shows the impotence of reason unaided by perception. One had seen the red side only, and from that he "reasoned" that the shield was red; the other had seen only the blue side, and in a similar way he "reasoned" that the shield was blue. Each reasoned from incomplete perceptions, and the error arose from drawing a general conclusion from an incomplete basis. Had either taken a single look at the other side, there would have been neither occasion nor use for reasoning, and there would have been no dispute. By itself alone, without the aid of previous perceptions, reason never could have arrived at a knowledge of the fact, because it had no power to originate the idea that the two sides of the shield

¹ Proof that this is correct is seen in two common exclamations. When a proposition bursts upon the mind of one to whom it is new, he exclaims, "I see"; or, if he is slow of perception, his friend asks, "Don't you see?" and after further hesitation comes the response, "Oh, yes, I see!"

were of different colors. Reason alone cannot correct the defect of erroneous or incomplete perception. Here reason is not only lame and halt, but blind and useless; and were man's perceptions complete, as they always are in the infinite mind, there would be no place for reasoning and it would never be needed.

326. All inductive reasoning is defective because the basis is never complete, and one can never be entirely certain that his conclusion is correct unless everything included in the proposition has been perceived, and then reason is needless. An old illustration is exactly in point: "All the grass that one has seen is green, therefore he reasons that all grass is green;" but with every perception of grass of another color corrections are necessary. A real induction is never made with absolute certainty. Worse difficulties occur when the perception is erroneous (21). Because of the erroneous perception of sight, the straight stick partly in the water and partly out appears crooked, and unaided reason is powerless to correct the error. The correction is always made by the aid of added perceptions, and without them no correction can be made. The final certainty depends upon perception.¹

¹ "Sir William Hamilton affirmed that philosophy changes about every thousand years from idealism to realism, and that philosophy

All that can be said about reasoning does not destroy nor in any way weaken the structures built upon the axiom and the syllogism, but it does shift the foundation and essential of certainty from reason to perception, shows that reason is not only valueless but impossible without perception, and demonstrates conclusively that accurate perception is the basis on which all knowledge rests.

327. It is not well to leave this subject without calling attention to an important exemplification of it. Though Jesus, the Christ, did not proclaim any system of philosophy, yet the soundest philosophy underlies all that he taught; and, though all that he said will endure the most rigorous tests of scientific reason and logic, yet he made small use of either, but depended almost exclusively upon the perception of his hearers for their acceptance of his utterances. Most of his basic expressions contain neither modification nor exception and are strictly axiomatic in form. However contrary to the popular thought of his day, and however copious his explanatory illustrations, he seldom argued to sustain either his prop-
has not made a single discovery." — HENRY BROWNE, *Triglot Dictionary of Scriptural Words*, p. 12. Witness, also, the complete overthrow of the theory of the atom, which reigned for a century; also other theories of equal importance, all destroyed by newly perceived facts.

osition or his precept. Knowing his expression to be true, he stated it clearly and concisely, then left it to be perceived by others. "Swear not at all;" "resist not evil;" "judge not;" "love one another;" "as ye would that men should do unto you do ye also to them likewise;" "ask and it shall be given you;" but why multiply examples?

In the progress of Christianity men have denied his declarations, have reasoned and argued all around and about them to show how erroneous they thought them to be, and have deemed them completely demolished; yet, like the rocky fastnesses of the Judean mountains, they stand unmoved, though the storms of centuries have beaten upon them; and they will stand unchanged forever.

328. Here, again, are presented the contradictions in terms which are unavoidable in any discussion of error (294). Reason seems to be a reality, but we have found that it is not derived from God; and, since He is the one source of all that is, it cannot be existent, and therefore must be an error. Like all errors, it appears to be closely connected with divine truth, — in this case the reality of perception, — and, just as the non-fact of the verbal lie seems to be true and to be the most important item in the statement that contains it (283), so reasoning assumes to be a reality

and to be the most important attribute of our minds.

329. That mind which seems to reason also appears to be conscious of all the manifold appearances of error and to deal with them and to produce results. Since the cause exists in its effects (41), if the effect is erroneous the cause must be erroneous also; therefore the mind that pretends to all these things must itself be caused by error; consequently this mind and its pretensions and assumptions, its acts and all their results, its consciousness and all that it is conscious of, are erroneous, and, like every error, are non-existent and must disappear (283).

330. This is a sweeping conclusion, but it must be remembered that in the examination of materiality it was found that close to the unreal shadow is the eternal reality (256); and it was also found that every error depends upon everlasting truth for its appearance (284). This denial of the error mind and the removal of its pretence will reveal the radiance of the divine mind of God, which, however much it may seem to be obscured, is eternally existent; and, if we will but let this radiance illumine our own consciousness, error will disappear, and in the white light of the one real and infinite mind we shall rejoice in freedom from bondage. The wood, hay, and stubble disap-

pear in the conflagration of error and wrong, but the gold, silver, and precious stones remain, with their brilliance not only untarnished but fully revealed.¹ God, who is truth, and right, and mind, is real and eternal.

¹ 1 Cor. iii. 11-15.

XXXVI

THE UNMEASURABLE¹

331. Because of the habit of innumerable generations, based on the belief in materiality and its qualities, every one has an almost overmastering tendency to think and speak of all things in terms of size, weight, or some variety of the physical appearances, even when considering that which does not possess either of those qualities. Length, breadth, and thickness are so frequently in mind, and they have been considered of such importance, that men have speculated upon the existence of a fourth dimension and even of an indefinite number of them. This has led to the metaphorical use of these terms, and though this use is not objectionable where the qualities which they represent appear to exist, their constant use where they are not applicable can only lead to confusion and error.

¹ That which, because of its magnitude, cannot be measured, is usually spoken of as *immeasurable*, but the word *unmeasurable* is here used to designate that which cannot be measured because of its quality.

332. It is not unusual to speak of the magnitude of an idea, the greatness of a thought, or the weight of an opinion, but whoever will stop to consult his consciousness must at once perceive that words relative to size and weight, when used thus, are wholly inapplicable, and therefore inaccurate; even if claimed as a metaphor, there is neither relation nor resemblance of peculiarities. A thought may be extremely important or very trivial, but it cannot possess magnitude. One would never attempt to measure a thought with a cup, or with a yardstick, or to weigh it with scales, however important it might be. To think of doing so would be ridiculous because of the entire absence from a thought of any such quality or condition as that indicated by words denoting either size or weight; and yet an idea may be just as definite to the mind as any physical object which seems to possess those qualities.

333. It is the same with mind itself. A cup may be used to measure water, or a rod to measure distances, but with neither of them can we measure either mind or life, for these do not partake of materiality in the slightest degree. It is the same with spirit. We can determine the height of a man with a foot-rule, or his weight with scales, but either rule or scale is totally inapplicable to his spirit.

Who shall use balances to find the weight of life, or apply a rod to find its length, or its width, or its height? and with what cup shall he decide its capacity? Bulk and quantity have no place in spirit, and it ought never to be thought of in any of the terms of material dimensions. Earthly things exist by measure and can be exhausted; but spirit is of God, and "God giveth not the spirit by measure." ¹

334. This is true of God Himself; neither He nor anything connected with Him can be measured by any of the units of earth. All His qualities, peculiarities, and standards are entirely distinct from those of materiality, and it is from our failure to recognize and remember this that our greatest difficulties in religion, in morals, and in the attempt to understand spiritual things arise. God is spirit, and the realm of spirit is His, but we have tried to think of Him in the wholly unsuitable terms of earth, and to explain Him by those of materiality and the shop; necessarily contradiction and confusion have resulted, and there can be no disentanglement until those terms and ideas are abandoned for others which apply correctly to spiritual realities (185).

335. As materiality passes entirely out of sight when we become absorbed in the mental, so, in the

¹ John iii. 34.

recognition of the superiority of the spiritual, that which is unreal of the mental likewise disappears. The spiritual is a distinct realm, and in this realm absolute individual identity exists in its purity, so that one being can never be mistaken for another, but materiality disappears, with all its apparent conditions. Man is so filled with things of earth and so little aware of things of spirit that description must halt at the border-line. Language belongs largely to materiality and mentality, and our words and phrases for the wholly spiritual are fewer than our really distinct recognitions of it; for many of those blessed experiences we have neither words nor any other form of expression.

336. In the realm of spirit there is no distance, no here, no there, and no large nor any small; and we do not, in the ordinary meaning of the words, go nor come. We are supremely active, but our activities do not partake of the nature of motions, nor do they cause weariness. There "the veil of the temple *is* rent in twain from the top to the bottom."¹ It is more than that, for there the spiritual perception is without mist or cloud, and we perceive everything clearly, perfectly, and exactly as it is. That which we desire to perceive is with us — or we with it — on

¹ Mark xv. 38.

the instant that we are conscious of the desire, for the eternal "here" is everywhere, and "everywhere" is here, and all time is one eternal *now*. This is the infinite region where divine perception is ever active and the living truth is forever present. With the disappearance of the mirage of materiality, disappear all doubts and uncertainties, and we know and understand without questioning. The eternal realities are always with us in all their wonderful harmony, loveliness, and power, and we perceive that they are all one, and that One is God.

337. In the spiritual realm we always stand face to face with Him and are not afraid, for all fear disappears in the conscious presence of perfect truth, goodness, and love; with our entrance into that realm every error vanishes, and we possess that perceptive realization of truth which is beyond all reasoning and all argument. While here on earth men have been aware that they stood in this Presence and they have dimly discerned some of these things; and, though speech of them is impossible, such men know these unutterable things of God. They can only say, that just in the proportion that they perceive truth and the eternal things of God, do all appearances of error pass away and all things become new — always existing, yet always new. Standing

there in the presence of Ultimate Truth, they consciously perceive and know that God is One, and in the superabounding beauty, and glory, and majesty of His ineffable Presence they also know that He is All, and that man is similar to Him and of one substance with Him.

PART SIXTH

CREATION

XXXVII

THE SIMILARITY OF MAN TO GOD

338. Just in proportion as we understand the infinite and transcendent God do we reverence Him, and as this understanding increases, so does our appreciation of His wondrous grandeur, majesty, and solemnity, until all words fail; and though comparison between God and ourselves is inconceivable, yet we know that each of the essential constituents of the real man is also a constituent of God Himself. This is not a riddle, but is a simple, irrefutable fact. As the Bible states it, God created man in His own image and likeness; therefore man must be similar to God.

339. The universal recognition of God by all mankind (57) is indisputable, and it is quite as wonderful that, as far as known, all nations and all races, in every recognition which they have ever had of a

superior and invisible being, have always ascribed to that being more or less of the qualities which they saw in themselves (210). All idolatry bears witness to this. Every maker of idols has made them more or less like something which he thought he perceived in man. The same ideas have colored all the thoughts that men have entertained about the Supreme Being. The more a people advanced in culture and intelligence, the more closely the images of their gods were like the human form, those of Greece and Rome being among the most exquisite ideals of its possible perfection that can be imagined.

Belief in this similarity did not cease with increasing intelligence; instead, as worship of images was slowly abandoned, men made mental images to take the places of their gods of wood and stone. Still thinking their gods were like themselves, men endowed them with their own defects as well as their own virtues. The mental images were as representative of human characteristics as the physical images had been of the human form, and the word "anthropomorphic" was coined for all these man-made and man-like mental images that were like what they believed their gods to be. Not so very long ago Christian people imagined God to be a man-like person with head, and hands, and feet, living in some local-

ity far removed from earth. Down to the present day similar conditions prevail in varying extent, even among the most enlightened. An eminent divine has well written, "Our God is man plus infinity." Only within comparatively recent days have men talked about the immanent God (102).

340. The difficulty arises from the fact that the lesson has been read backward. In his metaphorical language, that early writer of the old document that has been so long preserved in the first chapter of Genesis correctly stated the great basic fact that man is similar to God, when he wrote: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness." . . . "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him." This is not a mere reference to similarity, but is a definite statement, accurate in its form, because the similarity must flow from cause to effect, not from effect to cause; then man must be like God, not God like man. Although the philosophic idea rests on certain characteristics which man perceives in himself, yet these belong to him only because he received them from God; and, this being the fact, the reasoning is accurate. The world has not yet accepted the statement in Genesis at its full value, for it has continued to make its gods like men. Even

in their mistaken method they would not have fallen so far short of the truth if they had rejected the errors which they saw in themselves and had constructed their gods in harmony with the perfections which exist in man. The reason for their great mistake is plain: they thought man's errors were as real as his perfections.

341. Here and there among the Hebrew prophets are many glimpses of God's perfection, yet it remained for Jesus, the Christ, to teach in unmistakable language the perfection of God, the likeness of man to God, and the possible attainment of perfection by man. John expressed the broad essentials of the fact when he declared, "That which hath been made was life in Him, and the life was the light of men."

342. If the declaration, "God created man in His own image," had never been made, the logical basis for this claim to similarity would still be incontestable. The cause exists in its effects (41), consequently the substance of first cause is the substance of all effects (44), and man is an effect of the action of that first cause; therefore the substance of God is the substance of man, and man must contain within himself somewhat of the divine elements and he must resemble his cause or creator, God; hence, it is right

for man to look to the unmixed good (168) in himself to learn about God. But not for a moment should it be forgotten, that the cause can never become the effect, neither can the image and likeness become that which is imaged, nor can similarity become identity.

343. In an enumeration of God's essentials this similarity of man to God is readily perceived. Because God is power (92), man is powerful, and expresses power as from himself; because God is infinite presence (100), man perceives somewhat of this in his own presence and recognizes it in the presence of those about him; because God is spirit (109), man is spiritual; because God is substance (113), man is substantial; because God is the living reality (114), the essential of man is real; because God is truth (120), the real man is true; because God is existence (127), man exists; because God is life (140), man lives; because God is mind (149), man possesses mind and intelligence; because God is principle (156), man manifests the action of principle; because God is the one infinite individual (196), man has individuality; because God is the one infinite Being (200), man is himself a being. Although some of these are more distinctly perceived than others, and although some may seem almost hidden by appearances of error,

yet every man is conscious that they constitute the elemental and vital essentials of himself and of all other men. These were all first in God, and they appear in man because they were bestowed upon him by the Father; they constitute man's existence, form the basis of his apprehension of God, and thus enable him to perceive his own similarity and relationships to God — a fact that is unquestionable proof of the truth of these propositions.

344. Man derives all his knowledge about life from his own experience and observation of it within himself; this furnishes the basis of all he knows about it, enables him to recognize it in others, and also to perceive even the life of the divine Being. He may have the same knowledge of other essentials of God, and, acting from these cognitions within himself (but magnifying them to the fullest extent of his ability), surely man can obtain from them some idea of that living, intelligent, and infinite Being whom he calls God. Perhaps instinctively, certainly without consciously reasoning on the subject, man has gained a recognition of divine truths which have come within his own consciousness, that cannot be refuted, and which are of inestimable usefulness and value to him.

345. These facts and this reasoning establish the proposition that between God and ourselves there

exists a similarity. The more careful the consideration of this proposition, the stronger will become its confirmation. Let not man degrade himself, either by doubting or by denying this his more than birth-right, his real and essential nature, his very life and being itself; instead, let him reject all lower appearances, let him persistently and diligently pursue these highest attainments which are surely within his reach, let him reverently, in thankfulness and with awe, recognize and accept the truth of himself and of his Father and God, and let him glory in what he is and in the possibilities which his own divine nature opens before him.

XXXVIII

CREATION — GENESIS

346. In considering the subject of creation it must be remembered that out of first cause came all things (32, 45), that the cause exists in its effect (41), that first cause is the Creator (52), and that the Creator is God (54).

Creation by first cause is not the production of a new substance or constituent out of nothing, but it is a manifestation or expression of the always-existent, infinite, divine substance (65) in another aspect, condition, or relationship. This may seem like a new interpretation of the act of creation, but it is in exact uniformity with sound philosophy, as well as with the expressions of principle which have already been presented; and we shall find it in exact harmony with the Biblical story in Genesis.

347. It has been established that the essentials of man are similar to the essentials of God (341, 342); then, in the examination of our topic, we will take for consideration mind, which it has been the

habit of generations to regard as the all-important essential of both God and man; furthermore, mind is clearly suggested by the story in Genesis, and there cannot be a better interpretation of God and the universe than through mind. Let it be distinctly understood, however, that we need not be limited in this consideration to a single essential of God, because, in their unity of complete oneness in Him, they all act in eternal harmony, and each is of equal importance with the others (190).

The true mind in man (322) must be of God's mind and identical with it in substance, therefore it must act in the same way that His mind acts. This may seem to be a startling, presumptuous, and irreverent proposition, but all fact and all reason substantiate it. Let us repeat: First cause evolved all things out of the substance of itself (32); God, the Creator, is first cause (54), and man is a consequence of that cause. The cause exists in its consequence (34-41) and is the constituent of it (44). God is mind (149), and out of His mind and constituted by that mind came the true mind of man. Then this mind of man must be of the substance of God's mind (41) and must follow the same laws and act in accord with the same principles as the infinite mind of God. This being correct, then man may learn

something of the methods of the infinite mind by examining the methods of his own mind.

But in making this examination of man's mind, care must be taken to exclude from consideration every appearance of error, for in man there seems to be much which appears to be entirely erroneous, while God is absolute perfection (172), and therefore in Him there is no error; it must also be remembered that God is infinite, and therefore is infinite in mind. If these important distinctions are always kept in view, and are permitted to guide our thinking, it is possible to reason with absolute accuracy from the mind of man to the mind of God; in doing this we may not only perceive a new and a deeper meaning in the first chapter of Genesis, but we may also catch a glimpse of what have been called the profoundest secrets of existence.

348. The first step in this examination is to observe the method of action of man's mind, and his experience with an unsolved problem will suffice for an illustration: At the first, so far as the object sought is concerned, all seems an absolute void, until the solution emerges into view, and then it "stands before the mind's eye" as definite as any material object before the physical eye. When this comes slowly, he may go back over the mental process and it will seem

to him as though the solution had been created by the action of his own mind out of its own substance. On the other hand, some psychologists say that perhaps the solution already existed in the subconscious mind, and from thence appeared above the mental threshold. If it was a thought of truth (330), the mental action was the perception by man's true mind of a thought of the divine mind which had existed in that mind from "the beginning."

349. The solution of this problem is a new thing to the one who now first perceives it, and ever after it is to him a definite reality with an individuality of its own. It may remain unexpressed in his own mind, or he may express it at his pleasure, but it is a significant fact that when he expresses it to others he does not separate it from himself, for it remains with him exactly as before. By expressing an idea the mind is not divested of it, nor is the idea in any way separated from the mind. Necessarily, this peculiarity must inhere with entire completeness in the infinite mind, therefore, in expressing them, God did not divide nor separate from Himself his ideas, which are the reality of all that exists. They were with Him "in the beginning," and they were with Him just as much after expression as before. By what we have called the act of creation, God neither divided

Himself nor did He detach a part of Himself from Himself.

350. The Genesis story of creation, whatever else it may be, is one of the most sublime poems of any language, and it is significant that this early writer so distinctly indicates his recognition of the similarity between the methods of the action of God's mind and the mind of man.

The sole actor in this story is *Elohim*, translated God, a name which very often appears elsewhere throughout the Hebrew scriptures, though its identity is lost in the translation because four other prominent Hebrew words are also translated God, though each has peculiarities which render it entirely distinct from *Elohim*. The first verse of this chapter may be considered as a descriptive title.¹ The story begins by setting forth conditions strikingly like the first of man's experiences in the solution of his problem: "The earth was without form and void;" or, as another translation renders it, "was vastness (or formlessness) and void"; with a similar thought, the writer continues, "And darkness was upon the face of the deep (or waters)."² Here the story introduces the action of the infinite mind, for we next read, "And the spirit of God moved (or was brooding)² upon the face of the deep."

¹ See Appendix M.

² Revised Version.

351. The first act in the story brings something into manifestation — something is done and something is perceived, “And God said, let there be light, and there was light” (93).¹ The language of this declaration is metaphorical, as seen in the word “day,” which occurs a little farther on. For years the world was filled with discussions over that word, until finally religious people abandoned its literal meaning as a distinct period of twenty-four hours, and accepted its metaphorical signification of an indefinite length of time. To say is to express an idea, and applying this metaphorical meaning here, the phrase, “God said,” correctly represents the action; God, the infinite Mind, expressed light, and by that expression light was manifested.²

As a man expresses an idea that is in his mind and

¹ There are fragments of this idea among other ancient nations. The Egyptians said that Thoth made the world by the word of his mouth. Manu, of the Hindus, says, “The divine, self-existent one first with a thought created water.”

² “If the doctrine is held to imply that, in some indefinitely remote past æon, the cosmic process was set going by some entity possessed of intelligence and foresight, similar to our own in kind, however superior in degree, if, consequently, it is held that every event, not merely our planetary speck, but in untold millions of other worlds, was foreknown, before these worlds were, scientific thought, so far as I know anything about it, has nothing to say against that hypothesis.” — HUXLEY in *Life and Letters*.

it is perceived by his friend, so the infinite Mind expressed His idea, and it became an object to be perceived by a waiting universe. Light had always been an existent object in the infinite Mind, but, by His expression, it became a new, existent, and separate reality to those minds which then for the first time perceived it.

352. God's expression of light did not in the slightest separate it from His infinite mind, and it will always continue to be a part of Him and one with Him just as fully and just as exactly as it always has been. His expressions, manifestations, or creations are not divided from Him by such action any more than are the ideas of man when he expresses them to his friend; it is a separation that does not separate, a division that does not divide. Notwithstanding our consciousness of separate, distinct, and independent individuality, as expressions of God's mind we are just as much undivided from Him, and as intimately one with Him, as we were "in the beginning." In like manner, and in compliance with the choice of God, the infinite Mind, each entity was expressed or made manifest, as light had been, to those other intelligences which had already been expressed, and they perceived it as a new existence. Every object which was expressed existed already in the infinite Mind;

and this is in exact accord with what has been said about first cause, which contained within itself all things (32, 45).

353. In the Genesis story, each act of creation except the last is introduced with the declaration, "And God said," or, as we may now understandingly and with accuracy say, "God expressed." After the description of each object thus made manifest, the topic is closed with the declaration, "and it was so." "God said," and "it was so." Mind expressed itself and it was done. At the end of each account also stands another remarkable declaration, "And God saw that it was good." These are the refrains in each stanza of this great poem upon this greatest of all themes.¹

354. These closing words are in exact accord with the proposition that principle produces only harmony or good (163, 166). God is principle (156) and God is also absolutely good (168); and, since the cause exists in its effect, God, first cause, bringing forth all things out of Himself, produces only good. This is the teaching of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount,

¹ Although Sir Oliver Lodge would discredit the theory, yet he says frankly, "There is nothing to contradict the notion that it [life] sprang into existence suddenly at a literal word of command." — *Life and Matter*, p. 92.

“Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; . . . a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit.” God, who is good, does not produce evil. These are universal propositions, and rest for their foundation upon scientific truth. At the end of the story all this is summed up in the emphatic declaration, “*And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.*”¹ These final words are not a grandiloquent, oratorical flourish, such as some enthusiast might use, for they are in scientific and exact accord with the teaching of Jesus, the Christ, and with the conclusions developed in the preceding pages. They are neither metaphor nor hyperbole, but are a simple statement of exact fact, and are to be taken as they stand, without addition or diminution. The goodness of all that God made is absolute! *His creation is perfect!*

¹ The word “very” does not occur in the Hebrew, but the word “good” is repeated, so that a literal translation would be, “God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was good good,” or perfect good.

XXXIX

CREATION — JOHN

“In the beginning was the word,
And the word was with God,
And the word was God.
The same was in the beginning with God.

All things were made by him;
And without Him was not anything made.

That which hath been made was life in Him;
And the life was the light of men.
And the light shineth in the darkness;
And the darkness apprehended it not.”

John i. 1-5, Marginal Reading, Rev. Ver.

355. The great central significance of this quotation lies in the meaning of “word,” and to ascertain this it is necessary to examine the language in which it was first written. It is a rendition of the Greek word “*logos*,” which has no equivalent in English, and, because of its very inclusive meaning, in the opinion of some scholars its translation ought not to have been attempted, but instead, the word itself

should have been brought over into the English text and its explanation left to commentators, critics, and other instructors. It is widely recognized that in this connection John used the word to convey a meaning entirely distinct from its ordinary use elsewhere, therefore its definition in this place becomes of special importance.

356. According to the best authorities *logos* stands for the expression of thought, and thus far our translation is correct, for that is also what our English "word" means; but the meaning of "word" is limited to verbal forms of expression, while *logos* includes all possible methods by which thought can be expressed — not words only, but motions, gestures, contortions, facial movements, inarticulate cries, and everything that expresses a thought; so that sometimes *logos* becomes an equivalent for wisdom and eloquence. Even here its meaning does not stop, for it includes not only every method by which thought is expressed, but also the thoughts in the mind before they are expressed, even those that have not reached the form of words; and it also includes the mind that thinks these thoughts.

Briefly, then, *logos* includes in its meaning the mind and its thinking or action as well as its resultant thoughts and ideas, and all expressions of them.

Evidently our English "word" is wholly inadequate to represent *logos*, which could be accurately translated only by a long and inconvenient phrase which might read, "In the beginning was mind and all its actions, thoughts, ideas, and expressions." The reader may well drop the English "word" from these passages of John, and in its place use *logos*, mentally supplying its full significance.

God is mind, therefore this opening declaration is only another way of saying, "In the beginning was mind — God — with all His actions, thoughts, and expressions" (32, 45), and this agrees exactly with the full and correct meaning of God as first cause and Creator. Only infinity will satisfy the idea of totality which this presents.

357. The identity of *logos* or mind with the infinite God is not formally stated in this opening declaration, but preparation is made for such a statement in the second clause, which reads, "and the *logos* was with God." The *logos* and all that it signifies, — the mind and its thinking, its thoughts, and all the expressions of those thoughts, — all these were with God in the beginning. The climax follows closely in the third clause, "and the *logos* was God," thus declaring the positive and complete identity of God and the *logos*. God, the *Logos*, is infinite (78);

hence all things that ever have been throughout the entire past and all things that ever will be throughout the entire future must have existed with Him and in Him always.

Thus, with simplest language, approaching by majestic steps, unsurpassed in dignity and grandeur by any other possible form of words, is presented to the mind of man a vision of God Himself. This declaration is at once followed by another, which emphasizes, unifies, and binds it all into one compact, individual whole: "and the same" (that is, all this) "was in the beginning with God." It is like the final chords of the cadence of that hymn which we may well imagine the stars sang together on creation morning. Listen to the progress of the words as they march in serried ranks up the heights of creation into the very presence of the High and Holy One: —

"In the beginning was the Logos,
And the Logos was with God.

And the Logos was God.
The same was with God
In the beginning."

358. This wonderful declaration begins and ends with the phrase, "in the beginning," and these are

also the first words of the Genesis story of creation. The prominence of this phrase indicates its importance. Naturally we might accept it as denoting the time when the event took place, but the Hebrew language is peculiarly lacking in designation of time, and the best scholars say that when used by a Hebrew the expression "in the beginning" has no reference whatever to time, so that a "beginning," as we understand that word, was not intended by that phrase;¹ but instead it was used by early Hebrew writers to indicate an elemental and essential constituent without which the event or entity could not occur nor exist. Thus the phrase means the essential, the existent, the eternally real — that indefinable something which man perceives in everything and without which that thing could not be. The avoidance of a reference to a first act of creation is a silent attestation of the writer to his recognition of the infinity of God, who, because He is infinite, could not have had a beginning. The opening phrase of the first chapter of Genesis, like John, makes no reference to infinity, but leaves it with all its magnitude untouched. Man is too small to comprehend

¹ An eminent American scholar says of it, "It seems to elude all relations of before and after, and to escape into the timelessness of the elemental and absolute life out of which it proceeded, in the very nature of the case, the world of manifestation and change."

in its immensity the thought so delicately, yet unmistakably, suggested by these early writers.

All this agrees exactly with the scientific philosophy of first cause and God, for all things existed primarily in first cause (32-41) — in God, the Logos. It also agrees perfectly with the correct definition of infinity (78) because God's infinity necessitates the existence and eternal continuity of all things within Himself.¹ Indeed, if such a thing were necessary, the earlier discussion of this subject in these pages might be used to confirm the declarations of both Genesis and John, or, *vice versa*, as a person is inclined to accept one or the other as more important.

359. Having declared the identity of God and the Logos, John next proceeds to his second great topic, the acts of the Logos: "All things were made by Him (the Logos, God), and without Him was not anything made."² But in the preceding sentences he declares that "the Logos" (or all things) "was in

¹ Alvord, in the notes to his *Greek Testament*, p. 677, says, "The *Logos* is not an attribute of God, but an active reality, by which the Eternal and Infinite is the great first cause of the created and finite."

² Sir Isaac Newton says, "The whole diversity of natural things can have arisen from nothing but the ideas and will of one necessarily existing being who is always and everywhere, God, Supreme, infinite, omnipotent, omniscient, absolutely perfect."

the beginning with God, and the Logos was God"; then to say that they "were made" is to contradict that most impressive declaration.

360. The difficulty which causes this apparent contradiction is in the translation of the Greek verb, *ginomai*, a word which does not have an equivalent in English and which is here rendered "were made." The importance of this word and the inclusiveness of its meaning are shown by the facts that it occurs in the New Testament six hundred and forty-four times and has forty-eight different renderings.¹ If we accept that meaning of *ginomai* which is chosen by the translators in many other places, and if, instead of "by" we use "through," as preferred by many scholars, the sentence will then read, "All things came to pass through Him and without Him not anything came to pass." Such a translation would avoid the direct contradiction and would retain a widely accepted meaning of the Greek word; but there is another and a better solution of the problem.²

¹ Among the most numerous of these renderings is the copulative verb "to be" which occurs two hundred and forty-eight times; "to be made," sixty-nine times; "to arise," sixteen times; "to become," forty-two times; and "to come to pass," eighty-two times.

² "*Ginomai* occurs upward of seven hundred times in the New Testament but never in the sense of create, yet in most versions it

That *ginomai* also means "to express" is clearly indicated in Matt. v. 43, 45, where Jesus says, "Love your enemies, . . . that ye may *be* the children of your Father." In this place "be" is a rendering of *ginomai*. Every one *is* the child of his Father, and can never *be* his child more than he is now, but by his conduct he may show forth or express his sonship much more clearly. This is the idea that every reader gets from this passage; it is evident that this is what Jesus meant; and such must be the meaning of the Greek word in this place. Then we can properly use the word "expressed" instead of "made," and this will bring the statement into exact conformity with the preceding declaration by John, and also with the propositions in these pages which relate to the infinite God who is first cause and mind. The declaration thus becomes, "All things were expressed by [or through] Him and without Him was not anything expressed."

This translation does no violence to the meaning of is translated as though the word was *ktizo*." — *Emphatic Diaglott*, BENJAMIN WILSON.

Liddell & Scott define *Ktizo*, "To produce, create, bring into being," etc. They say of *Ginomai*, "Radical sense, to come into a new state of being"; and under this definition we might read the passage, "All, through Him, came into a new state of being," and this would not contradict John's preceding statement.

ginomai, removes the appearance of a contradiction, brings these statements of John into exact harmony with each other and with the story of Genesis, and changes what we are accustomed to call creation into an act of expression. Remembering that the Logos is mind, we perceive that that action is an expression of what always existed in the infinite mind of God, and Creation thus becomes a continuous series of events extending endlessly forward.¹

361. When the original Greek manuscripts of the New Testament were written, punctuation was not known, therefore it became a part of translation, and since its earliest use there has been a difference of opinion about the punctuation of this sentence. In the margin of the Revised Version it reads, "All things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made," which leaves it a rounded and complete expression of a single idea. To attach to this the phrase, "that was made," as it stands in the King James Version, makes it incongruous and does not add anything to its meaning. Instead, if carried to the next sentence, it harmonizes with the rest of that sentence and gives it immense value. Remembering that *ginomai* may be correctly trans-

¹ It is worthy of note that Jesus never speaks of the spirit, nor of spirits, as "created."

lated "to express," the sentence becomes, "That which hath been expressed was life in Him."¹

362. What grander or more ennobling and sustaining thought is possible! With extremest awe and reverence each and every man can say of himself, That life of me which is indeed my real life is of the very life of God, whom Jesus taught us to call Father (41)! This is the keynote of all Jesus' ethical teaching, forms its basis, and furnishes an explanation and a reason for all that he taught about the relationship of man to man, of man to God, and of God to man. In this truth man may find the solution of all the riddles of his own being, for it constitutes the basis of his existence, and is the source and cause of all that is real in him, and whatever appears inconsistent with this is to be abandoned as an unreality; but this is not true of man alone, but of all "that hath been expressed," not only in the whole earth, but in all the universe and in the heaven of heavens itself.²

¹ The margin of the Revised Version reads, "That which hath been made was life in Him." The Sinaitic manuscript, which is ranked among the best and earliest, reads, "*is* life in Him," thus denoting a continuous present, which is in closer harmony with the context and is preferred by many of the best scholars.

² With this we can understand what Jesus meant when he said, "He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which

Wonderful as this is, it is only a statement in other words of the truths of the preceding pages — God is infinite in each of His essentials and therefore eternal; as first cause, in His infinity He eternally comprises within Himself all that is, or was, or ever will be (32); out of the substance of Himself (110), which is the life of Himself, He made manifest every existent thing, whether animate or inanimate, and His life thus becomes the constituent substance of all manifested existence (44).

In all this there is nothing new; it is only the teaching of Jesus stated in a different form — another way of saying what he said so long ago, when he repeatedly declared that God is our Father; then we are necessarily His children, and if this has any meaning at all it means that the child partakes of the Father's nature. God is spirit (109); then we, as His children, derive a spiritual nature from Him and are also spiritual beings (107); and John's statement, "that which hath been made was life in Him," is in exact accord with this, for spirit and life are one.

363. John continues, "And the life was the light sent him." — John v. 23. For he who honoreth not the divine being within himself honoreth not the infinite divine Being, his Father, God.

of men." It is extremely significant that a little farther on he says, "That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Then this light is not material, nor is anything else material of "that which hath been expressed," for all is life; nor is there any error, because all is from God, who is the effulgent perfection of light and life. All this agrees with the story in Genesis, which not only does not have any account of the creation of anything material, but it distinctly says, "God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good."

John seems to reach greater heights than are found in Genesis, though in the conclusion of his statement he gives recognition to sense perception — to the belief in materiality and in error — for he says, "And the light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness apprehended it not," or, literally, "knew not of it" (247). There is a world of significance in the fact that John's metaphor does not in itself represent a reality, but merely the absence of something (for darkness is only the absence of light), which unquestionably shows his understanding of the unreality of all error.

As if to show the character of darkness, John says that it is wholly unconscious of the light that is

shining everywhere, even in the midst of darkness itself — that darkness of our minds which does not recognize the truth. In the presence of a similar condition, Jesus exclaimed, "If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" "All things were made [expressed] by Him [the Logos] and without Him was not anything expressed;" God, Logos, life, light, as used in this place, are one and the same, but light never expressed darkness; then, both as a simile and as a fact, darkness, which here typifies all forms of error, was never expressed, never created; therefore it never had an existence, and it is nothing.

Thus, in the beginning and in the ending of his most wonderful statement, John deals accurately with most tremendous truths — with the truth of all truth, and with the fact about all error. There are no more stupendous statements in any language, nor is there anywhere so much so clearly set forth in so few words. In this marvellous epitome of the world into which Jesus, the Christ, was ushered, John compassed the height of truth and the depth of error — all its light and all its appearance of darkness. The scene is set, and John is ready to tell his story of the coming of Jesus, the Christ, chronicle his career as he had witnessed it, and record the glory of his departure.

Though Jesus is removed from us, the darkness of the world is surely vanishing before the radiance of the truth of the ever living Christ who, even now, is active in behalf of us, his brethren. Brighter and brighter to our consciousness the rays of that divine light are shining, farther and farther they are penetrating, and more and more they will illumine the hearts and the minds of men, until finally all shall become wholly conscious of the perfect day of God's own truth.

XL

FORMATION OF THE EARTH MAN

364. The Bible contains many seeming contradictions, but often these are due to the reader's lack of knowledge of the circumstances under which the Bible was written, or to failure to understand the statements which it contains. Among the most important of these are the discrepancies between what have been called the two accounts of creation, contained in the first three chapters of Genesis. If they are held to be two stories of one great event, they are irreconcilable, but if they are accepted as accounts of two distinct events, each has its place of peculiar importance and conveys its own lesson of immense value.

365. The first story is distinctly an account of creation; is devoted exclusively to the consideration of its special subject, noting its inception, progress, and completion; is strictly narrative in form; proceeds along lines of regular development; is rhetorically a distinct unit; and contains neither negation, pro-

hibition, nor any statement or suggestion of any effort (96), nor of anything either to oppose or to resist. Everything is accomplished by the word of its one actor, God; and it properly closes with the end of the first verse of the second chapter.¹

The second story begins with the fourth verse of the second chapter² and ends with the nineteenth verse of the third chapter. The chief actor in this story is the Lord God, whose course is entirely distinct both in character and method from that of God. Many things interfere and oppose, and there seems to be continual fear lest others should occur; therefore, from beginning to end, the story is filled with negations and prohibitions.

The first story states unequivocally that creation was completed: "And the heaven and the earth were finished and all the host of them." The second

¹ Readers of the Bible need always to remember that its divisions into chapters as well as verses is often purely arbitrary and without much reference to the meaning of the language. Not infrequently the verses divide sentences, and the chapters make a separation between continuous subjects, and this renders the meaning more or less obscure. For these reasons one must sometimes ignore these divisions in order to find the real meaning of the writer.

² This omits the second and third verses of this chapter, but those refer to the establishment of the Sabbath, and only indirectly have anything to do with either creation or with the events of the second story.

story tacitly admits that the earth already exists, for it says nothing about creation in the specific and distinctive meaning of that word, but confines itself exclusively to an account of the "formation" of man and animals out of the ground, to the planting of trees, and to attendant and succeeding incidents, none of them creative in their character. The first story is concerned strictly with spiritual reality and truth and is without a recognition of error; the second deals so exclusively with materiality and error that the late President Harper, of the University of Chicago, went so far as to say that it is the story of sin. Nothing in any other literature reveals the peculiarities and methods of error with such completeness, or traces its course in the human mind with such accuracy. In the first story each subject has an importance of its own unrelated to man, though when he comes upon the scene all else becomes subject to him; in the second story everything is secondary to man, and other things have importance only in their relation to him; looked at from one point of view, it is a story of man and for man.

366. The introduction to this story of the earth man will be better understood by a brief allusion to the peculiar construction of the book of Genesis. It contains twelve documents, each, except the first, in-

troduced by a formal expression having the essentials of the title of a chapter or book. The title of the third document is a little more elaborated than the others. It occurs in the first verse of the fifth chapter: "This is the book of the generations of Adam;" then follows the story of Adam, largely genealogical, ending with the introduction of Noah and a statement of the wickedness of the world. The next chapter is introduced by its title: "These are the generations of Noah;"¹ and this document contains an account of Noah and the events connected with him. In the succeeding documents the form of the title is similar, each being briefly descriptive of what follows. This shows that there is a general construction of eleven of the twelve documents which make up the book of Genesis.

367. In the second document the title is greatly elaborated and reads: "These are the generations of the heaven and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made earth and heaven."

To generate means to bring forth, or to produce, therefore the first clause of this title must mean: These are what were brought forth or produced by the heaven and the earth. Not anything can be a pro-

¹ In this chapter the quotations from the Bible are in accord with the Revised Version unless otherwise stated.

ducer which does not itself already exist; therefore, according to this title, the document which follows it must be an account of what was done or produced by the heaven and the earth after God had created them. Thus, even in the title of the story, it is clearly assumed by its writer that heaven and earth were already in existence.

At this point, in the middle of the title, an abrupt departure is made from the peculiarities of the first story, bringing the two parts of the title into a contrast as striking as are the characteristics of the two stories. A new actor, the Lord God, is introduced; heretofore the order has been heaven first and earth second, but now it is earth first and heaven second, showing a decided change in mental attitude. The title concludes, "In the day that the Lord God made earth and heaven," thus distinctly stating the time when the events occurred which that writer was about to describe, and also completely separating these events from the incidents narrated in the preceding account of creation.¹

¹ There is a wide difference in meaning between creating and making. God alone creates; man may make. The first story is distinctly an account of creation, though the word "make" occurs several times, yet every time it is with the clear significance of "create," as, notably, in verses 5 and 26, where it alternates with "create" in verse 27.

This title harmonizes perfectly with the statement at the close of the first document, that creation was then finished — not merely heaven and earth, but all that in them is; and also with the idea that this second document deals with another series of events which occurred after the heaven and the earth had been created.

368. Truth affirms and error denies; the natural language of truth is affirmative, and in the first story there are only affirmations; the natural language of error is negative, and in compliance with this principle, and also in conformation with its own character, the second story opens with a series of negations: “No plant of the field was yet in the earth, and no herb of the field had yet sprung up; for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground.”¹ This opening declaration acknowledges the existence of the earth, the field, and the ground, but shows that there was a failure to perceive either the plants, the herbs, or the man of God’s spiritual creation.²

¹ This is the language of the Revised Version and is closer to the Hebrew than the King James Version.

² In the preceding chapters the fact has been clearly shown that materiality has no knowledge of spirit or of spiritual beings, and in the progress of this story it will appear that its writer is dealing solely with materiality.

This last negation has been interpreted to mean that there was not a man in existence; but God had already created, in His own image and likeness, the spiritual man. The declaration is not that there was not a man, but "that there was not a man to till the ground," and the special significance of this negation lies in the word translated "till," which means "to serve" — "there was not a man to serve the ground." This was literally correct, for, according to the first story, the man whom God created was directed to "subdue the earth and to have dominion over every living thing that moveth on the earth."¹ That man created in God's own image and likeness is a king by his own divine right, and he is to exercise kingly dominion over the earth itself. There is nothing between him and his Creator, and even his Creator does not interfere to dominate nor to dictate to him. There is a vast difference between the service which is given from choice or is prompted by love, and that which is given grudgingly or because of compulsion. Jesus taught us how to use this kingly dominion, how to transform service into blessed privilege to do, how to make labor both an education and a joy. There might have been many men in existence then, yet there was not one to "serve

¹ Genesis i. 26-28.

the ground” in the sense that a slave serves his master.

369. Immediately the Lord God proceeds to remedy the deficiency by forming a man for this special object. The origin of the spiritual man and of the earth man contrast so sharply, and yet they are so often confused with each other, that the two accounts are here presented side by side: ¹

To bring out the contrasts of these two methods of procedure with perfect distinctness, one has only to close the mind against ideas which have been previously entertained regarding these two trans-

¹ As a contrast of minor importance, in the first story it is related that man is the last creation of God, while in the second story he is the first object formed by the Lord God.

<p>“And God said, let us make man in our image and after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.”</p>	<p>“And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”</p>
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actions, confine himself to the simple meaning of the words and allow them to form the picture which they naturally suggest.

By the fiat of His own almighty power, God manifested man out of His own divine substance and made him a spiritual being similar to Himself — an expression of His own infinite being — and this man did not need any preparation to enable him to act.

On the other hand, the Lord God gathers the dust of the ground already in existence and with that he “forms” a man. Like the action of the sculptor in forming his clay model, it is a making, and it is distinctly human in its method; there is nothing creative about it, neither is there anything spiritual about it; it entirely lacks any suggestion of omnipotence, and the same material is used both by the sculptor and the Lord God. The story may be idealized to its farthest limit, yet it is not possible to escape the materiality of this dust man, because thus far he is nothing else but dust — only an inert mass of materiality. Crude as was the old negro preacher’s description he was not far afield when he told his congregation that “de Lord God, he done tuck a little water an’ a little dust, an’ he done made it into de shape of a man an’ sot it up agin de fence fer to dry.”

Professor Toy, of Harvard, one of the foremost

Hebrew scholars, says that the word in this place translated "formed" is used in all early Hebrew literature for the special purpose of designating the action of the potter in forming his vessel of clay.¹

To set this lump of clay a-going — for it was nothing more — the Lord God "breathed into its nostrils the breath of life," and immediately there appeared the connection between materiality and this peculiar life which is so different in its advent and in its characteristics from the life that was conferred by God. This ends the action of the Lord God in the formation of this man of dust, for immediately "the man became a living soul."²

Thus we have the spiritual man created by God in His own image, a king in his own right, and the man of earth, or the soul man, whom the Lord God formed out of the dust of the ground for the avowed purpose that he might be the slave of that earth over which the spiritual man had been given unlimited dominion. This earth man was named Adam, meaning of the earth, or, literally, of red earth; and because to the Hebrews red signified fire, the fanciful interpret the

¹ It was a popular belief among the Egyptians that their gods modelled man out of clay with a potter's wheel, and the same belief appears in Babylonian writings.

² See Appendix N.

word to mean earth on fire, a symbol not without confirmation in the experience of human beings.

370. The books of the Old Testament were written by different men at different times, extending over a period of twelve or fifteen hundred years. Although in touch with each other through their writings, yet some of these men were separated from others by centuries; each was engrossed with his own special subject to which the words "soul" and "spirit" were merely incidental, yet, except in one instance, the Hebrew words which are translated soul are never rendered spirit, and those which are translated spirit are never rendered soul. Thus, the difference between soul and spirit was so distinct in the minds of those old writers, and they made their meaning so clear, that when their books were translated into English by persons who did not themselves fully recognize this difference, the idea of the original writers was clearly maintained in the translation.

As used in the Old Testament, the word "soul" never means spirit and spirit never means soul; therefore it follows that in the opinion of the original writers of that book the spiritual man is wholly distinct from the man of dust who "became a living soul." Exactly the same conclusion has been developed from the facts and reasoning in the preceding pages, and

here in the Bible is as complete confirmation of this distinction as can be made.

371. A fact of the greatest importance in this connection is the similar but broader distinction which runs through all the teaching of him who, of all men, taught the truth — Jesus, the Christ. He used two Greek words for life; one of these, *zoe*, is always translated life; the other, *psuche*, from which our English psyche comes, is sometimes translated life and sometimes soul, but Jesus used each with its own distinct meaning, though in the translation the distinction between the two words is entirely lost. He never spoke of the *zoe* as having an ending, and, as if to intensify that idea, he attaches to it words and phrases that are translated eternal and everlasting; nor did he allude to a possibility that it could be lost or destroyed; nor did he ever speak of it as the source of anything unpleasant, disagreeable, wrong, or evil. The *zoe* life is the life of the man expressed by God, the Father, which, as set forth in the first chapter of Genesis, is absolutely good and without defect.

In the following quotations from the words of Jesus, wherever the word "life" occurs, it is a translation of the word *zoe*, and a study of these passages will show the meaning which he attached to that word: —

“And this is *life* eternal that they may know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent;”¹ and again, “As the Father hath *life* in Himself so hath He given to the son to have *life* in himself;”² and again, “He that believeth hath everlasting *life*.”³ The young man asked, “What shall I do that I may have eternal *life*?” “And he said unto him, If thou wilt enter into *life* keep the commandments.”⁴

This gives a far deeper meaning and more special importance to that passage from the first chapter of John so often quoted in these pages: “That which hath been made (expressed) was *life* in Him, and the *life* was the light of men,” for it makes it certain that the *life* conferred upon man by God, his Father, is the eternal and perfect life.

Jesus used the word *psuche* with a meaning exactly opposite to that with which he used the word *zoe*, never recognizing it as continuous or eternal, but always as something that may be lost, destroyed, or laid down; he also recognized it as the source of our sorrow and suffering, and in one place he speaks of it as something to be hated. In the agony of the garden Jesus said, “My soul [*psuche*] is exceeding

¹ John xvii. 3.

³ John iii. 15, 16.

² John v. 26.

⁴ Matthew xix. 16, 17.

sorrowful, even unto death.”¹ And again, “Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and ye shall find rest unto your souls”² [*psuche*]. In several places an understanding of the correct meaning of these two words relieves a seeming contradiction and throws a flood of light on the subject: “He that loveth his *life* [*psuche*] shall lose it; and he that hateth his *life* [*psuche*], in this world shall keep it unto life [*zoe*] eternal;” that is, whosoever will save this earthly appearance of life shall lose it, but whosoever is regardless of that life as compared with the spiritual life shall save it until he comes into the recognition of the eternal life.³

Psuche has been defined as “the life connected with the body,” and as Jesus used that word it does not mean the divine life bestowed by the Father, but distinctly that life which the second Genesis story represents as springing from some undefined source into an appearance of existence — “a living soul,” which was doomed to death and extinction in nothingness (375) before it had revealed itself in a single action. All that results from *psuche* is weariness, pain, sorrow, and suffering, — error, — and we have seen (289, 290) that, notwithstanding the persistence of its

¹ Matthew xxvi. 38.

² Matthew xi. 28, 29.

³ John xii. 25. See Appendix O.

claim to importance (283, 286), error, with all its pretensions, is, by itself alone, an unthinkable nonentity (281, 282); truth is eternal (283) — and this is the teaching of Jesus.

372. In the two stories of Genesis are these two men — the God-created, eternal and spiritual man (*zoe*), and the soul man (*psuche*), who was formed by the Lord God out of the dust of the ground. They are the two typical and idealized characters of the Bible, one the exact type of the real and the true, the other of the unreal and erroneous. As depicted in the first chapters of the Bible, neither of them appears anywhere else, either in the Bible or in the world, but apparently every man seems to embody within himself a heterogeneous mixture of the distinctive characteristics of both, so that each seems to contain the irreconcilable elements of both the spiritual and the material (249), of both the good and the evil (311). This appearance dominates man to such an extent that each believes himself conscious of being both good and evil, both spiritual and material. This is because each believes that the spiritual and material, the good and the evil, are equally real constituents of himself, and therefore that the action of either is as real and as much an action of himself as that of the other.

The world has not understood this troublesome and anomalous mixture any more than it has understood either of these idealized characters. The result has been confusion and misunderstanding, and the word "man" has never conveyed the meaning that it should. Knowing the truth or fact, and knowing that he has the power to make himself what he will, it is for each human being to choose which of these two characters he will attain. There can be no doubt where the choice will fall when man once understands truth and also understands what the lack of it means.

XLI

THE PROHIBITION TO THE EARTH MAN

373. In the next act in the drama of the earth man the characteristic methods of the Lord God appear, and they are recorded in these words: "And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden." This is no more than any man might do; there is not anything creative about it, and it is in exact contrast to the method of omnipotent spirit which spake vegetation into existence: "Let the earth bring forth herb yielding seed and tree yielding fruit; and it was so."

374. The declaration in the next verse records the continuation of this planting: "Out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." In fulfilment of the purpose for which the earth man was formed, "The Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it."

The Hebrew words here rendered to dress and to keep mean, literally and exactly, to serve and to guard. This man was not placed in the garden to have dominion over it and to subdue it, as the God-created man was instructed to do by the whole earth, but, like a slave, he was to serve it and to guard it. Even as the translation stands in the King James Version, this man was to be a servant to the garden, for in dressing it and keeping it he would be obeying its requirements.

375. Without any reference to his own wish or will, this man is placed in this garden by another; he had not yet done one thing of his own choice, yet the first words addressed to him by the Lord God contain the most sweeping prohibition the world has ever known: "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it." For the spiritual man there is neither prohibition nor restriction; he is to do as he pleases and to subjugate the whole earth; but before the material man has done more than to look over the threshold of existence, he not only hears an absolute prohibition, but it is followed by a threat of the worst possible penalty for its violation: "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The threat of death lies

across the door of his entrance into activity, and the fear of death follows him to the end.

God makes no prohibition because everything that He created is good, and there can be no prohibition of that which is wholly good (354). Prohibition is necessary for the Adamic man because error is a constituent element of his composition, and, from his earliest inception, he is connected with erroneous conditions; he is, in very fact, the error man.

376. One question which arises in connection with this prohibition is, Why is good prohibited as well as evil? and this provokes a fundamental question of immense importance, Why does man do evil? In its turn this suggests still another question, broader and even more general, What is man's primal object in life?

In every walk of life, and in every condition, whether of education or of ignorance, of morality or of vice, of success or of failure, every man is always seeking something better than he now has. This is man's primal object in life. Often mistakes are made in the character of the object pursued because man's judgment is not correct, and as a consequence he takes that for good which is not good; but something that he thinks is better than he now has — something that he thinks is good is the universal quest. This is

the thought behind all human activities. Whatever his method or his specific object may be, if the aspirations, desires, and wishes of every man could be laid bare and analyzed, under the external appearance or pretence would be found the fact that, from his point of view, the object of his effort seems to hold an advantage for him over what he now has; that is, it seems to him desirable and good. At the time, the dominant motive impelling the search for that which includes evil among its constituent elements is always a belief that it will yield an advantage.

No man knows as does the drunkard what drinking and the pangs of it mean; but in spite of that knowledge, he never takes a glass of intoxicant that he does not do it with the full belief that some advantage will result to him. He may be influenced by a score of reasons that a sober man never thought of, all of them founded on erroneous perceptions, backed by bad reasoning, and resulting in worse conclusions; but they seem sound and sufficient to him, and all his reasoning points to the dram he is about to take as a means for attaining something which, as he then sees, constitutes an unattained good — and yet, in the undercurrent of his mind, he knows it is bad and that he ought not to take it.

The thief takes property to better his condition.

It is true that he does not see things from the right point of view, but it is *his* point of view at the time, and the one that controls his actions. He knows it is wrong to steal; but he does not steal because it is wrong, nor because he wishes to do wrong, but he dares the wrong and its danger because of the good which he imagines will come to him through possession of the coveted object. The murderer kills for a similar reason — as a means to secure what at that time seems desirable and good either for himself or for some one else — perhaps to put out of the way some one who, as he thinks, interferes with his liberty and happiness, or prevents him from obtaining what he wishes.

The whole range of crime and wrong is the same from top to bottom. The one who does a wrong always does it, not because it is wrong, but because he thinks that particular act will bring him good, though at last, like the apples of Sodom, it turns to ashes on his lips. The drunkard curses the day when he was born; the thief slinks out of sight; and the murderer attempts to hide both himself and his crime. When the deed was only in thought, each knew within his inner self that it was evil, and he heard, though perhaps but faintly, “the still, small voice” saying, “Thou shalt not”; but he did not heed it,

and now that the deed is done he fully realizes what before he saw but dimly.

It is a fact without exception in the entire history of the race that no man ever did evil for evil's sake alone, hence there is no need of prohibiting that which is thought to be wholly evil; but when that which appears to be good is associated with evil, — the "tree of good-and-evil," — there the prohibition is needed. This is the reason for the peculiar form of the language in the prohibition, though we must remember that this "good" so prohibited is not in reality good but is good only in appearance. It resulted from evil and therefore can never be other than evil.

377. Consider the warning of Jesus against everything that falsely predicts good: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." There is no need of such a caution about wolves which are not concealed by sheep's clothing — about evil which is not believed to be good or to result in good, evil which is not masquerading in the guise of good — for men always avoid that evil which has to them no pretence of good. This peculiarity of language shows the keen insight and wisdom of Jesus, and this expression is in exact accord with the great prohibition in the Genesis story.

A searching and exact analysis of every instance where men did wrong because they thought good would result will show that either their knowledge, their reasoning, or their judgment was erroneous. *What they thought to be good was not good but was evil.* The "good" of the drunkard, the "good" of the thief, the "good" of the murderer, and the "good" of every man which is sought through avenues of evil is never indeed good but is always evil. It is a product of evil and error, and therefore is itself evil, and can never be changed into good nor become a reality. Jesus did not leave us without a definite guide to correct judgment concerning what is good and what is evil, for he said, "Ye shall know them by their fruits;" and however sincere men may be in their mistaken understanding of what is good, when an event is far enough in the past for them to exercise unbiassed judgment regarding it, and to see all the attendant circumstances in their real character, the truth will stand out clearly and they will recognize that nothing good has come from an action that had in it any element of wrong.

Thus this prohibition applies to good-and-evil, to that which we mistakenly think is good or productive of good, and to that which is wholly evil, whatever its appearance or our opinion; but the prohibition is

much broader and more inclusive than this. The prohibited tree is "the tree of the knowledge of good-and-evil," and therefore of the knowledge of the entire subject of evil. The reason is plain: a man will not do that about which he does not know anything, nor will he be even tempted by it.

From any human point of view this complete avoidance of all knowledge of evil seems impossible, but it must be remembered that we are speaking of the spiritual man, the God-created man and his realities, not of the man made of the dust of the earth. When this God-created man comes into recognition of his own nature, he will no longer need any prohibition. But that recognition will only come in response to his own most earnest desire for it, and to his persistent efforts to attain it by the rejection of all error (312).

378. The teaching of Jesus includes the same requirement. He would have man put the error thought out of himself so completely that he will not recognize its presence in another. He says of anger: "If thou bring thy gift to the altar and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."¹ The offence set forth in these words is not

¹ Matthew v. 21-25.

that I have anything against my brother, but that I remember that he has something against me — that I recognize evil in him. In the old Jewish law the man ceremonially unclean was not allowed to offer his gift on the altar; and because I remember that my brother has something against me I, too, am unclean; and therefore Jesus says to everyone with like recognition: "Leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way; first be reconciled [the literal meaning of the Greek is, 'be changed throughout'] to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." Jesus knew that if I were harboring the recognition that my brother has something against me, such an idea would create in my mind a strong tendency to think evil of him, and my only safety against error in myself is to "change throughout" my thought about my brother. Jesus would have us so pure in love and so clean in thought that we would not give recognition to evil if it presented itself; all of his teaching is in perfect harmony with this, and it is also exactly in line with the Genesis prohibition. Jesus and Genesis are at one on this subject.

This direction of Jesus, stated in other language, is simply that each should put the error wholly out of himself, and to do this would be exact compliance with the great prohibition which the Lord God im-

posed upon his earth man, and also compliance with the course of reformation suggested in the preceding pages ¹ (312, 313).

379. The prohibition of the knowledge of good and evil, which we have seen is a prohibition of all evil, is much broader and more inclusive than at first appears, and it has a solid basis in scientific truth. All evil exists solely by man's belief in it (286), but belief is based on what we call knowledge, and if there were not any knowledge of evil there would not be any belief in it. Even now full compliance with this prohibition would result in complete extinction of the appearance of evil, for so accurately do both this prohibition and the teaching of Jesus strike the root of the tree that they destroy it.

380. The threat which the writer puts into the mouth of the Lord God is itself a statement of a principle of psychologic science (289). It is a condition inherent in error that out of error itself, as from a seed planted there, and from no other source, comes more error, until it culminates in death. Even thus early in the history of the race the law of causation (41) was recognized, and on that law rests this declaration which has always been interpreted as a threat,

¹ Thomas Carlyle says, "If every man would reform himself, there would not be any rascals in the world."

but which, instead, is a statement of the unavoidable result of the pursuit of evil.

381. The statement of this principle stands here in the forefront of the Bible, but the principle itself is written in the heart of every man; it is not merely a prohibition set down in a book; it is a brilliant ray of "the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world"; it comes here in the beginning of the story just as it makes its appearance in the consciousness of every human being; no man ever yet held an action to be either questionable or wrong who did not, whenever he thought of doing that action, also recognize within himself the prohibition, "Thou shalt not." This is more than a coincidence. The story is faithful in its characterization of error and its results, and is correct in the delineation of its course in the human mind.

XLII

THE TRAGEDY OF THE EARTH MAN

382. The people who still believe that the serpent spoken of in the story of the Garden of Eden actually conversed with Eve are probably as few in number as those who think the animals in Æsop's fables really talked. The important part of either fable or story is the lesson it teaches, and whether or not the incidents occurred is of minor importance in comparison with the principles inculcated. It is well to study this story of the earth man because the general course of evil in the human mind is most clearly set forth therein.

383. The writer tells us that "Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air"; and we read further, that "the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made." The writer is careful to state that this serpent is of the Lord God's forming. God saw that everything that He had made — which included "every creeping thing that

creepeth upon the earth" — was not only good, but "very good"; but here appears a serpent as well as a man that the Lord God had formed out of the ground, and from the first, neither appears to be good.

384. Attention has been called to the fact that whenever man has recognized that an act is wrong, there comes to him the great prohibition of all wrong, "Thou shalt not"; but preceding this comes the question, "Is it wrong?" If it is perceived to be wholly evil, there is no doubt, and no question presents itself, but doubt arises in every case where good seems to be associated with evil. Evil, error, wrong, in the person of the serpent, asks a question which is in perfect keeping with his subtle character: "Hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?"¹ The response of the woman clearly indicates that up to this point she had not had a doubt.

385. In this question the word "God" occurs for the first time in this story, and herein appears the craftiness of the serpent. The prohibited tree was one of those which "the Lord God had made to grow

¹ This is according to the King James Version. The Revised Version gives it as follows: "Hath God said, ye shall not eat of any tree of the garden?" but in the margin is: "Hath God said, ye shall not eat of all the trees of the garden?" The American Revision follows the Revised Version in both cases.

out of the ground," just as he had formed his man and his animals, including the serpent; and it was not God but the Lord God who prohibited eating of that tree. The differences between God and the Lord God and between their respective acts were apparently as confusing at that time as they have appeared to be ever since. The Lord God had said, "Ye shall not eat of this tree"; God has said, "Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat."

If the woman had answered the question with a straight "No," as she probably would have done had she recognized the distinction between God and the Lord God, then, from his basis of error, the serpent might have responded, "Why not eat of this tree?"

Had she not been confused by names, and had she answered the question of the serpent in accordance with the facts, she might have said: "God has said, we may eat of every tree upon the face of all the earth; but the Lord God has planted here the tree of the knowledge of good-and-evil, and he has said we shall not eat of it." The truth of such an answer would have banished all doubt, would have completely foiled the serpent, and doubtless the interview would

have terminated. Notwithstanding her confusion, her answer accords with the broad general principle of right; she recognizes that the prohibition should be obeyed, and she repeats it with emphatic words added, saying: "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." But she had accepted the suggestion of the serpent, and, as the world has ever since done, she erroneously attributed the prohibition to God, who did not prohibit anything to the man whom He created.

386. Though the woman was confused, the serpent had but partly succeeded in his plan, and he made another attempt, declaring to her, "Ye shall not surely die." The serpent's answer, translated "ye shall not surely die," is an illustration of a peculiarity of Hebrew literature, and a loss to English readers occurs here, for an exactly literal translation would read, "Dying ye shall not die," and that is a statement of fact in accord with the teaching of the whole Christian world. Man is immortal; the spiritual being does not die; and therefore the words attributed to the serpent are indeed true: "Dying ye shall not die." In her confused mental condition there can be little doubt that the woman was con-

vinced that the threatened death would not follow violation of the prohibition. Error always makes a similar promise, and the world always believes it now as the woman believed it then. The man or boy beginning with intoxicants says to himself, "I shall never become a drunkard"; and every wrongdoer deludes himself with a like promise.

The next step in the progress of error is to exhibit the pretended advantages which will come from the violation of the prohibition (375), and the serpent passes rapidly to his assertion, "For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."¹ He knew that she was seeking good (376), and his words held the promise of what seemed to her the greatest possible good, for in one respect, at least, she should be the equal of the gods. He has promised what seemed a desirable result, but in doing so he has planted the seeds of error; this is his work; it is finished, and he leaves her.

387. Next the woman made an examination for herself; she "saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise"; she was seeking good, and all these seemed good to her. She saw in the tree the

¹ See Appendix P.

same things that the world is seeking for to-day because it calls these things good; all men desire good food, things pleasant to the eye in the beautiful and æsthetic, and so also do all men desire knowledge and wisdom; practically they indorse the opinion of this woman. That which before had made her hesitate was now wholly obscured; the initial question of the serpent was practically answered; the penalty was cast aside; she believed his promise, and she decided that eating of the tree would be an advantage; therefore "she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat."

"The eyes of them both were opened." The promise of the serpent was indeed fulfilled, but the result was not what the woman had anticipated. The man and the woman had become like the Lord God, for they now knew evil, while before they had known only good; and they knew the character of what they had done, but only to regret the act and to condemn themselves.

388. Eve has been universally condemned, when, in fact, no woman ever acted from a better motive. She had found what she sincerely thought to be good, and which promised yet greater good; with that as a basis, and out of her generosity and love for her husband, she shared the new-found good with him.

There is not anything wrong in the motive which impels a person to seek good, nor in that which prompts one to share a good with another.

It has been said that Eve's error all lay in her violation of the prohibition; but the first error, that which led to the violation, and without which that violation would not have occurred, and that which caused her downfall, was the mistake in her judgment of the character of the tree. No wrong was intended, for all thought of that had entirely disappeared from her mind. She was seeking good; her answers to the serpent show conclusively that her intentions were right and that she was actuated by a good motive; but the wiles of the serpent led her to make an examination of the tree, and this convinced her that it was good. She was governed solely by her mistaken conclusion that the tree was good (286), and her error in judgment is the source of all the ills that followed (289).

From first to last her motive was good, but, however close together they may be, the motive and the act are always entirely distinct; the motive may be good and the act bad, or the motive may be bad and the act good, but the motive can never change the character of the act, however much it may change the opinion of the world concerning it. The good

motive did not produce either the mistake in judgment or the consequent wrong action, and it was from these, and not from the motive, that the trouble arose.

In all literature there is not a more accurate portrayal of the general character and course of error than that contained in this story. The order of occurrence for every error ever committed is always the same; first the doubt, questioning, or uncertainty; then the erroneous decision that either the condition, the thing, the act itself, or its result, will be advantageous or desirable — in other words, that it is good or will produce good; next, the obscuration of the error. In the erroneous decision lies the fatal error without which the wrong will not be perpetrated, for the action results from this decision. Whatever the condition, the prohibition always presents itself in front of that which is erroneous or evil; it may be but dimly discerned, or because one has so often failed to heed the voice of his inner consciousness, he may no longer notice its admonition, but no man can ever truthfully say, "I was not warned."¹

389. The man and the woman recognized the character of their act, and the story now proceeds rapidly to its culmination: "They heard the voice of

¹ "Whosoever will do His will shall know of the doctrine."

the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam and said unto him, 'Where art thou?'

"And he said, 'I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.'

"And he said, 'Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat?'

"And the man said, 'The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.'

"And the Lord God said unto the woman, 'What is this that thou hast done?'

"And the woman said, 'The serpent beguiled me and I did eat.'"

Look upon the picture which these words present: a garden in that warm eastern clime; the Lord God, avoiding the heated hours, comes to the garden in the pleasant part of the day; they hear him, run away and hide among the trees; the Lord God cannot find them, and he calls out to Adam, who, terrified, answers; they are detected, and the act which now they so keenly realize was wrong is exposed.

Compare this with the omnipresence and the omniscience of the infinite One who, knowing all things from the beginningless beginning, needed not that any one should tell Him anything! What need to Him of either questions or answers? or of the "cool of the day"? How could the difference between the methods of God and those of the Lord God be more distinctly illustrated?

390. After the judicial investigation,—for that is what the questioning of the pair by the Lord God amounts to, and it finds its parallel in the courts of to-day,—there follows the condemnation and the sentence of death: "In the sweat of thy face shall thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

The penalty of death is thus fulminated by the Lord God against the material man and against him alone; the man whom he formed out of the dust of the ground and who is to be destroyed. The description is clear, precise, and exact; the expression of the narrator is so explicit that it is not possible to apply this condemnation to another; the inclusion of the earth man in the penalty is as definite as the exclusion of the man whom God created; and the language is unmistakable and emphatic. Only one

man appears in this second story, and that man is from the dust; his pretence of life must terminate and he must return to that from whence he came; his ending is as ignominious as his beginning.

Thus it always is with error, and this is a story of the inception, course, and termination of error as personified and exemplified by this man who was nothing else but materiality.

391. The career of the earth man, as it is presented in the second and third chapters of Genesis, correctly outlines the general course of every form of materiality. In each case it has an unexplained and unexplainable beginning, followed by growth toward some definite standard; when this is reached, then succeeds its downward movement through deterioration and death to decay.

✓ Vegetation springs up, grows, attains the dimensions peculiar to its kind, and then, like the earth man, falls back to the earth from which it came. Thus it is with the blade of grass, the flowers, and the mighty giant of the forest; long as either may live, and as beautiful as each may become, not one passes beyond the ultimate standard of its kind; all fall to the ground and decay.

So far as history tells us anything, generation after generation of each member of the animal kingdom

runs its allotted round, traverses its little circle from invisibility to invisibility,—from nothingness to nothingness,—and its circle is neither larger nor smaller than that of its predecessor. “Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther,” is as true of all materiality as it is of the proud waves of the sea; nothing material is steadfast or enduring; the hills and the mountains crumble to dust and are blown away by the wind; the earth itself disintegrates and disappears; even the very stars themselves are in the same category; “star-dust” is gathered together, and a sun with its attendant planets and their satellites is born; it runs its race like all the other suns, and then turns again to star-dust. Astronomers tell us that “the floor of heaven is strewn with the wrecks of dead worlds, as the earth is strewn with dead materiality.” The penalty of the earth man, “dust thou art, to dust shalt thou return,” is as true of every object formed of earth as it was of Adam.

Not anything material endures. This is the one great fact of materiality, and this is the one lesson that must be accepted from this source; during all the ages man has searched in vain for something better, or even for something different; and he has asked of matter its profoundest secrets, and materiality has answered, “The finality is nothingness.”

It is no wonder that those who have studied materiality to its limits have despaired at its teaching. In it there is no hope beyond a succession of individual closed cycles, each moving its weary round without progress. "Thou shalt surely die" was spoken to all materiality and to every error.

God is! Spirit exists eternally! In God's domain there is neither cycle nor death. The spiritual man has life everlasting; and his destiny is progress as endless as his existence; life, glorious life, without spot or blemish, is his forever; and continually to progress in the knowledge, the understanding, and the wisdom of eternal truth, is his God-given destiny.

392. It is remarkable that the facts about error should have been understood and so clearly presented in this great allegory, written so long ago that the writer's name and time are lost — facts to be recovered and recognized after all these ages of darkness and suffering. It is written in the terms of reality, as though it were real, and in its discussion in these pages the same terms have also been used, because there is no other way of presenting the story of error, and having presented it, of showing that this error is all to end. Science and revelation, as set forth in this story and also in the teaching of Jesus, the Christ, as well as in the experience of the race, all unite in

proclaiming that the penalty of termination shall finally be executed upon whatever is materialistic of each individual; and thus error shall finally demonstrate both its own nothingness and the correctness of this story of its inception, rise, progress, and final overthrow.

XLIII

THE LORD GOD

393. The careful reader of the interpretation of the two stories of creation given in the preceding chapters cannot fail to recognize that they are accounts of two distinctly separate groups of events; and as neither writer has described any of the incidents narrated by the other, he must also recognize that it is impossible for either story to be a contradiction of the other; furthermore, both in incidents and in methods, they are in such exact contrast that each narrative stands entirely by itself.

394. No sooner are these contrasts understood than we are confronted with one of the most serious problems of the Bible, for the characteristic peculiarities of the Lord God, as depicted in the second story and elsewhere in the Old Testament, stand in sharp contrast to those of Elohim, or God (350), in the first story, and in far greater contrast to those of God, the Father, as presented in the teaching of Jesus, the Christ. Every careful student of the

Bible, if he has not recognized that the actions attributed to the Lord God could not have been perpetrated by the God portrayed in the Gospels, must have been oppressed by a sense of their wrongfulness and by his inability to find either reason or excuse for them. They reveal two distinct and contradictory characters, and these the most prominent and important in the Bible.

It is difficult to make a very exact or definite definition of the designation Lord God, which we find in our English translation of the Bible and hear so frequently from the lips of religious teachers, because it is a growth from obscure beginnings, modified by the religious events of many centuries, and much of the history of that growth is lost and much is confused by those fragmentary and complicated records that have survived.

Throughout the Old Testament this anthropomorphic god (339) appears under names varying with the various people and with the times; among them are Jehovah or Lord, Lord God, the Lord of Hosts who is the god of war and is sometimes spoken of as the Lord God of Hosts, the God of Israel, the God of the Hebrews, the most high God, the almighty God or the Lord God Almighty, and the Lord thy God. The variety and number of these

names only faintly indicate the attendant confusion, which has been increased by the attempts of modern scholars to resurrect from the past an accurate history of the religion of the Jewish race. The confusion both of names and their application began with the story of the serpent and Eve in the garden, and with the passing centuries it has grown so great that the reader must judge by the attendant incidents whether the correct name has been used.

395. The idea which to-day we attempt to express by the word "God" is the result of continuous developments and changes beginning with the infancy of the race. There is not a thinking person who has passed early maturity who holds unchanged the ideas he held in his younger days. There may be a certain conformity of opinion among the members of some particular group of people, yet, the world over, there is the widest diversity of ideas on this subject.

So far as history gives any information, each tribe, each nation, each race, had some conception of God peculiar to itself (210); and there have been similar differences and developments of ideals among those who, not understanding the distinction between the two names, used the term "Lord God" when speaking of God. At no period since the designation Lord God or any of its equivalents was first used has

there been entire uniformity either of thought or of use concerning it. The Lord God depicted in the story of the formation of the earth man was different from the opinions later entertained by the Israelites, or later still by the Hebrews, or, still later, by the Jews; and those who worship the Lord God to-day entertain still another set of ideas — and yet, because they use that name when they mean God, their opinions have included their own highest ideal of the divine Being.

There may have been then — as there may be now — some who, accepting the mere words without any thought as to the ideas they represent, believed the Lord God to be an actual being, perhaps not quite the equal of God, but a sort of intermediary, with authority and with power to enforce it and with the ability to hear and answer prayer. Those who hold such an idea will see its fallacy if they will but consider the facts, and they have only to banish from their minds all thoughts of another being and associate only their best and highest ideals with the one infinite, divine Being, our Father, God, to set themselves right.

Theories of absolute right and wrong — which include the ideals of morality — have also undergone a similar variation from age to age, each age and each

locality having a variety of its own. Through all these variations two general peculiarities have prevailed in the ideas regarding the Lord God: First, from a time antedating both history and tradition, men have imagined their gods to be like themselves, including all the qualities which they considered either admirable or desirable regardless of whether they were good or bad; and the earlier members of the race to which we owe our Bible were no exception to this condition. Second, there have always been those who believed that the idea of the Lord God which others held was in certain respects erroneous, morally wrong, or evil. Since error cannot present an appearance unless associated with truth (285), therefore the larger and better the ideal held of the Lord God, the greater was the amount of absolute truth that he represented to them, and the nearer they came to a correct idea of God Himself.

The Lord God was an expression of their highest ideal of God; it contained much of good, and was constantly improving, keeping exact pace with improvement in themselves. In the second Genesis story the writer clearly shows that he has grouped many admirable qualities in his ideal of the Lord God, and the fulmination against the earth man which he depicts so vividly is marvellously wise. The Ten

Commandments have been the wonder of the world and the guiding star of the ages, yet the language of the context reveals beyond question that their author was the Lord God — or, in other words, they are unmistakably an expression of the highest ideal to which some wonderfully wise man had attained through his perception of God's truth and its relation to the duties of man. We may call them revelation, but what is revelation but the God-given ability to perceive? for He has hidden nothing from His children.

But with all his wisdom that early writer saw but dimly, for the reason he gives for obedience to the Commandments is: "for I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me." Contrast this with the teaching of Jesus: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth,' but I say unto you, that ye resist not evil." And again Jesus said, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy,' but I say unto you, love your enemies." The God revealed in these words is love and truth, the very God of perfection, in whom is neither jealousy nor hate; and Jesus never associates with Him any of

the human defects that the writers of the Old Testament so persistently attribute to the Lord God.

396. God is infinite and omnipresent in the fullness of the meaning of those words (78, 101), but there is an entire absence of any indication of those qualities either in the Old Testament narrative or in the story of the Lord God's search after Adam; indeed the whole Bible contains no more childish picture than that of this game of hide-and-seek. From the beginning to the end the Lord God never escapes from the purely human type of action, and in his dealing with Adam he does not give him one affirmative command (368).

Frequently the writers attribute to the Lord God qualities impossible to the infinite God, because at various times he is represented as changeable, wrathful, vindictive, envious, jealous, cruel, and bloodthirsty. The commands sometimes imputed to him would disgrace the worst tyrant or professional warrior, and in the light of to-day one would hesitate to believe they could emanate from even a naked savage. Yet it must not be forgotten that in the ages when the Old Testament was written, all this, which to more enlightened minds is so repugnant, was in perfect harmony with the conception they then held of God, whom they called the Lord

God, and whom they believed to be an all-powerful combination of good and evil, with the absolute right to exercise toward His creatures whichever He chose. Therefore we do not err when we say that the Lord God, as depicted by those early writers, was their highest ideal of God. The true God is the very reverse of all this, for He is the God of absolute goodness, purity, and love, and many of the acts attributed to the Lord God could not spring from such a source.

397. The effect of mingling error with truth, as is done in all the ideas held concerning the Lord God, is well illustrated by a prediction of Isaiah. Born a Jew, and carefully educated in the religion of his country, he believed implicitly in their doctrine that the only place in all the world where God could be worshipped as He ought to be worshipped was in the temple in Jerusalem. When it was revealed to him that ultimately all mankind would worship God aright, he united this divine truth with his early teaching, and on that compound basis he predicted that all the nations and tribes of the earth would come up to Jerusalem to worship. This prediction is manifestly erroneous, but hidden beneath the words is a kernel of absolute truth. As represented in the second Genesis story, the aim of the Lord God

in his treatment of the earth man was always toward the attainment of better things through the elimination of error; and, if we have the ability to discern it, we shall surely find more or less of absolute truth and right closely connected with even his evil acts (285), just as so much absolute truth appears in Isaiah's erroneous prediction.

398. When, in his answer to the scribe, Jesus said,¹ the first commandment in the Jewish law is, "thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength," he gave expression to his recognition of the facts that the name Lord God was used by them to designate their highest ideal of goodness, and that, by faithful and earnest adherence to their love for that absolute good which existed in their ideal, they would continue to gain in perception and knowledge of the truth, and would finally attain to a recognition of the perfection of God Himself. No man has yet recognized God absolutely unclouded by error,² but by love and worship of the best that he does recognize he will ultimately arrive at a perception of absolute perfection. As we continue in this love and worship, we shall discover defects, but by faithfully loving and persistently following our

¹ Mark xii. 30.

² John i. 18.

highest ideal we shall be led to the rejection of more and yet more error and to the perception of better and still better ideals, until finally we shall reach the best — the perfect One — God. As Jesus suggested, this is the course for every man.

The final culmination of all progress in this direction was first set forth in the teaching of Jesus, the Christ, who placed before us the God of absolute truth, right, and goodness (168) — the God of perfection (172). The light of His countenance shines through all of Jesus' teaching, yet of Him Jesus does not dogmatize nor undertake a description. Even after giving others every credit belonging to them, no one can arrive at a fair apprehension of the scope and character of the teaching of Jesus without recognizing its immense superiority to that of all others. All other gods are modelled in the similitude of man (340), and like their gods, all other schemes of morality and right are tainted with human defects; while the morality which Jesus taught is divinely complete and perfect.

399. Thus we have before us that perfect Being who is indeed God, whom Jesus, the Christ, taught us to call Father, and who is without any error, unreality, or defect; and we also have a portrayal of the Lord God, whose dominant characteristics are

human, who is full of man's errors, but who is never without some gleam of the divine qualities and essentials. The contradictions in character between the God suggested to us by the Christ and the god who could perform the deeds and issue the commands of which we read in the Old Testament, all disappear when we understand that they are not both representations of the one true God, but that while one is the perfect God of whom Jesus testified, the other is a product of the imagination of men who indeed perceived much that is truth, but who, like Isaiah, held much to be truth that is not truth, and mingled both in their idea of a god whom they called the Lord. Between such there cannot be any contradiction; nor is it difficult to distinguish between them, for if any defect appears connected with either, it is not of God, nor does it belong to Him in any degree; and if there is any item of perfection, it is of God and belongs to Him alone. Thus the greatest inconsistency of the Bible disappears.

Through this interpretation we come into a more cohesive, consistent, and valuable understanding of the teaching of the Bible. The Old Testament is not destroyed nor is it set aside, as some seem to think, but it is relieved of its discrepancies and becomes to us a new book, broader and more compre-

hensive, clearer and purer, and with such warnings against error as could not otherwise be presented. In it we no longer see error masquerading in the guise of truth, nor do we any longer blasphemously impute to God actions which, were they perpetrated by human beings in these days, would be held to be sins of the deepest dye. Thus God is relieved of all imputation of these human frailties, foibles, cruelties, and crimes, which in Old Testament times, and even later, through the name of the Lord God and other erroneous designations, have been attributed to Him. This fact alone removes from the mind of man one of his worst stumbling-blocks, purifies and ennobles his own ideals, and makes possible a recognition of the ideal of perfection which Jesus presented to the world.

PART SEVENTH
CONCLUDING PROPOSITIONS

XLIV

FREEDOM ¹

400. God is the one first cause or origin (53, 54), and all that exists was derived from His substance, and therefore is constituted of that substance (41, 45). This condition is abundantly confirmed by the Biblical statements that man is in God's image and likeness, therefore he possesses within himself many of the essentials that belong to God (342) and must resemble Him in those particulars; consequently it is entirely legitimate to reason from what is known of God to ascertain the real constituents of man (343).

401. The proposition that God is entirely free to do whatever He chooses, without hindrance from

¹The word "freedom" is here used in contrast to the word "liberty" because liberty may be made to include license, which is a dangerous counterfeit of freedom. See Appendix C.

any source, has been proven by incontestable reasoning from a correct basis (96, 97). Added to this reasoning is the testimony of man's perception, which, in this particular, is as universal as his perception of the truth of the axiom (26). To each of the many deities which man has worshipped throughout the ages, he has always ascribed the characteristics of freedom and self-control, and, stated in homely phrase, this includes belief in the ability of those deities to do as they please. In earlier times, particularly among the Semites, if any savage tribe became convinced that its god was not able to control his own actions, and, through his superior power, to assist and protect the tribe, he was at once deposed. The universality of this idea is seen among ourselves. If we were convinced that God could be subject to any control other than Himself, or that He could in any way be limited in His action, we should instinctively know that we had not yet found Him whom we seek. To be indeed God He must be absolutely free, and must have unlimited and perfect control of Himself and of all His actions.

402. Because God is free, every man, by the divine right of his sonship alone, is entitled to a similar freedom and to unlimited and perfect control of himself and of all his actions (24). But this must

not be misunderstood: True freedom can never include license, nor the liberty to do the slightest wrong, for, as a necessity of its nature (41-47), wrongdoing, whatever its character, leads inevitably to bondage and death (289); while perfect freedom, with all that it implies, always results in absolutely right actions, which constitute the basis of freedom, and from which only good can come.

Freedom and self-control include and necessitate each other because each is indispensable to the other, and, interwoven with them, and an essential of them, is the ability to exercise choice without any limitation or interference from anything external to the individual; and, since thinking creates desire, and desire influences choice, and choice controls all actions, the ability to exercise freedom of action necessitates the right to entire freedom of thought (24).¹ But without proper self-control, which is one essential of freedom, license may take the place of freedom, and, through resultant wrongdoing,

¹ Professor Palmer, of Harvard, said in a Lowell Institute Lecture: "Only in so far as we believe ourselves to be free can we be said to be capable of anything worthy the name of conduct. Without freedom, what we call our acts would be mere movements like unto the movements of the things about us. Only that which expresses our purpose, and into which we have put ourselves, can be really our act."

bondage will inevitably follow. Jesus said emphatically, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whosoever committeth sin [error] is the servant of sin."¹ As peace and harmony result from compliance with principle, so, also, does the ability to exercise freedom and self-control; and there cannot be complete compliance with principle without a correct understanding of the fact that every other person has the same desire for perfect freedom and self-control which each one wishes for himself, and the same absolute right to exercise them.

No one ever saw a child old enough to have a desire of its own that did not resent having its choice interfered with, and there was never a white-haired man so old that he did not manifest the same characteristic. There is a meaning in this as deep as the meaning of life itself, for it is an instinctive expression of the inborn divine right to freedom which belongs to every individual. It is for this that all men, from the birth of the human race until now, have been blindly struggling through frightful mistakes, and the struggle will not be ended until they

¹ John viii. 34. The word here translated sin might, without any violation of the meaning, have been translated error, and the expression would then read, "Whosoever committeth error is the servant of error," which is a psychologic fact.

have secured their object; with the dawning of that day there will be "peace on earth and goodwill toward men."

Because all are alike children of God, and because a principle is universal and without exception, it follows that the same divine right to absolute freedom of thought and action, and to self-control, without impediment, hindrance, or restraint from any source whatever, belongs to each and every individual alike; therefore not any one has any right to prevent another from exercising that freedom; all control or domination of one man by another is wrong; and man has no right to do wrong under any circumstances.

At first thought the preceding propositions may seem like a limitation both of the principle of freedom and of the freedom of the individual; but a little consideration will show that, on the contrary, the limitation results, not from compliance with these propositions, but from violating them. The world has been thrown into its worst confusion through ignorant violation of this principle, each selfishly claiming for himself what he sees as his right to entire freedom of action, at the same time forgetting that all others have an equal right to the same freedom.

403. God is one and all; there is no one to interfere with Him in the exercise of His infinite freedom; but men are many; no two are just alike; and their misunderstandings, strivings, and contentions suggest that the perfect freedom which is their divine birthright is unattainable by them. How to exercise this divine right, which is an actual possession, is the problem of mankind.

Ever since the days of Jesus there have been those who have recognized the brotherhood of the whole human family, and now there are some who, in addition to this, declare the solidarity of the human race. The race is indeed one; and, as in the normal person each part of the body acts in perfect freedom without interfering with the same perfect freedom in every other part, — all thus acting as one complete whole, — so would it be with the entire race of mankind did each for himself practise this principle of absolute freedom, and respect the right of all others to do the same. The difficulty does not come from man's surrounding conditions, nor does it come from the principle, but from failure to understand and to apply this principle to his daily life.

It is necessary always to remember that each man is just as sincere in his opinion as you yourself are in yours. Each considers whatever he is doing as the

wisest, best, most nearly right, or as the most desirable thing to do, or perhaps as the only thing that he can do under the circumstances and conditions as he understands them; and for these and for many other reasons he does not wish to be interfered with. In his desire to secure freedom for himself he forgets that he is one of a great multitude of social beings, each having the same desires and the same rights that he himself has; and he also forgets that his own freedom depends upon his perfect willingness that all other persons shall exercise the same freedom in full measure. The proposition can be more clearly and exactly set forth by means of a direct personal illustration:—

404. Each of two neighbors, looking at an object to be accomplished, holds a different opinion, both concerning the object and the method of attaining it. They are equally sincere. During the discussion which follows, each becomes more positive that he is right and that the other is wrong; and thus the difference widens and intensifies. When the possibility of successful persuasion fails, in order to bring about what he now thinks is both right and necessary, one or the other attempts compulsion. It is to be noted that in the beginning even the one who became the aggressor was moved by sincere

kindliness, but as discordant feelings intensified, each entirely lost sight of the principle that the other, as well as himself, has the right to unrestricted freedom both of opinion and action, and therefore that his own right, like the right of every one, ceased the instant it conflicted with the right of the other. Each is oblivious to his own mistaken attitude; but the one attacked distinctly recognizes that his right to freedom is being violated, and therefore he resists as vigorously as possible, and he is greatly surprised and disturbed by his friend's manifestation of what he thinks is inconsistency or obstinacy. The history of all mankind is epitomized in this illustration. The social disturbances of the whole world, great or small, between men or between nations, arise out of the fact that men violate this principle and thereby limit their own freedom as well as that of others.

405. It is remarkable that man, while claiming what he honestly thinks is his own right to freedom, insists upon depriving others of the same right. Each man instinctively feels that he should be free to do as he chooses;¹ therefore, and as he thinks rightfully, he resents interference, forgetting that a

¹ Professor James comes very near to this fundamental idea of freedom when he says in his *Talks to Teachers*, p. 265, "The first thing to learn in our intercourse with others is non-interference with their own peculiar way of being happy."

wrong done by another never makes it right for him to do wrong. Worse still, in their blindness, many honestly believe it is their moral duty to prevent others from exercising their right to freedom, nor do they recognize that they are themselves doing the very things which they condemn. There are numberless historic examples of this: The Pilgrims fled from England to Holland, and from Holland to an unknown wilderness to secure the right to worship as they chose; and yet, as soon as they had obtained a little authority, they did all they could to prevent the Baptists and the Quakers from exercising the same right.

The national altercation is the same in character as the personal, and always involves the same principles and conditions. Out of such conditions grew the American Revolution and the American Civil War, the war of the United States with Spain, and that of England with the Boers. The difficulty, the confusion, and the social chaos of the world arise from the fact that men never knew, or else have forgotten, the universal principle of freedom and the necessity for its application to all the affairs of human beings; when this principle is both recognized, accepted, and practised, then, and not until then, is there any use in hoping for "world-wide peace."

The Western bully, insane with liquor, illustrated the general situation when, in response to a caution from his friend, he retorted, "I am going to have quiet in this town to-night if I have to shoot every man in it." It was in the same spirit that Napoleon announced that he made war to secure the peace of Europe, when war would not have existed if he himself had not made it, and there was no peace until his ability to continue the war terminated.

406. Neither men nor nations recognize that in violating this principle they commit an error if not a crime, and that they also deprive themselves of their own freedom and place themselves under bondage to their own error (402). It is an essential of the act itself that the man who lies must come under bondage to his lie because he must make it good; the man who steals is under bondage to his crime; so, too, is the man who commits any error, whatever the principle he violates. Either directly or indirectly, the crime or the indiscretion imposes upon the one who commits it an obligation or a condition of bondage exactly proportioned to the offence. The only way in which any man can secure his own freedom is by leaving every other man entirely free also; and what is true of the individual is true of the nation.

When the facts and the conditions which attend

error of every kind are fully understood and rightly appreciated, men will desire to leave others free in the same degree that they desire their own freedom. Acting from such a choice, they will leave all others free, will be entirely free themselves, and thus all apparent limitation either to the principle or to man's freedom will disappear (402).

407. Were all men to act in accord with this principle, each from choice stopping short when he recognizes that he is beginning to interfere with the right of another, it would not produce disorder and chaos, but, on the contrary, all crime, wrong, and discord would cease. There would be no more stealing; no one would plan to steal because each would recognize that the owner wishes to retain his possessions and would respect that wish. There would be no murder; he who would otherwise be an assassin would stop before he took the weapon in his hands, because he would recognize in his intended victim the desire to live. It would be the same with every crime, and the condition of the world would be revolutionized. Instead of violence, disorder, and contention, there would be harmony and perfect peace.

408. From the nature of the principle, compliance with it can be accomplished in no other way than by

the willing and independent action of each individual; any attempt to enforce obedience to it would be its violation and the destruction of individual freedom. On the other hand, this compliance would not cause any one to be interfered with by others, for he who complies with this principle will not conflict with any law, violate any principle, assail any institution, nor will he attack any person. Neither does it require the formation of any society, nor the creation of social machinery of any kind; indeed the organization of a formal society or association, or the use of either social or political machinery, would tend directly toward the destruction of the object in view, because in either there would be more or less restriction or compulsion; but compliance with the principle does not interfere with voluntary, free, and untrammelled individual association, coöperation, and mutual assistance; and one may advocate it whenever opportunity enables him to do so without interfering with the wishes of others; but at last it is only for each individual to act in accordance with his own choice.

409. It is beyond question that God gave every man his complete freedom (24). The infinite Mind, because it is infinite, is necessarily omniscient, therefore the entire career of the real life of every man is

always before Him from the minutest action to the greatest, and from its first inception and expression to the last (319) — always in the Father's care. The infinite Being, God, is not only omniscient but He is entirely free in all His action (97); knowing all completely, He knew beforehand what He was to do, intended what He did, and, being perfect, He could not make a mistake (172); consequently He could not have any occasion to change or to modify in any slightest degree His own course nor the course of anything in His universe.¹

It is inconceivable that the infinite God, who is also unchanging principle (156), and who therefore always works along the undeviating lines of principle (158), should have any occasion to retract any of His acts. Furthermore, the essential constituents of the real man are also essential constituents of God Himself (343), and not anything could by any

¹ An apprehension and acceptance of what is meant by the terms "infinite mind" and "omniscience" will furnish a solution of the seemingly incongruous conditions of foreknowledge and freedom. According as one has knowledge of another and of his surroundings he is able without any interference with the other's freedom to predict what that other will do. If this finite knowledge could be enlarged into that complete knowledge of all things which is possessed by the infinite Mind, all seeming incongruity between the knowledge of God and the unmolested freedom of the individual would disappear.

possibility occur that would require any change in these constituents. Then God does not and will not interfere with man to take away from him that complete freedom with which, beyond question, He endowed him "in the beginning," nor will He have any occasion to dominate or to coerce him in any way. Man is a King by right of origin as well as by right of divine gift (369), and there is no one to interfere; but it remains for him to manifest this Kingship.

XLV

BIBLICAL BASIS OF FREEDOM

410. Freedom for man is clearly set forth in the Genesis story of creation. Similarity of man to God appears in the first words which relate to man: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over¹ the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle,² and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." That this was consummated is shown in the declaration of creation: "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him." The preceding pages have shown that this is a statement of fact. Man is similar to God.

After man had been created, "God blessed them"

¹ The Hebrew word here translated dominion is used figuratively though it is translated dominion, rule, or reign in twenty-three cases out of the twenty-four where it occurs in the Old Testament. The literal definition of the word is "to tread down," "to tread upon," "to rule."

² The Pshitto, a Syrian version supposed to be as early as the second century, has it, "the cattle and all the beasts of the earth."

and followed this by an enumeration of the particular things they were to do, which, though varying in form from the enumeration first given, is equally inclusive. Man is directed to "subdue it [the earth], and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." The last clause is sufficiently inclusive to embrace all animals. Here are two enumerations of those things over which man is given dominion, including the very earth itself and every living thing upon the earth with one exception, and that exception is man.

By an unavoidable law of thinking, the thing not included in an enumeration of items is excluded. If your friend tells you that you may have his watch, his pocket-book, and his shoes, it is equivalent to telling you that you cannot have anything not mentioned; therefore, by this exception, we know that man was not given dominion over his fellow-man.¹

¹ Failure to state this in specific terms seems a serious omission until it is recognized that this story takes no note of error, and to dominate his brother would be an error; besides, this man whom God spake into being is perfect, and would not know nor commit an error, and therefore there is for him no need to mention this nor any other error. The omission thus becomes a confirmation of the character both of God's acts and of the man whom He created (353).

This is further evident from the fact that each list includes all men in its general terms, so that all men alike have dominion over all other created things on the earth, and over the earth itself; if there is to be domination of man by man, that right is given to all men alike.

411. Such domination would result in pandemonium, and to avoid this it would be necessary by some means to specify those individuals who are to exercise it. This condition is found among insects which live in communities where each group has its specific kind of work to do and its peculiarities adapted to that work. But there are no such distinctions between human beings; and surely had the Creator intended that any man or set of men should dominate their brothers, He would have endowed those men with marked peculiarities which not only would distinguish them from all other men, but would also enable them to give unquestionable evidence of the possession of that right; He would also have equipped them with the ability necessary to maintain that right and to exercise it with ever increasing good to all mankind. Not only are there no such distinguishing peculiarities in any man or class of men, but the lessons of experience exemplify their absence in every case, and wherever domination of one man over

another has been exercised, the result has been disastrous, and all attempts at such domination have culminated in the worst possible forms of violence. The greater the scheme of domination and the more complete its apparent success for a time, the greater has been the final catastrophe.

This is strongly confirmed by the history of all governments, which, from at least one point of view, are organized methods for the control of some men by other men. Every nation has been permeated with error, and the more arbitrary the form of government, the greater have been the resultant wrongs. Rome was one of the greatest empires in history, and its wonderfully complete control resulted in as complete failure. The world has not elsewhere witnessed such corruption and wrong nor such a catastrophe.

All this agrees with conclusions derived from other and entirely independent data; and, since no man has the right to dominion or authority over his brother, then his brother has no such right over him, and all men are alike free.

412. Everything in the teaching of Jesus, the Christ, is entirely consistent with the great principle that man is free. His words, either in spirit or in form, are in perfect harmony with this principle in every instance where they relate to this subject,

while several of his broadest and most inclusive ethical precepts rest upon it for their foundation. Notably is this true of the Golden Rule, which includes within its terms all his utterances touching the conduct of man toward his fellows. Indeed, not only does the rule rest on this principle of freedom for its basis, but it finds therein the reason for its existence, for he who in his conduct toward others complies with this principle of freedom, always does by others as he would be done by, and full compliance results in exact obedience to the rule.

413. Upon this eternal, exceptionless, and unchangeable principle as one of its secure foundations rests also the least understood and most misunderstood of all the precepts promulgated by Jesus, the Christ: "Resist not evil: but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." The other foundation of this precept is found in the fact of the nothingness of evil (272, 280, 282).

In violation of this precept, all human laws recognize self-defence as one of the inalienable rights of man, and that its necessity justifies any act, including even murder, but neither the principle nor this precept leaves any place for such a course. When a man attempts to coerce another he is doing wrong, for he has crossed the dividing line between his own

and another's right, and he who resists such an attempt is not resisting any *right* of the other, but by that resistance he is himself attempting to control the offender, and in that he is doing exactly the same wrong that is being done by the other man, and by so doing is making two wrongs where before there was only one. Furthermore, he is using that man's wrongdoing as an excuse, reason, or justification for what he himself is doing (406), forgetting that the wrong act of one man never makes it right for another to do wrong. Under the broad principle of freedom for every individual, both he who attempts to coerce another, and he who, in self-defence, resists such coercion, are violating the principle and the precept (402). If the principle is correct, the precept is correct also, for, like the Golden Rule, this precept is simply an accurate and practical application of the principle to human affairs.

414. Jesus also said, "Judge not." Judgment and condemnation are mental actions which prepare the way and make it seem advisable, necessary, and right, to interfere with another, thus leading to violation of the principle; while willing compliance with the words of Jesus because of one's own choice would leave neither reason, excuse, nor opportunity for either judging or condemning, and would result

in complete compliance with the precept, thus showing that the principle is the basis for the rule.

These are three striking examples of harmony between the principle of freedom and the precepts of Jesus, the Christ, and in all he says there is nothing that in the slightest conflicts with this principle; on the contrary, all his precepts and all his actions harmonize with it perfectly.

All his social precepts are of such form and character that the domination of man by man in any attempt to secure compliance with either of them would itself be violation of the precept which it was sought thus to enforce. At the Last Supper, with great solemnity, Jesus gave to his disciples — for us as well as for them — his New Commandment: “Love one another as I have loved you.” This, if complied with, renders all other commandments totally unnecessary, because, as Paul said, “Love is the fulfilling of the law,” and in loving we find the fulfilment of this principle; in loving we perceive its absolute truthfulness; therefore through love we make this principle manifest to ourselves and to the world.

415. Although this principle of freedom and the precept “Resist not evil” are largely repudiated by the world, yet we know that under the most extreme

provocation possible they were fully complied with by Jesus, and the result in blessings to the world has been beyond comparison. The enemies of Jesus, the Christ, believed they had killed him, and they thought by that act they had removed him out of their way and had destroyed the effect of his teaching. In all this they were mistaken. He continued to live, and the moral power of his life and teaching has been increasingly active in the world ever since; and it was never more widespread nor productive of greater results than to-day. Had he chosen to do so, he might have overcome his enemies by force, but had he done so, the result would have been the same that it always has been in every case where force has been used. Force is of materiality, and it never accomplishes anything outside of that domain; it never changes an opinion nor varies a course of conduct except by means of its own domination; moreover, the use of force is such a violation of principle that it turns the course of events backward and makes two errors where before was only one, thus doubling the wrong in the world. Surely the cause of truth can never be advanced by the violation of principle.

416. It is a significant fact, overlooked by many of the followers of Jesus, that every one of his precepts

is based on eternal principle, and therefore not one of them is a dictation of authority. Perhaps no expressions of Jesus are more universally accepted than those in the Lord's Prayer; certainly none are more often repeated. Those who are sincerely earnest in their use of this prayer can do their part toward securing the conditions they ask for, especially those requests, — which include all the others, — “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,” for if this principle of freedom is complied with, these requests will become accomplished facts, our Father's kingdom will come, and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven; and then will this earth be heaven indeed!

417. Freedom for all men will result from compliance with this principle, and in its practice all wrong will ultimately disappear and the blessing of perfect peace will rest upon all mankind. This is ideal, but it is the ideality of truth; and, whether these facts are recognized or not, truth is eternally real, and truth is practical. Thousands of other things were once ideal which have since become practical realities. Jesus was not a dreamer of dreams; or, if he was, his dreams were of ideals that he knew would sometime become realities; and he clearly saw this principle as a vital reality which mankind would finally recognize and accept. Men have not tried to apply

this principle to their daily conduct, but have said, as they have of many of Jesus' precepts, that compliance with it is an impossibility; but our old world is either casting aside its "impossibilities" or is making them possible. This vision of an ideal world, where every man is himself free and leaves all others free also, where the Golden Rule and the non-resistance of evil, as taught and exemplified by Jesus, are the practical methods of all action, where every man loves his neighbor as he loves himself, and all are as one family, is to become an actual reality.

The world is already awakening to a recognition of the truth of this great principle of freedom, and we are hastening toward the day when all men will realize the correctness of the declaration of Him who made all things, that "they are very good."

XLVI

THE UNIVERSAL ONENESS

418. We have seen that all that is, is of His substance (113); that in reality creation is expression or manifestation (360); and that all remain in the infinite Mind, which is God, just as completely after manifestation as before (349); so that which at first seemed to man like division and separation does not divide nor separate, for God always remains one with each of His manifestations. "That which hath been made was life in Him" (361), and when man recognizes this truth, he will understand that all are one with Him and in Him, and consequently are one with each other.

419. Man's understanding of mind has ministered largely to his apprehension of God's methods of expressing Himself, and it will be equally helpful in giving a better understanding of the oneness of all things and of their true relationship to God and to each other. Nothing illustrates this so well as the intimate relation of the thinker with his thought and the oneness of thoughts and ideas in individuals.

Mind action is so natural, and sometimes so rapid, that often one may be almost unaware of it. The result of mind action is a thought. Through its perception by the mind a thought becomes just as much an individual entity or reality as any physical object ever appears to be, and mental perception of it may be as clear, definite, and exact as any sense perception.

420. At the outset it must be distinctly understood that throughout this chapter we are speaking of the real mind (330), — the divine mind in man, — of its actions, thoughts, and ideas (322). A thought in truth not only is indivisible, but, like all the realities of God, it existed “from the beginning” (357) in first cause (44) and came from first cause (32). But God is first cause (54) and God is reality (124), therefore all true thoughts are realities which exist in the infinite mind of God; consequently each true thought is as real, as unchangeable, and as indestructible as are truth and God.

421. Men talk of changing their minds, and they think that expression is a correct statement of the fact; but what really takes place is a rearrangement of their ideas. In our adult experiences all our ideas are made up of many single thoughts. A compound idea, though correctly recognized as a single indi-

vidual, can be analyzed and separated into its component parts. One or more of these parts may be removed, or others may be added, or both these actions may take place, and thus a new compound idea will appear. The man says he has changed his mind, and for all ordinary purposes this expression is correct enough, but in fact it is only a rearrangement; the simple, unitary thoughts and ideas have not changed, for each remains the same indivisible, immutable, and indestructible entity that it was when first it formed a part of the composite idea.

422. That an idea is a part of the thinker is a matter of individual mental consciousness and of common experience and expression. A man is asked if he knows Mr. Brown, whom he met for only a moment, and his reply is an unhesitating negation. Should he be asked the same question after a year of intimate association, his answer would be an equally unhesitating affirmation. During that year he has seen no more of Mr. Brown physically than he saw in his first glance, but he has become familiar with his thoughts, ideas, and opinions; therefore he knows him. A man's ideas are an integral and inseparable part¹ of himself; even those of which he may be

¹ What is here meant by "part" is a constituent that cannot be separated or divided from the man, hence it is not a "part" in the

wholly unaware exist in his inner mind, exerting their influence, ready at any moment to spring into his consciousness and to assume increased activity. Seemingly an idea may be laid aside or forgotten, but it is neither misplaced, lost, nor destroyed. Years afterward, in the most sudden and unexpected manner, some slight incident may recall it, and there it is in the mind just the same and just as vivid as when it was first perceived. Such experiences are common to all, and every one has purposely brought into his consciousness a seemingly forgotten name, incident, or idea.

423. But a man's thoughts and ideas have another and entirely different relationship to him. As the thought comes clearly into his consciousness and passes into the domain of ideas, he sees it as something entirely separate and distinct from himself. It has an individuality of its own and it is an entity as separate from him as the stone in the street or the star in the sky. Although these two seemingly contradictory relationships exist at the same instant of time, they do

common usage of that term. The same difficulty occurs whenever allusion is made to a "part" of any spiritual being. Language lacks a word to express the exact meaning which should be conveyed, but the reader will recognize this peculiarity and will not be misled by it.

not conflict nor in the slightest modify each other. The fact that in materiality there is not any counterpart of this dual relationship does not in any way interfere with its existence in its own spiritual domain.

So complete and so enduring are these two relationships that the thinker may express his idea to another, who may have a distinct and complete perception of it as an idea belonging to the one who expressed it, yet standing out in its own individuality separate from either of them, as well as from all else, and maintaining between them that separate identity and existence. This is very clearly illustrated by the letter from a friend, or by the printed page.

424. By the expression of his idea the thinker does not lose anything, because, complete in every particular, that idea remains an inseparable, unchangeable constituent of himself, in him and one with him just as much after as before expression (349); therefore his individuality remains unchanged. Such giving does not impoverish the giver, though it may make him who receives rich indeed, and there seems no mystery about it because it is the common experience of every one.¹

425. An idea having been expressed by the thinker

¹ It may be well to allude here to the fact that man is an idea of God and bears the same relation to God that all His ideas do.

becomes an integral and indivisible part of him who accepts and assimilates it, because it enters his mind just as previously it had entered the mind of him who first perceived it. It now occupies a three-fold relationship — it is an indivisible and inseparable part of him who first perceived it, it has become an equally indivisible and inseparable part of him who has accepted it, and it exists in its own entity and individuality distinct from either.

426. This threefold relationship of the idea is as impossible to materiality as is its dual relationship (423). The material unit may be transferred from one person to another, but, unlike the mental unit, it is a transfer; what one gains another loses. Furthermore, if a piece is split off, as a piece of wood or stone may be, it thereafter remains a separate piece. True, it may be fastened in the place where it originally belonged, but, however perfect the union, it is forever a distinct piece, while a thought becomes an integral part of every mind that accepts it. Mind and materiality differ so entirely that there cannot be any comparison between them; not anything material is ever truly a symbol of either mind or spirit.¹

427. Because of the individuality, indivisibility, and indestructibility (420) of each distinct idea as it

¹ See Appendix F.

exists in each of the relationships thus far noted, a new relationship now exists between the thinker and the one who has accepted his idea. The complete idea remains an inseparable part of the thinker; it has also become an inseparable part of him who accepted it; it is exactly the same individual idea in each of these two, and it is also an indivisible part of each; therefore, in fact and in truth, to the extent of this idea, these two individuals are literally and exactly one. He who expressed the idea is unchanged by its expression (424); he who received it is unchanged except by the addition of it to himself; thus, both the giver and the receiver continue to be each his own, special, identical, and individual self, as he was before.

428. We can understand a continuous interchange of ideas between these two until each has acquired all the ideas of the other. Then, although each continues to be his own complete, individual self, yet, so far as ideas are concerned, in the strict meaning of the word, these two are one; and at the same time that they are exactly and indivisibly one, they are also two in the same precise and correct meaning of that word. This does not represent a mystical union of two natures in one being, but simply the presence of the same constituent ideas in two individuals.

429. This oneness of ideas need not be confined to these two. They may take a third into the interchange of thought so that the three shall become one as completely as are the two; then the same terms which apply to the two will apply to the three; and this interchange may extend without limit, yet each will remain himself with all his own identity unimpaired and with no loss of individuality.

430. Thus far the attention has been directed to oneness through mind and thought, to enable the reader to comprehend more readily the oneness of all mankind with each other and with God. The same result can be obtained by a consideration of any one of God's essentials. Truth is an essential of God (126), and, like each of His essentials (185, 190), all truth is one (120). In the reality of man there is nothing except what he derived from the one source or Creator, God, therefore the entire real man is truth; and since all truth is one, therefore each man is one with each and every other man, and also one with the Father.

The difficulty with this problem of the oneness has been that men have erroneously continued thinking of spirit and of spiritual things in the terms of materiality (334). Whenever we attempt to think of mind, truth, spirit, life, principle, existence, being, God, if

we would be accurate, we must at once dismiss from our thoughts all the peculiarities which distinguish and pertain to materiality. Until we do this we shall fall into inextricable and ineradicable error concerning all spiritual existence (333).

431. In entering upon the discussion of oneness through spirit, it seems well to repeat previous statements, thus presenting the entire argument at a glance:—

Man, in the essential of his being, is spirit (107). God is spirit (105) and He is infinite; since there is only one infinite (79), there is only one spirit, and that spirit which is an essential of man must be of the same spirit which is the essential of God; therefore the spirit of each man is one with the spirit of God, and it is also one with the spirit of each and every other man; and what is true of the oneness of God and all men in a single essential is equally true of their oneness in each other essential (190). Therefore, in their spiritual entirety, all men are truly one.

Thus there exists a oneness of all men through ideas, and also a oneness through the divine essentials of their being; and these divine essentials comprise the entire reality of each man, so that all, in their entirety, are absolutely one.

432. God is all, and God is one in the exact mean-

ing of that word. Notwithstanding all the innumerable multitudes which He has spoken into manifestation by the fiat of His infinite power, each individual among them all retains his own identity so completely that not even the minutest of them all is either lost or absorbed in the infinite oneness. If a single individual could be either lost or separated from Him, there would then be something apart from God, and He would be neither infinite nor all; but either loss or separation is impossible. All are one with Him and exist in Him; in very fact, "*in Him we live, and move, and have our being.*"

433. This universal oneness is the basis on which rest all the ethical precepts of Jesus. He says: "Judge not;" "Do as ye would be done by;" "Love one another;" "Love your enemies;" "Resist not evil." He also says: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these ye have done it unto me." These principles of universal oneness apply with tremendous meaning to every wrong which man inflicts upon his brother-man. Every one who peers closely into events is forced to acknowledge, not only that each wrong is the root of its own inevitable recompense (289), but, further than this, that the man who wrongs another, even though that other be one of the humblest, is inflicting upon himself an equal

or even a greater wrong. Observation will confirm this, and no reason can be found for it except that in reality the two are indissolubly one. Nor is the wrong confined to these two, for, while apparently it may affect only those most closely concerned, if it has done nothing more, it has increased the sum of wrong in the world, and no man can say where its seeds may fall, spring up, and bear fruit after its kind. This indisputable fact is a most emphatic confirmation of this principle of the oneness of all mankind.

But in a higher and more intensely significant sense than this, because each man is one with his Father, God, as well as one with his fellow-man, each wrong, whoever it may be aimed at, is not only a wrong against the perpetrator of it and against his brother, but it is also a wrong against his "elder brother," the Christ; more than that, and greater and beyond all, it is a wrong against the High and Holy One, his Father and his God.

In the same degree that we realize this oneness, our understanding of all truth will be clearer, and our incentives to do wrong will diminish, until at last the full light of truth will put out of every heart all appearances of selfishness, envy, malice, and hate, and the whole world will then naturally and gladly obey the two commands which rest for their basis

and for all their reasonableness upon the fact of this eternal oneness of each individual with every other one — those commands which Moses said the Lord told him to deliver unto the children of Israel, and which Jesus emphasized as the first and the second in importance in all the Jewish law: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”

XLVII

JESUS AND THE ONENESS

434. The conclusions reached in the preceding chapter give the basis for a clear understanding of those declarations of Jesus, the Christ, which have sometimes been regarded as mysteries too far removed from all usual experience to be comprehended by human understanding.

Near the close of his ministry, as Jesus was walking in Solomon's Porch, the Jews asked him to tell them plainly whether or not he was the Messiah, or Christ.¹ In the course of his response he made this most remarkable declaration: "I and my Father are one."²

The mystery connected with this statement disappears, and it becomes simple and fully understand-

¹ John x. 22-42 includes the entire narrative of this event.

² This is a mistranslation which is corrected in the Revised Version. It should read, "I and the Father are one," thus, in this most important statement, giving recognition to the universality of God's Fatherhood and therefore to the sonship of all mankind. Because of this fact Jesus taught all men to pray to "Our Father which art in heaven."

able if we accept the oneness existing in the realm of mind, spirit, and truth, which is the domain of God and of Jesus, the Christ. Christ and the Father are one in the exact meaning of that word; and at the same time each is his own individual self (431).

435. Misunderstanding this declaration of Jesus, the Jews took up stones to kill him. He asked them why they did this, and they said, "Because thou, being a man, makest thyself God." They were then in such a mental condition that they could not listen calmly to anything he might say, and when he reiterated his statement that he is the son of God, and called their attention to the distinctness of his individuality from that of God by saying, "The Father is in me and I in Him," they did not understand. But we can understand this declaration of his oneness with the Father, and we can see both its accuracy and its beautiful simplicity, and we can also see how the Father and the Christ each is himself, without loss in this oneness of either individuality or of distinctiveness ¹ (429).

¹ There are those who, recognizing the divine in themselves, but thinking neither of God's relation to them, of their relation to God, nor of their relation to their brothers, go to the extreme and declare, each for himself, "I am God." But the cause is not the consequence (46). Neither is any one man God nor are all men together in their combined oneness. Although each is a partaker of the

436. In sending out the twelve disciples, Jesus said, "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth Him that sent me."¹ In sending out the seventy he said the same, though in more intense language: "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth Him that sent me."² In recognition of the same principle of oneness, he said to his disciples at the Last Supper: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth Him that sent me."³ Thus the idea is expressed on three distinct occasions—in sending out the twelve disciples, in sending the seventy, and at the Last Supper, when the language must have the widest application. In neither case is it understandable except upon the basis of the oneness existing between his disciples and himself, and between himself and God.

divine essentials, yet he is not God; and when he perceives that every other man, in the same way, is as divine as he is, and, without any loss of individuality, is one with himself, then will dawn upon him the consciousness of his own oneness with God and with the Christ, and his former idea that he himself is God will forever disappear.

¹ Matthew x. 40, and context, especially 40-42.

² Luke x. 16.

³ John xiii. 20.

437. Matthew, Mark, and Luke each tells the story of another occasion when the disciples were discussing a question of priority; finally they came to Jesus and asked him who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. In the midst of his answer (Mark says with a child in his arms) Jesus said: "Whosoever shall receive one of such little children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but Him that sent me." ¹

In these words of Jesus, the Christ, is ample warrant for the assertion that not only those who are his acknowledged disciples, but all created beings, are one with him and one with the Father; for all began as children, and what they received from their Creator has never been taken from them, and they themselves can never destroy nor forfeit it, however long they may fail to be conscious of its possession, or however much they may obscure it by the appearance of error.

438. The most severe and terrible of all his utterances of this special class was made at the Last Supper in connection with his prediction concerning the treatment which, for his sake, his disciples would receive from the world: "He that hateth me hateth

¹ Matthew xviii. 1-5; Mark ix. 37; and Luke ix. 48. There is some variation between the two accounts, but none in the teaching of the oneness. This absence of variation in this particular is especially confirmatory of the accuracy regarding the oneness.

my Father also.”¹ This is a legitimate deduction from the great fact of the oneness of the Christ and the Father.

439. In his discussion with the Jews, in Solomon’s Porch, already alluded to, Jesus said, among other things: “Though ye believe not me believe the works; that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in Him.”² In his response to the request of Philip, who said, “Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us,” Jesus asked him, “Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?”³ Afterward, alluding to his works, Jesus again appealed to Philip: “Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works’ sake.”⁴

440. There is one other statement about believing: “He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on Him that sent me. And he that seeth me seeth Him that sent me.”⁵ This leads directly to what he said to Philip a short time afterward: “Have I been

¹ John xv. 23.

³ John xiv. 10.

² John x. 38.

⁴ John xiv. 11.

⁵ John xii. 44, 45.

Paul had occasional recognitions of this oneness, for he said, “In Him (God) we live, and move, and have our being.” And again, “For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do His good pleasure.” — Acts xvii. 28; and Philippians ii. 13.

so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.”¹

441. Whatever view one may take of other things in the parable which includes the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, the teaching that the race is one with “the King” is clear and unmistakable. Because of the good deeds done unto him by those on his right hand, they were called to the inheritance of the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world; but they were not aware that they had done anything, were not even conscious of having seen him. To this “the King” responded, “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”² When those on his left hand were told of their failure to do for him what they ought to have done, their answer was that they did not know of any such failure; and to them he said, “Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.”³ The statement is exact and clearly defined; doing for the least is doing for “the King,” and failing to do for the least is failing to do for “the King.” There can be only one interpretation: the least in all the world is one with “the King” — each one in all the world, even the least, is one with Him.

¹ John xiv. 9.

² Matthew xxv. 40.

³ Matthew xxv. 45.

442. The definite assertion of Jesus relative to the condition in the future forms a most appropriate conclusion to these quotations: "At that day ye shall know that I am in the Father and ye in me, and I in you." ¹

All the utterances of Jesus are in entire harmony with each other and with divine truth, and they are founded on that truth. In all his statements which touch upon this subject of the oneness Jesus recognizes the distinct identity and the separate individuality both of the Father and of himself. Jesus, the Christ, is himself; the Father is also Himself; and so, too, is each individual; there is no merging of one in another nor any absorption of one by another; the individuality of each is maintained so inviolate that each stands on his own basis, responsible for himself alone.

443. "The Father is greater than I" is a proposition which finds many varied expressions in the teaching of Jesus. Directly and indirectly he says, "The Father is greater than I," ² emphasizing it by the statement: "The servant is not greater than his lord; neither is he that is sent greater than He that sent him;" ³ and he said that God both sent ⁴ him and gave him; ⁵ that he is obedient unto God; ⁶ that all he

¹ John xiv. 20.

² John xiv. 28.

³ John xiii. 16.

⁴ John viii. 42.

⁵ John iii. 16.

⁶ John xii. 49, 50.

hath he received from God; ¹ and that of himself he could not do anything; ² but that the Father doeth the works. ³

Not anywhere in his teaching does Jesus lose sight of the superiority of the Father. In every case the Father, with His own separate, definite, and distinct individuality, is over and above all.

444. The preceding declarations of Jesus are in accord with what was said in the foregoing chapter, and they intensify and enlarge it, because they show that this oneness includes God, the Father, also the Christ, who is the son of God, and every member of the human family. This oneness is of spirit; therefore, when considering it, every ghost of materiality should be banished, and there should be admitted to the mind a clear vision of unmeasurable, infinite spirit (333); we shall then find that every difficulty connected with our apprehension of oneness will disappear.

The deduction which is inevitable from the preceding utterances pertaining to the relationship of individuals to the Christ, is of wide application, of the most intense interest, and of the greatest value. Because we are one, then, inasmuch as we have done it

¹ Matthew xi. 27.

² John v. 19.

³ John xiv. 10.

unto a disciple, we have done it unto Christ; and inasmuch as we have done it unto the Christ, we have done it unto God, the Father. It is a lesson which may well be taken to heart and most earnestly considered, for it teaches the true relationship existing between man and man, between each man and the Christ, between each man and the Father, and between the Christ himself and the Father.

XLVIII

IMMORTALITY

445. Mankind believes in life after death as universally as it believes in a god, and this is true not only of the present age but of all ages, not only since the earliest dawn of history, but ever since those days which we hear about only through tradition and myth. Even the graves of those peoples of whom both tradition and myth are silent bear the same testimony, for they buried with their loved ones food, utensils, and weapons for the chase, and also toys for the children. Just as man has never been without belief in a god, so he has never been without belief in a hereafter for himself and for his friends. These two are always found together, and yet both have been accompanied by more or less doubt and uncertainty.

It is a curious fact that disbelief increases with the increased questioning of reason, which at least suggests the idea that disbelief may have had its beginning when men failed to find answers to their questions by reasoning; and perhaps it was then they began to

doubt the possibility of finding an answer. History tells us that in Greece and Rome doubt of their gods and of the future life became more prevalent during the decay of those nations. In the midst of the downfall of Rome, which was perhaps the darkest day of the historic world, a new faith and a new religion sprang up out of the East, which was founded on a firmer belief in God and the future life, and which was to establish a firm foundation for those two beliefs that were born with the race.

446. The writer of the old book of Job voiced a universal question when he made his hero ask, "If a man die shall he live again?" Long before that time the writer of the Genesis story had pictured Eve as pondering the same question while she listened to the declaration of the serpent: "Ye shall not surely die," or, "Dying ye shall not die." Belief and doubt have contended for the mastery ever since a human being first buried the body of a loved one.

The attempt to obtain a satisfactory answer to this question, one which shall have the positiveness of a scientific assertion, has so long and so often been declared impossible by the accepted leaders in learning, that it requires the courage of one's own convictions to face assertions fortified by so much wisdom and dignity. For ages the answers have been

based on the inborn convictions of the majority of mankind, the revelation to the saint, the vision of the seer, and the faith of the enthusiastic devotee, and men have been told that they must be content because there was no other authority. For a large class the solution they already have is sufficient, but in many minds these answers leave the same old doubt which Eve had when she listened to the subtleties of the serpent, even if they do not provoke and intensify that doubt.

In these later years wonderful progress has been made in the knowledge of materiality and its arts, and philosophy has filled the world with books, yet the question of immortality occupies the same position that it did centuries ago; but with the spread of knowledge in other departments there has arisen an increasing demand for more light on this subject which lies so close to the heart of every one, and the world will never be satisfied until it receives a definite and convincing answer.

447. A modern writer of influence, who emphasizes the assertion that positive answer is impossible, seems to state the climax of his position in these words: "If we can trace a fundamental identity between any element of our character and the nature of God, if we can find in the beneficent heart of

God a homology to the heart of man, we have commenced to build the demonstration of the fact of immortality." This statement touches the very keystone of the difficulty. For many years men were told with earnestness and sincerity by their leaders and teachers that they were conceived in sin, born in iniquity, and totally depraved in every fibre of their being, and they have only just begun to awaken from the nightmare caused by such assertions. These teachers, who saw only total depravity in the being whom God had created, had completely lost sight of the meaning of those most emphatic statements of Jesus, the Christ, regarding the character of the child: "Of such is the kingdom of heaven," and "He who receiveth one of these little ones in my name, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth not me, but Him that sent me!"

It is time thoroughly to shake off our dream of evil, to escape from its bondage, and to realize the accuracy of the statement of the old writer, which, whether or not we call it revelation, is founded on inherent truth — "God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him." Between God and the error man formed by the Lord God out of the dust of the ground (369) there is neither "fundamental identity" nor the slightest similarity; but between the

man whom God spake into existence and God, his Father, there is not only strong similarity (343) but there is fundamental identity. Then there must be "a fundamental identity between certain elements of man's character and the nature of God," and if we have found these elements, certainly they furnish the foundation on which we may build "the demonstration of the fact of immortality." It has been conclusively shown that this fundamental identity (44) exists in the very nature of conditions about which there can be no doubt, and it also exists in the inherent nature of spirit (107) and existence (129), in the known characteristics of God Himself, and in those of the man He spake into existence (343).

448. God is infinite (78), and though there is no illustration for infinity (73), there is an elaboration of the idea which may aid somewhat toward an understanding of its continuity. Let us suppose that from some point an exactly straight line extends directly backward. We can imagine that line going always in precisely the same direction, on and still farther on. At the farthest possible stretch of thought we have only entered upon its beginning, for it extends forever on without any end. From the point of beginning we can suppose it extending forward in a direction exactly opposite to that just considered, and,

like that, going on in the same direction forever, without end. The two lines united form one endless line, and this is infinite, but only in the one quality of length. We may look upon this as suggesting the continuity of life, as the merest filament in the limitless strand of the divine life of God, which, being infinite, has neither beginning nor ending.

449. The reasoning connected with this proposition is very simple: Life is an existent, definite entity, absolutely real (139, 141); but God is life (140), hence life is as infinite (72) as God is (78); consequently the stream of life cannot have had a beginning and will never have an ending; therefore there never has been, is not now, and never can be any termination to life; that is, there never has been, is not, and never will be any death.

“That which hath been made was life in Him” (361). That life of man which is indeed life is a spark from the divine life (41), a spark in the infinite flame of that eternal life and existence (139) which is from eternity to eternity (362). The life of God can never terminate because it is infinite in itself, and a man’s life is a particle of that infinite life (141, 343); therefore that life of man which is indeed his real life can never end. If one life might terminate, so might all. If that real life of any one man could end, it would

mean the termination of one strand of the infinite life of God; and if one strand could be terminated, then all strands could be, and that would mean that the life of God himself might terminate. That divine life, whether the life of God or the life of man, goes on forever, and man lives as long as the eternal God lives. We live, and, because God is God, and because we are of the same life substance, we shall always live. **MAN IS IMMORTAL!**¹

450. But this is not all. God is the one infinite individual (196). Because our life is of His life we are immortal, and in the same way that we derive our life from God we derive from Him the divine quality of individuality. Just as our life is a spark of His divine life, so our individuality is a spark of His individuality. To end the individuality of one man would be to destroy the infinity of God; but to do that is impossible; then the individuality of each of us continues as long as God continues. Not only is man immortal, but his individuality, with all the qualities that it bestows upon him, is immortal also;

¹ This answers one of the most serious questions connected with the unreality of error. The questioner says: "I *saw* the murderer slay his victim; is that unreal?" The answer is simple: Life is eternal; what we call death is the termination of an appearance which in reality never existed; there is not any death; the "victim" was not killed for the *man* still lives and he will live forever.

and this means that each of us will continue to live forever in his own individual, real self.

451. Nor is this all. God is mind (149), and as the real mind of man is of His mind (45), it is as eternal as God is. This means that the mind of man is also immortal, and that we are to continue to live forever in the full enjoyment of that mind and its intelligence.

452. What has been said of these three essentials of God is equally true of every other essential of Him which enters into the constitution of man; therefore man is not only immortal in these three realities, but because every constituent of the real man is from God and is as everlasting as God is, each man possesses complete immortality.

453. Herein is an authoritative answer to the question which love so often asks, "Shall we meet and know each other again?" Three things are absolutely proved: we continue to live; each continues to be his own distinct self, and each continues to possess his own mind, with its own intelligence; therefore we *must* know each other with even more certainty than we do now, "for now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part, but then shall I know as also I am known." Just as surely as God is God, just so surely shall we know each other hereafter.

There is not so much doubt of the truth of these propositions as there is of the return of daylight each succeeding morning. According to astronomical science, it is within the possibilities of the imagination that such a catastrophe might occur in the solar system that there would not be any succeeding sunrise, and therefore no more to-morrows. But in the midst of such an event, or in the midst of anything or everything that can occur, God will be God; and therefore you and I must continue to be, and so also will each and every created being. Our existence is so involved in the warp and woof of the nature of God that the unending life of our true and real selves is as far from question as is the life of God Himself.

APPENDIX A, SECTION 20

LIMITATION OF THE COGNITIONS

It has been said that man is limited to his cognitions with unrelenting and rigorous exactness; and this is true, because his cognitions form the sole basis of all his knowledge (24), all his reasoning, and all his actions; but this need not cause discouragement, because, at the same time, two other propositions are likewise true: his cognitions are continually enlarging both in number and in scope, and, what is quite as important, he is constantly correcting not only his cognitions but the conclusions which he draws from them. All this is most hopeful, because as his cognitions enlarge and as his conclusions approach nearer the truth, his possibilities for improvement enlarge also; therefore limitation to his cognitions does not constitute an adamantine entombment within exactly prescribed and unchangeable limits; instead, there is the continually enlarging opportunity for endless progress, and the certainty that this progress will continue so long as man retains his desire for better conditions and his ability to perceive them (376). Not anything good can ever terminate (171); man is immortal in every item of his reality (452); therefore his progress will never cease.

APPENDIX B, SECTION 88

THE BEGINNING

When the mind has gone backward through a long succession of effects and causes, and at last has paused at the first cause, for a moment it flatters itself that it has found the origin, and therefore an explanation, of beginning; but at once new questions arise concerning the condition previous to that beginning, when there was not anything, the time before cause began to be, and how something began without a cause.

These questions seem to indicate that we are no nearer a solution of the problem than before the acceptance of first cause; but we are now dealing with God, who is infinitely continuous existence (128), and this introduces a heretofore unconsidered element into the problem.

The idea of continuity of existence does not involve any contradiction of experience, and its infinity is at most only a prolongation of that idea. In tracing each cause to its preceding cause (30), we are confronted with the possibility of an infinite succession of causes, and this would seem to destroy the idea that there was ever a first cause, or a real beginning. The sixth and seventh chapters have so fully explained all other causings or beginnings which could occur that there is no mystery except about the first beginnings or first cause, and only that remains to be explained; but, if the succession of

causes extends backward infinitely, then there is not any beginning to be explained, and only that which does the work of causing remains to be made clear. We are aware of a power (29) which is always acting, and which has been named God, or first cause; it has been shown that these two are one (54) and that they are infinite (78); and that which is infinite could never have had a beginning (84) — hence there is not any beginning to be explained.

Thus a correct understanding of the meaning of the word “infinite” (72) satisfies the mind as to the absence of a beginning; and the answer to the problem involved in an object or event which always existed lies in the statement that the self-existent, which had no beginning, did not need a cause (88), for the reason that self-existence combines within itself both cause and effect. Indeed, the acceptance of the proposition of a self-existent and infinite God is a complete solution of the problem.

By some it may be said that the infinite continuity of God does not account for the origin or first beginnings of things; this is only a recurrence to the former question relative to the origin of first cause, and the answer to that suffices — the infinite never began, and therefore there is not any beginning to be accounted for.

The idea that life is forever continuous conveys no shock to the understanding because, though man may not consciously recognize it, that idea is really innate.

It is the apparent cessation of life that shocks, and the mind requires experience and explanation in order to adapt itself to it. Eternal life is the natural condition which all mankind has always longed for, and it is what untold numbers, perhaps in some ill-defined and more or less uncertain way, have believed in, even in defiance of all sense perceptions.

When the idea that all things are manifestations of the eternal, infinite life is accepted as a fact (361, 362), all doubt and uncertainty are transformed into perfect confidence in the reality of continuous existence.

APPENDIX C, SECTION 91

PAIRS OF WORDS

The English language contains several pairs of words with a very wide range of meaning, in which each one of the pair has a number of definitions closely similar to those of the other, and also each has another class of definitions distinctly different. The student of this general subject will do well to take notice of this peculiarity, because it will aid him in reaching a more intimate knowledge of all subjects.

One such pair of words is power and force. Fundamentally, power is of God, while force relates to physical peculiarities; thus, we say the power of God, but never the force of God; and, on the other hand, we say the force of a blow, but very seldom the power of a blow.

One may be said to be spiritual, or of the mind; the other is purely physical, or material.

This condition is illustrated on the side of materiality in what is called the law of conservation of energy or force, which declares that the total force of the universe is constant, none being created and none destroyed by any of the actions or processes of materiality. Thus, in all bodily motions, science is able to account for the expenditure of all the force used by a muscle. A muscle moves in response to the action of the mind; an inorganic object moves when enough force is applied to one side of it. Scientists show that in this, and in all similar cases, something which they call force or energy passes from the pushing object to the one that is pushed; but they also demonstrate just as conclusively that no addition of force is received by the muscle from the mind. Force is of materiality; power is of God; force and power are so entirely distinct that, so far as natural science can discover, neither ever receives anything from the other.

Another pair of words is action and motion; these are often used interchangeably, but they are distinct in meaning. An action is an exertion of power — the exertion of mental power as distinguished from physical; thus, strictly speaking, action belongs to rational beings only. On the contrary, motion is change of place from one point to another. The mind acts, but it does not move; the stone moves, or is moved, but it does not act.

Individual and personal constitute another pair of words. Not only has each wandered afar from its derivative meaning, but both are used indiscriminately as well as interchangeably, so that one group of writers almost invariably uses "person" to convey the meaning which another group attaches to the word "individual." The only safe way for the reader is, in every case, to consider the context, and thus discover the meaning which the writer intended to convey. A study of dictionaries, which profess to give the usage of words, will show the confusion which has arisen in the use and meaning of these two.

Yet another pair of words is freedom and liberty. Both refer to the actions and conditions of the individual or person, though, as the words are used in this book, the individual is always free, while the person is always limited. Freedom is usually considered the larger word, and yet it is held that, in a certain sense, freedom is limited by natural and moral conditions; and it is generally recognized that freedom seldom oversteps the rules of decorum, custom, or morals, and therefore does not run into excess. On the contrary, liberty sometimes degenerates into license which may defy all restraint, do anything that caprice or passing fancy may choose, and run riot in excess of all kinds. Such errors lead the person into suffering and bondage of the worst character, in which there is neither freedom nor even liberty. Since freedom chooses to avoid immorality and excess

of all kinds, and acts from this choice, it is always absolutely free, while liberty, in its imagined freedom, may choose to do those things which destroy all liberty.

Thus, while both freedom and liberty appear to be limited, one is limited only by its own free choice, and therefore is always free, while the other is limited by the results of its own errors, and therefore is often under the dominion of external things or conditions.

APPENDIX D, SECTION 92

GOD AND HIS ESSENTIALS

It is a peculiarity of the mind when considering any one essential of God to see Him as that essential to the exclusion of all others. We say that God is power; God is indeed power in the fullest and most inclusive meaning of the word, and when we look at the expression by itself it seems to include the whole, so far as one word can; but He is much more than is perceived in the most comprehensive signification of the expression. When we reverse this form, and say that power is God, an error immediately appears, because the expression conveys a sense of limitation that confines it to power alone, and we perceive that something is lacking. Our ideas of power are not large enough to do this, nor will they be until we can clearly and fully establish in our minds the perfect comprehension of the all-embracing oneness of God (189, 190). God is indeed all there is of power, but power is not all there is of God.

It is the same with mind (149). We say with truth that God is mind, but even though we may be able to advance some specious explanation, we instinctively feel that something is wrong when we say that mind is God. Similarly, we say that God is existence, and in one meaning of the term this includes the whole infinite round; yet, in another meaning, He is vastly more. Neither power, nor mind, nor existence, nor yet all three together, are the whole of God; God is substance, but substance is not God; God is principle, but principle is not God; in a similar way we may go through the entire list of His known essentials.

These terms are never reversible (67). God is each of His essentials and He is also all of them combined (188); but our idea of God is greater than all of them together, and when we insist upon the declaration that either of them alone is God, we shall be forced to make a new and special definition for each of those words by which we designate His essentials. If all persons recognized them in their larger meaning, and in their more intimate and closer relationship to each other and to God, and also saw that at last in Him they all merge together and become one (190), then might the reversed form of the statement be accepted as correct. Men do not ordinarily so accept them, and therefore the terms should not be reversed, for to do so would be to set up a stumbling-block in the way of many an earnest person.

APPENDIX E, SECTION 148

SOME THINGS WHICH ARE ERRONEOUSLY
CALLED "ESSENTIALS"

The word "essential" is used to designate that in God which is absolutely essential to Him, an entity without which He would not be God or would not even exist (90). Although we may look upon these as separate or separable from Him and from each other, yet they are not only one with Him or in Him, but they are one with each other (xxiii). Certain conditions, qualities, and even relationships, have sometimes been erroneously represented as essentials, and in some cases God has been declared to be that which does not belong to Him at all.

God is primary, underived, and self-existent (87), and in the harmony of His nature (156, 163, 169) whatever is an indispensable requisite of His being and one with Him must also be primary, underived, and self-existent. This is necessary, because, however much we may think we recognize its separateness and individuality, whatever is one with Him must be an inseparable and indivisible constituent of Him. Many qualities, like intelligence (147, 148), understanding, knowledge, and wisdom (151), have been called essentials, although they are only results of the action of an essential; they are not primary, but are derivative and secondary in character, and consequently cannot properly be called

essentials. Whatever is a mere quality, condition, or relationship, can never be an essential.

Thus it has been said that God is action, whereas action is merely a result arising from the use of power or force by an object or individual. God is power, and power is the ability to act, but power is entirely distinct from action. Without something to move, there cannot be any motion, and without something to act, there cannot be any action. The actor is the cause, and is primary; the action is the effect, and is secondary. Neither action nor motion is self-existent; but God is self-existent (87), and therefore He cannot be action. It would be incorrect to say that God is motion and equally so to say that He is action.

It has been said that God is health; but God cannot be health, for health is merely a condition of the body, and is not even a quality. Perfect health is popularly recognized as a bodily condition in which there is an entire absence of discomfort, disease, or any physical infirmity, and its peculiarities pertain exclusively to materiality and not to the spirit; therefore health has no characteristic of the divine Being. Looked at from the human point of view, — the only point from which it can be considered, — health is purely negative in character, consisting solely of the absence of pain, disease, and sickness.

It has been said that God is prosperity, meaning business or financial success and success in endeavors

generally. Especially in its grosser forms this is so absurd that it would be ridiculous if it did not display a pitiful failure to appreciate the position of Jesus, who said, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth," and, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness."

God is always free, but it would not be correct to say that He is freedom, because freedom is a result of His omnipotence (97), and though it is of the utmost importance, freedom is not an entity but only a condition.

God is absolutely pure, yet purity is derived from the action of principle, and conduct in accordance with principle, results in the condition of purity. Notwithstanding its value, it is secondary in character and is, in itself, a quality; hence it would not be correct to say that God is purity.

There are many similar erroneous statements (164, 165, 167), but these are sufficient to suggest the necessity for care to avoid falling into errors.

APPENDIX F, SECTION 185

FUTILITY OF ATTEMPTS AT ILLUSTRATION

In searching for something to illustrate the intimate relationships of God's essentials, it must be remembered that in no case does materiality serve to illustrate the spiritual, except, possibly, at one or two points (331); and herein have thinkers and writers on spiritual and abstruse subjects made most serious fundamental mis-

takes. For instance, try to illustrate thought, which, through experience of his own thinking, every one knows is the opposite of matter; let him try to perceive the real substance of thought, and then attempt to imagine two thoughts coming into collision in space (426). Illustration is not possible unless, in the perception of thought, his imagination contains enough semblance of matter to create an image of the colliding thoughts, and that would include enough error to make failure of the illustration certain (333). However diverse the subjects which thought may from time to time be engaged upon, whether of the most material things, or of power, or of presence, or even of God Himself, thought itself always maintains the same characteristics.

Power and presence are not in the slightest degree materialistic in their character, though they seem closely associated with materiality, nor do they in the smallest degree possess any quality of matter, and hence it is impossible to illustrate them with anything material (184).

APPENDIX G, SECTION 230

SENSATION AND MENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS

The last of these material processes is the purely material nerve motion, and immediately succeeding this is what for convenience we have called sensation. This is somehow closely related to materiality because it follows the nerve motion and does not present itself if

there is not any nerve motion; and yet, this which we have named sensation must be something other than material in its character, because consciousness, except through this sensation, is never in the slightest aware of any of those motions of materiality which precede and lead up to sensation; nor is it even aware of them as motions. Thus, although the two are entirely distinct from each other, sensation is definitely related to materiality on one side, and on the other to mentality, because perception is strictly a mental action and consciousness is one form of perception. The result of the action of sensation is our consciousness of light, and in a similar way comes our consciousness of the entire host of sense perceptions; and thus we are fairly embarked on the mental side of the great series.

The physiologists recognize that a nerve may be set into motion both by something material and external and also by something mental and internal to us. The nerve may carry its disturbance to the brain, and thence results a feeling of pain which consciousness takes note of. Following this, the mind acts in such a way that another nerve disturbance goes along the nerve in the opposite direction, causing a muscle to contract, by which means the hand is removed from that which caused the first nerve disturbance and the sensation of pain. Thus, in these ways, sensation is the connecting link between ourselves and external things, and also between different parts of ourselves.

Between the action of what we call materiality on the one hand and consciousness on the other, sensation seems to stand, and thus it furnishes a connecting link between the material and the mental; but consciousness, or the mental action, never appears to approach the material any nearer than sensation. Thus, whether it be some external object, or our own mental action of which we are conscious, both seem external to our consciousness. There is no more mystery in this peculiar mental relationship than there is in the corresponding physical relationship. Thus we touch the chair, which is an external object; we touch our foot with the same hand that touched the chair. The foot is as much external to the hand as the chair is, and yet it and the hand are a part of the same organism. We see no mystery in this, and there is no more mystery in our consciousness of our own thinking.

APPENDIX H, SECTION 243

MIND LIFTS THE WEIGHT

Physiologists say the lifting of the weight is done by the contraction of the muscles in a mechanical arrangement of bones, muscles, and nerves in the arm; but the question now becomes, What contracts the muscles? The physiologists say the contraction is effected by a nerve impulse sent from the brain, but even that does not take us back to the beginning. What is the source

of that powerful impulse which comes from the brain? There can be only one answer: It is mind. The man first decides to lift the stone — that is purely mind action. Following this decision is the thought — lift the stone. That is mind action also. The power originating in the mind is communicated in some unexplained way through the brain to the nerve and through the nerve to the muscle, and in response to the action of the mind it contracts. Therefore, in the last analysis, that which lifts the stone is neither muscle, nerve, brain, nor any other form of materiality; these are only organs or instruments for the transmission of the power and for its use and application to the object, each in its way. We naturally and instinctively refer all these actions to the influence of the mind, which first recognizes the weight as an obstacle and then overcomes it. Without the mind action, not anything could be done.

APPENDIX I, SECTION 248

NERVES

The spiritual man is the true, real, and God-created being, and, because he is like God, he is intelligent. Like God, this man is both self-conscious and conscious of his surroundings, and there must be means by which this is accomplished. Though we do not become consciously aware of spiritual existence, nor indeed of anything spiritual, in any of the ways by which we be-

come aware of material things, yet, for convenience, we may call these spiritual means of consciousness the spiritual nerves.

We seem to the error mind of ourselves to be material, and our means of becoming conscious of ourselves and of external things seems to be material also. These seeming material means of consciousness are called nerves. But belief in materiality is an error, and this evil tree brings forth evil fruit in the form of pretended knowledge of the existence of erroneous things and that they are good; both statements are false. This belief in the materiality of things is a lie and the father of lies, and there is no truth in it nor in any of the declarations or pretensions of the material nerves. There is no materiality to the real nerves, nor is there any materialization of the real nerves, simply because there is no materiality. All that is is good. Though these spiritual means of consciousness, or nerves, are not perceptible by the senses, yet there is no defect possible to them nor in the consciousness which we have through them, because they are divinely perfect. Through these spiritual means the perfect being becomes conscious of all things real, and these are themselves perfection. Let us thank God that He never made any error, nor any pain, nor any suffering of any kind, but that *all* that He made is good.

What is here said of nerves is a type of every appearance of materiality, whether organic or inorganic;

and also of its mental prototype of error (the product of the error mind) in all its unreal pretences; and this applies not only to each item in man but in animals and in all vegetation — in everything that lives. Connected with each of these non-existent unrealities is the real, living, acting, spiritual, and eternal existence — life, God, everywhere.

APPENDIX K, SECTION 272

JESUS AND THE UNREALITY OF EVIL

Against the proposition that error or evil is not real, it has been urged that Jesus accepted its reality. It is true that he used the language of the Jews of his day without comment, neither indorsing nor denying their ideas on the subject, just as he used their language on many subjects now generally recognized as erroneous.

Some of his peculiarities must be noted: He did not resist evil, and therefore he did not attack any of their views outside of their moral or religious subjects which were the foundations of his teaching, and in a wonderful way he enlarged on these, fulfilling them and making new creations and new rules of conduct; neither did he proclaim any system either of science or of philosophy; but he restricted himself to the expression of a few broad and remarkable general principles touching morality, and to certain fundamental and ethical precepts for the guidance of human beings in affairs of life; but

he was silent on all subjects of physical science; and, however much he might elucidate his propositions by most pertinent illustrations, he rarely attempted to sustain, either by argument, logic, or reasoning, those topics in which he was most deeply interested. For this course there were abundant reasons in the history, character, habits, and mental conditions of the people. It was necessary that he should speak to them in language they could understand; they believed evil to be real; and, without declaring either its reality or its unreality, thereby avoiding all possible antagonism which might result, he gave them certain precepts which they might understand without discussion.

Such a plan of action does not include a discussion of either the reality or the unreality of evil or error any more than it does the motions of the planets; but the question whether or not he accepted its reality is obliterated by the fact that if his precepts are complied with, all error, wrong, and evil will utterly disappear, and with them all question of their reality. This manner of dealing with error is vastly superior to any other because it renders unnecessary all argument and all theorizing about its reality.

A careful examination of his general methods will show that he always advised that it be let alone and abandoned — never that it should be contended with or resisted; and in this he goes beyond the erroneous act, for he advises the abandonment of every thought

which would lead to the act. This destroys the very root of all questions connected with the subject, because, if the contributory thoughts are abandoned, the evil at once and forever disappears. Resistance always increases it or produces other or additional evil; if it were real, this would not be the case; it is never destroyed until it is abandoned, but its abandonment always destroys it — a conclusive argument that it is nothing.

Another prominent point in his method was that he did not himself resist evil; on the contrary, none of his precepts is more unequivocal and exceptionless in itself and in its illustrations than his impressive declaration: "But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil." There is not anything in all his teaching that in the slightest modifies the most exacting requirements of this precept, but there is much that strongly and emphatically confirms it, and Jesus himself complied with it literally under the most extreme circumstances. Neither his course nor this precept can be sustained on any other ground except the nothingness of evil, for if evil is a reality, there is no other way to exterminate it but by resisting and destroying it.

There are three reasons for this position of Jesus, either of which is sufficient. The first is the mental principle that what one is not thinking about is to him as though it did not exist; therefore, when all thought of evil ceases, it will be destroyed. The second

is the psychological principle that thinking is fundamental and causative to such an extent that the act cannot be committed if all thoughts about it are excluded from the mind. The third reason is found in the fact that evil has no existence except as it is believed, and the exclusion of that belief from the mind would result in its destruction, and the exclusion of it from every mind would be its annihilation.

Although he counselled non-resistance of evil in the strongest terms, and gave us a most impressive example of it, yet he did not in the slightest minimize its wrongfulness, nor did he in any case treat it as of slight importance. On the contrary, he always maintained its enormity, and placed an impassable gulf between it and goodness.

Similar reasons apply to the silence of Jesus on the subject of the unreality of matter, and on at least two occasions his words and his actions cannot be explained on any other basis.

On the subject of materiality as exhibited in weariness, he was quite explicit, for he said to the weary, "Take my yoke upon you, and *learn* of me; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." (370).¹

On another occasion he gave an example from his own experience. He was journeying to Galilee, and being weary, he waited at Jacob's well while his disciples went into the city to buy food. As he rested, a woman

¹ Matthew xi. 28-30.

came to draw water, and he talked with her of the highest religious truths. When his disciples returned, they asked him to eat. He responded, "I have food to eat that ye know not of." They wonderingly asked if any one had brought him anything to eat, and he told them, "My meat (food) is to do the will of Him that sent me." Turning his mind away from his hunger and weariness to active contemplation of spiritual things, in order to show these truths to the woman, had allayed his hunger and given him rest; he did not need material food nor rest, for he had partaken of the spiritual substance. Every man, at least in some small way, has had similar experience, and from such experience can learn the uselessness, even unto the nothingness, of matter. John iv. 3-34.

APPENDIX L, SECTION 277

SYLLOGISTIC STATEMENTS RELATING TO GOOD AND EVIL

PART FIRST, BASED ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT GOOD IS REAL

For the consideration of those who wish to make an exhaustive examination of the subjects of good and evil in their relation to God, the two are here presented in syllogistic form, divested of all extraneous conditions and including every conceivable point of view. They are first considered on the basis of the reality of good;

and, second, on the basis of the reality of evil. Three propositions constitute the foundation:—

(1) God is, ch. VII; (2) God is infinite, ch. IX; (3) God is good to the exclusion of everything but pure good, ch. XX.

To whatever the word “infinite” is applied, it must include the whole of that in connection with which it is considered; and the absolutely infinite must include every phase as well as the whole of each one; therefore the infinite is the all (78).

In its relation to space, the infinite includes all space; this is omnipresence. In its relation to time, the infinite includes all time; this is eternity. In its relation to power, the infinite includes all power; this is omnipotence. In its relation to intelligence, the infinite includes all intelligence, all knowing; this is omniscience. The foregoing being true, the following must be correct:—

1. God is infinite.
2. There can be only one infinite.
3. Then God is all.
4. God is good; consequently all that is is good.
5. Evil is not good, therefore it does not exist. Or it may take the following form:—
 1. God is infinite; then God is all.
 2. God is good; then all that is is good.
 3. There is not any evil.

The last syllogism may take as many forms as there are relationships of God to man. Consideration of three of these will furnish a sufficient example. For convenience of expression we may include all error, evil, and everything which is the opposite of good in the designation "not-good." Thus stated, the syllogism includes the whole. The name of any form of error may be substituted for the not-good in either of these syllogisms, with the same resulting conclusion:—

1. God is omnipotence.
2. Then there is no other power.
3. But God is good.
4. Then all power is good.
5. Therefore the not-good does not possess power.

1. God is omnipresence.
2. Then there cannot be another presence.
3. But God is good.
4. Then all presence is good.
5. Therefore the not-good has no presence.

1. God is omniscience.
2. Then there is no other intelligence.
3. But God is good.
4. Then all intelligence is good.
5. Therefore the not-good does not possess intelligence.

In other words, the not-good, or error, in any of its forms, has neither power, presence, nor intelligence.

Having no power, it cannot act. Having no presence, it must be without existence or being, and, therefore, wholly unreal. Having no intelligence, it is outside the domain of mind, principle, and law. It does not exist. It seems real to man, but whatever form its seeming may take, it is not any more real than the seeming motion of the sun, which is standing still. Men have accepted this latter fact as well as a great many others which are in as direct contradiction to the senses as this one, and they will ultimately accept the facts presented in these syllogistic statements.

The argument is unassailable. The only refutation to this conclusion comes through the senses, or from the sense perceptions. But it has been conclusively shown: first, sense perceptions are wholly unreliable, because they never report things as they are, *i.e.* they never tell the truth; and, secondly, it has been proved that each quality or thing that they tell us about does not exist outside of sensation itself.

PART SECOND, BASED ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT EVIL IS REAL

I. God is powerful. Because He is infinite, He must be infinite in power. This is expressed by the word "omnipotent"; omnipotent power is infinite power. Omnipotence will now be considered in connection with the assumption that evil is real:—

- A. 1. God is omnipotent and God is good.
2. Let it now be assumed that evil is real.
3. Then, since God is omnipotent, it is in His power to destroy evil at once and forever.
4. But He does not do this.
5. Then evil must, in some way, be good and not evil; otherwise He would destroy it.
6. Then evil is not evil, but is on an equality with goodness.
- B. 1. God is omnipotent.
2. Let it be assumed, as before, that evil is real.
3. Then the conclusion is irresistible that God permits its existence.
4. God has the power to abolish evil at once and forever, because He is omnipotent.
5. Then it follows that He does not do so because He does not choose to.
6. Then the conclusion is unavoidable that God is not good.
- C. 1. God is good.
2. Let it be assumed that evil is real.
3. God does not destroy it.
4. He is good, therefore He would if he could.
5. Then the failure to destroy it must be because He is unable to.
6. Therefore He is not omnipotent.

7. But if He is not omnipotent, He is not, in very deed, God.

This exhausts every phase in which God's omnipotence can be considered in connection with the admission of the reality of evil, and there is no escape from these conclusions. If we attempt to evade either one of them, we are at once confronted with one or both of the others. In each case the conclusion is erroneous, therefore there must be an error in the process; and that error lies in the assumption that evil is real.

II. God is infinite. Then He must be infinite in presence. This is expressed by the word "omnipresence," which will now be considered in its relation to the assumption that evil is real:—

- A.
 1. God is omnipresence, and God is good.
 2. Let it be assumed that evil is real.
 3. Then evil has presence.
 4. Consequently it constitutes a part of God's omnipresence and is a part of Him.
 5. Since God is good, then evil, as a part of Him, must also be good.
 6. Therefore evil is good.

- B.
 1. God is omnipresent.
 2. Let it be assumed that evil is real.
 3. Then it has a real presence.

4. Then, God being omnipresent, a part of His presence must be evil.
 5. Then God is not wholly good.
- C.
1. God is good.
 2. Let it be assumed that evil is real.
 3. Since God is good, then evil cannot constitute a part of His presence.
 4. Then God cannot be all the presence there is.
 5. Then God cannot be omnipresent.
 6. Therefore He cannot be God; for in order to be in very deed God, He must be omnipresent.

As before, we have exhausted every phase of our problem, and again have come to the same conclusions. They are unavoidable if the reality of God's omnipresence and the reality of evil are admitted. Again, the error in the reasoning lies in the assumption that evil is real.

III. God is intelligent. Because He is infinite, He must be infinite in intelligence; but infinite intelligence is omniscience, which will now be considered in its relation to evil as a reality.

- A.
1. God is omniscient, and God is good.
 2. Let it be assumed that evil is real.
 3. Then, because God is omniscient, He knows all about it.
 4. Then He intends its existence.

5. God, who is good and omniscient, would neither intend nor permit evil in any form.
 6. Therefore it follows that evil is good.
- B.
1. God is omniscient.
 2. Let it be assumed that evil is real.
 3. Then God, being omniscient, knows about it and intends it.
 4. If God were good, He would not intend evil.
 5. Therefore God is not good.
- C.
1. God is good.
 2. Let it be assumed that evil is real.
 3. But God is omnipotent.
 4. Then God cannot know about it, because if He did, being omnipotent, He would destroy it.
 5. Therefore there is something which God does not know about.
 6. Then He is not omniscient.
 7. But if God is not omniscient, He is less than God.
 8. Therefore God is not God.

Here we come a third time to the same conclusions as in the two previous considerations. If it is admitted that evil is real, there is no escape from these conclusions, which are repugnant to all recognized conditions and are contrary to the basis of our propositions. Reverse the assumption, and declare that evil is not real, and

then the conclusions in each case will be reversed and come into agreement with the first basis.

IV. The conclusion in each of the preceding syllogisms results from introducing into the formula the assumption that evil is real. If evil is indeed real, then each of the conclusions reached in the preceding divisions, A, B, and C, is correct; and they stand as follows: —

- A. Evil is not evil, but it is good.
- B. God is not good.
- C. God is not God.

A. We properly shrink from the declaration that evil is good. To accept this would, at once and forever, sweep away all distinctions between good and evil and obliterate all ideas of right and wrong. It would destroy every moral quality, would place what we now call vice by the side of virtue, and would elevate evil to an equality with goodness and truth.

B. The conclusion that God is not good is more repulsive and subversive than the conclusion that evil is good, because it corrupts the one source of all. It either makes God a devil, or it makes a god of the devil, and it makes the worship of evil as necessary and praiseworthy as the worship of God — a condition which is on a parallel with the devil worship of barbarism. Yet, if the existence of evil as a reality is admitted, there is no possible escape from this conclusion except in the absurdity that evil is not evil but is good.

C. The destruction of God's infinity makes Him no

longer God, and divides His kingdom and power with something else which possesses presence, power, and intelligence. This is the admission of two gods in the place of the one God, and opens the door for polytheism. If we have two, one each for what we think is its appropriate portion of the universe, it is only a little farther in the same direction to one for each of all the possible divisions which we may recognize in creation. Under such conditions, God is no longer God, but is only a god.

V. This logical process may be extended indefinitely by successively introducing into the syllogism the assumption of the existence of each error or evil, even the smallest; but it has been carried far enough to show that the reasoning may include any of the possible forms of error, and the conclusion will always be of the same kind.

Thus, on the assumption that any appearance of evil is real, we have our choice of three propositions: either evil is good, or God is bad, or God is not God. If God is infinite, it is impossible that evil should exist. To deny God's infinity is to make Him less than God; to admit the reality of evil is to deny the reality and sufficiency of God; it is to deny God. Here, then, are the alternatives, God or evil; having one, the other is impossible.

APPENDIX M, SECTION 350

THE FIRST VERSE OF GENESIS

The following is from a book entitled *Key to the Hebrew-Egyptian Mystery*, by J. Rallston Skinner,

p. 179. It shows a very interesting possible condition and rendering of the first verse of Genesis, and one which is in close keeping with the truth as set forth in these pages. It is given place here because of its suggestiveness:—

“It must be borne in mind that in the scroll-reading the letters are not separated, but run together, without point divisions, from which fact there are *two readings* to this sentence, as follows:—

(1) B'rāshith bara Elohim eth hāshamayim v'eth h'arets.

(2) B'rāsh ithbara Elohim eth hāshamayim v'eth h'arets.

where the verbal *bara*, *to create*, instead of the *perfect of Kal*, may be thrown into the third person singular *future of hithpael*. (This reading pointed out by Rev. Dr. Julius Goldammer.) The translation of this sentence is, ‘In the beginning God made the heavens and the earth’; and this is the narrative form of the sentence. Suffering a closer analysis, this narrative form assumes a cosmical interpretation; thus, ‘*B*’ is a prepositional prefix, signifying in the largest sense *in*, and with *material*, carrying the idea of *in*, or *out of*, or *from*, as of material. Rāsh = head, and is a masculine noun, but here used with a feminine termination, it signifies with the prefix and the terminative, ‘*in the substance of*,’ or ‘*out of the head, as a material, or essential.*’ Elohim

is a compound made up of El, a masculine singular, meaning the all-embracing God; and to this ה, or *h*, is added, as separating the elements of El, and out of them constituting *El-h*, or *male* and *female*. It is the compound of two characteristics, involving the use of *two opposites* from whence to mould, as, *in sexes*, the duality of man and woman; as, *in forces*, the duality, as centripetal and centrifugal — for example, electricity combining two opposites under the manifestation of madefication of one *initial* force. To this *El-h*, thus combining these two opposites, a plural termination is added, indicating the two in combination, thus, ‘*God in the assumed double relation of two opposites.*’ Then follows, not, ‘*they created,*’ as of gods, but ‘*He created*’; and then, not *the heavens*, as we laxly take it, but, ‘*the two, or duplex heavens*’; for in Hebrew, from the force of a double construction the term is dual, not singular. So the sentence reads, ‘In (or out of) his own essence as a womb, God, in the manifestation of two opposites in force, created the two heavens, and the earth,’ as to the heavens, the *upper*, or *light*, and the *lower*, or *dark*; signifying the opposites of *heat* and *cold*, *day* and *night*, *expansion* and *contraction*, *summer* and *winter*; in short, the all-embracing cosmical relations.

By this reading, a mere meaningless abstract enunciation assumes a general form of shadowing forth the *means* and *use* by which creation was effected.”

APPENDIX N, SECTION 369

“BREATH OF LIFE” AND “LIVING SOUL”

“And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a *living soul*.” — Genesis ii. 7.

The Hebrew word *chai*, translated life in the phrase “breath of life,” and living in the phrase “living soul,” occurs more than five hundred times in the Old Testament and has twenty-six different renderings, about half of which refer directly to life as in these phrases. The possible divergence from life in the meaning of this Hebrew word is seen in the fact that seventy-six times it is rendered beasts, and wild beast once, raw, six times, running, seven times, and such other words as appetite, company, troop, etc.

The phrase “living soul” is the translation given to the two Hebrew words “*nephish chai*” in the above quotation, but in no other place in the King James Version do they receive a rendering with this meaning, nor does it in any other place refer to a human being. It is translated *living creature* eight times, in the following places where the translation of this phrase is italicized :

“And God created great whales, and every *living creature* that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind.” — Genesis i. 21.

“And God said, Let the earth bring forth the *living*

creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind." — Genesis i. 24.

"And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatever Adam called every *living creature*, that was the name thereof." — Genesis ii. 19.

"And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; and with every *living creature* that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth." — Genesis ix. 9, 10.

"And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every *living creature* that is with you, for perpetual generations." — Genesis ix. 12.

"And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every *living creature* of all flesh." — Genesis ix. 15.

"And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every *living creature* of all flesh that is upon the earth." — Genesis ix. 16.

"This is the law of the beasts, and of the fowl, and of every *living creature* that moveth in the waters, and of every creature that creepeth upon the earth." — Leviticus xi. 46.

This Hebrew phrase is translated living thing once, as follows:—

“And all that have not fins and scales in the seas, and in the rivers, of all that move in the waters, and of any *living thing* which is in the waters, they shall be an abomination unto you.” — Leviticus xi. 10.

In the remaining two places it has a more free rendering, but the meaning is very clearly the same as in the other places:—

“And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving *creature that hath life*, and fowl that they may fly above the earth.” — Genesis i. 20.

“And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, *wherein* there is *life*, I have given every green herb for meat.” — Genesis i. 30.

The foregoing includes every place where the phrase *nephish chai* occurs. Once it is translated *living soul*, once *living thing*, eight times *living creature*, and twice it has a more free rendering; but in only this one place (Genesis ii. 7) does it indicate a human being.

APPENDIX O, SECTION 371

A STUDY OF WORDS MEANING LIFE AS USED BY JESUS

To know about a thing, examine the thing itself; to know about a man, go to the man himself. As there is

no better way to decide what words mean than by a study of their use in the sentences where they occur, so there is no better place to seek for the meaning of Jesus than in his own words and expressions.

The following references include every place in the Gospels where words signifying life are represented as having been used by Jesus, and a careful examination of these passages and their context will enable any one to decide for himself the exact meaning in each case, and it will also reveal the general significance which he attached to each of the words. Such a study cannot fail to result in a clear comprehension of the important points in his teaching on this subject. In our King James Version of the New Testament only five Greek words meaning life are found in the expressions of Jesus — *zoe*, *zao*, *psuche*, *bios*, and *biotikos*.

By Thayer in his Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, by Young, who in his concordance professes to give the root meaning of each word without reference to either metaphorical or theological uses, and by Liddell & Scott, *zoe* is defined "life, existence as opposed to death, activity." Jesus couples with it the words eternal and everlasting, but he never alludes either to its beginning or its ending, nor does he ever suggest that it is the source of anything troublesome, erroneous, or wrong. From a study of this word as used in the Gospels, it will be recognized as meaning the real, enduring, or spiritual life which was expressed by God as set forth in Genesis i. 26-28 (XXXVIII).

Zoe occurs ninety-one times in the New Testament, and it is translated life in all places except Luke xvi. 25, where it is rendered lifetime. It is found sixteen times in the Synoptic Gospels, eleven of these in the sayings of Jesus on five different occasions, as follows:—

In the Sermon on the Mount,

Matthew vii. 14; context, 13-14.

When speaking of offences,

Matthew xviii. 8, 9; context, 1-11;

Mark ix. 43, 45; context, 38-48.

Jesus' answer to the rich young man,

Matthew xix. 17; context, xix. 16 to xx. 16.

Answer of Jesus to Peter,

Matthew xix. 29; context, 23-30;

Mark x. 30; context, 23-31;

Luke xviii. 30; context, 24-30.

In the parable of the sheep and the goats,

Matthew xxv. 46; context, 31-46.

In a talk about covetousness,

Luke xii. 15; context, 13-40.

Where attributed to others, this word is found as follows:—

In the question of the rich young man,

Matthew xix. 16; context, xix. 16 to xx. 16.

In the prophecy of Zacharias,

Luke i. 75; context, 67-79.

In the question of the lawyer,
 Luke x. 25; context, 25-37.

This word *zoe* occurs thirty-five times in the book of John, which may not inappropriately be called the Gospel of life. It is attributed to Jesus twenty-eight times on eleven different occasions, once it is doubtful whether the words are from Jesus or from the apostle John, on two occasions they belong to John, once to John the Baptist, and once to Peter. Jesus uses the word in the following places:—

In his conversation with the woman at the well,
 iv. 14; context, 5-15.

And in his talk with the disciples afterward,
 iv. 36; context, 34-39.

In his reply to Jews who sought to kill him,
 v. 24, 24, 26, 26, 29, 39, 40; context, 17-47.

After the miracle of the loaves and the fishes,
 vi. 27, 33, 35, 40, 47, 48, 51, 53, 54, 63; context,
 25-69.

In a talk with the Pharisees,
 viii. 12; context, 12-20.

In the parable of the good shepherd,
 x. 10, 28; context, 1-39.

At the raising of Lazarus,
 xi. 25; context, 1-39.

To his disciples at Jerusalem,
 xii. 25 (last time in the verse); context, 20-26.

In a speech in the temple,
xii. 50; context, 44-50.

In his answer to Thomas,
xiv. 6; context, xiii. 36 to xiv. 14.

In his prayer to his Father,
xvii. 2, 3; context, 1-3.

In the following passage it is doubtful whether to ascribe the language to Jesus or to John:—

John iii. 15, 16; context, 1-21.

In the following the language is unmistakably John's:—

In the introduction to John's gospel,

i. 4, 4; context, 1-14.

A conclusion of John's gospel,

xx. 31; context, 30-31.

The following is ascribed to John the Baptist:—

John iii. 36, 36; context, 25-36.

The following is Peter's language:—

John vi. 68; context, 66-69.

The verb *zao* is related to the noun *zoe*, as our verb to live is related to the noun life; it is defined "to live, to have life, to be among the living, to be alive, to enjoy real life." It occurs one hundred and forty-three times in the New Testament, and it is translated either to live or living one hundred and seventeen times. It has six other renderings. When translated to live, Jesus uses this word on eight different occasions, clearly meaning the enduring spiritual life:—

- In the story of the temptation,
 Matthew iv. 4; context, 1-11;
 Luke iv. 4; context, 1-13.
- In answer to the questioning lawyer,
 Luke x. 28; context, 25-37.
- In speaking of the resurrection,
 Luke xx. 38, 38; context, 27-40.
- When answering the nobleman about his son,
 John iv. 50; context, 46-54.
- In his declaration about the dead,
 John v. 25; context, 17-31.
- In his response to the dissenting Jews,
 John vi. 51, 51, 57, 57, 57, 58; context, 24-65.
- In answering Martha,
 John xi. 25 (last time in verse) 26; context, 1-46.
- In statement regarding his own departure,
 John xiv. 19, 19; context, 15-31.

Jesus uses the word in the following places where it is translated living and where he clearly means eternal life: —

- When speaking of the resurrection,
 Matthew xxii. 32; context, 23-33;
 Mark xii. 27; context, 18-27;
 Luke xx. 38, 38; context, 27-40.
- Declaration to the woman at the well,
 John iv. 10; context, 3-43.
- Declaration at the feast,
 John vii. 38; context, 32-44.

In the parable of the Prodigal Son the translation in the King James Version makes Jesus appear to use this word *zao* to indicate the earthly life (Luke xv. 13; context, 11-32). In this place the present participle of *zao*, living, is modified by the adverb *asotos*, which is defined dissolutely, profligately; hence a literal translation would be "wasted his property living dissolutely." This would relieve the verb of the erroneous meaning suggested by the King James translation.

This word, used by others besides Jesus, and translated living, is found in the following places, where it clearly refers to enduring spiritual life:—

Answer of Peter to the question of Jesus: "Will ye also go away?"

John vi. 69; context, 66-69.

Peter's answer to the question of Jesus: "Whom say ye that I am?"

Matthew xvi. 16; context, 13-20.

The adjuration of the high priest,

Matthew xxvi. 63; context, 57-68.

Question of the men at the tomb,

Luke xxiv. 5; context, 1-12.

This word, translated to live, occurs in the following places, where it is used by others who are evidently ignorant or forgetful, and therefore use it to indicate the temporal life:—

The request of the ruler, Jairus,

Matthew ix. 18; context, 18-26;

Mark v. 23; context, 22-43.

Declaration of Luke regarding Anna, the prophetess,
Luke ii. 36; context, 36-38.

Question of the woman at the well,
John iv. 11; context, 3-26.

Psuche is defined "animal life, breath," by Young, and Thayer to a certain extent agrees with Young, while Liddell & Scott, though recognizing that classical authors use the word as meaning the life of animals, find it also to mean the spiritual life. Vincent says in his *Word Studies*, vol. II, p. 230, "The soul (*psuche*) is the seat of the human affections; the spirit (*pneuma*) of the religious affections." Jesus spoke of *psuche* as being weary, lost, destroyed, laid down, and hated, and he suggests that it is the source of weariness, suffering, and sorrow, but he never intimates that it is eternal or everlasting. By his use of the word *psuche* he indicates the transitory life of the body, the material life, or the life of materiality, which has beginning and ending. He is very definite in his use of the two words *zoe* and *psuche*, and he maintains the characteristic difference between them in every case.

The word *psuche* occurs in the New Testament one hundred and three times. It is rendered life forty times, soul fifty-eight times, heart once, mind three times, and, with a prefix, heartily, once. The following include all the places where it is attributed to Jesus, who, on thirteen occasions, uses it twenty-seven times when trans-

lated life, Matthew in his narrative once, and Peter in a question once.

In the Sermon on the Mount,

Matthew vi. 25, 25; context, 19-34.

In sending out his disciples,

Matthew x. 39, 39; context, 34-39.

In an address to his disciples,

Matthew xvi. 25, 25; context, 24-28;

Mark viii. 37, 35; context, 34 to ix. 1;

Luke ix. 24, 24; context, 23-27.

In answer to the question who are greatest,

Matthew xx. 28; context, 20-29;

Mark x. 45; context, 35-45.

When speaking about labor on the Sabbath,

Mark iii. 4; context, 1-6;

Luke vi. 9; context, 1-12.

When reproving a desire for revenge,

Luke ix. 56; context, 51-56.

In a talk to his disciples about money,

Luke xii. 22, 23; context, 13-58.

In a definition of discipleship,

Luke xiv. 26; context, 25-33.

When prophesying the destruction of Jerusalem,

Luke xvii. 33, 33; context, 20-37.

In the parable of the good shepherd,

John x. 15, 17; context, 1-31.

In a monologue on his own death,

John xii. 25, 25; context, 23-26.

In an answer to Peter,

John xiii. 38; context, 36 to xiv. 4.

In the parable of the vine,

John xv. 13; context, 12-17.

Matthew uses it in his narrative,

Matthew ii. 20; context, 19-23.

Peter in his question,

John xiii. 37; context, 36-38.

When *psuche* is translated soul, Jesus uses it nineteen times on ten different occasions, Mary uses it once in her conversation with Elizabeth, Simeon once in his address to Mary, and the lawyer uses it in his answer to Jesus:—

On sending out his disciples,

Matthew x. 28, 28; context, 16-31.

In his call to the weary,

Matthew xi. 29; context, 28-30.

In a quotation from Isaiah. (See Isaiah xlii.)

Matthew xii. 18; context, 14-21.

In an address on discipleship,

Matthew xvi. 26, 26; context, 24-28;

Mark viii. 36, 37; context, 34-38.

The greatest commandment,

Matthew xxii. 37; context, 34-40;

Mark xii. 30; context, 28-34.

The scene in the garden,

Matthew xxvi. 38; context, 36-46;

Mark xiv. 34; context, 32-42.

Answer to the question of the lawyer,

Luke x. 27; context, 25-37.

In an address on property,

Luke xii. 19, 19, 20; context, 13-40.

When predicting the destruction of Jerusalem,

Luke xxi. 19; context, 7-24.

In a monologue on his own death,

John xii. 27; context, 23-30.

Mary uses the word in her talk with Elizabeth,

Luke i. 46; context, 39-56.

Simeon uses it in his talk with Mary,

Luke ii. 35; context, 25-38.

Response of the lawyer,

Mark xii. 33; context, 28-34.

The Greek word "*bios*" occurs eleven times in the New Testament. It is defined "means of life," and is translated life five times, living five times, and good once.

Translated life, it occurs in Jesus' parable of the sower, Luke viii. 14, where it says that the seed which fell among thorns "are they which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of (this) life, and bring no fruit to perfection." The parallel passages, Matthew xiii. 22, Mark iv. 18, 19, express the same meaning but do not use this word.

Translated living, but evidently meaning property, *bios* occurs in the story of the healing of the woman

with the issue of blood, Luke viii. 43, where it says that she "had spent all her living upon physicians." It is found twice in the parable of the Prodigal son, Luke xv. 12, where it is said that the father "divided his living unto his two sons," and also Luke xv. 30, where the elder complained that the younger son had "devoured his living with harlots." In the story of the widow and her two mites, Mark xii. 44, and Luke xxi. 4, Jesus awards her high praise because she casts into the treasury "all that she had, even all her living."

The foregoing are all the places where *bios* occurs in the Gospels, and here the meaning clearly refers to the temporal life and its possessions. In each incident the attitude of Jesus is without question.

Biotikos is an allied word, and is defined "belonging to or supporting life." It occurs three times in the New Testament, and is translated "of this life," "of things pertaining to this life," and "things that pertain to this life," each once. It occurs in the Gospels only once — in the warning which Jesus gives of the coming tribulation, Luke xxi. 34.

A vast array of questions necessarily enter into any discussion of such an important subject, and many of them cannot now be settled authoritatively; for instance, did Jesus use the Greek or the Aramaic language? and do we have an accurate translation so as to give Jesus' meaning correctly? Furthermore, the Gospels had four authors, each with his own mental character-

istics, and there is much uncertainty about the means by which they became possessed of the statements they recorded; yet, despite all these questions and uncertainties, and despite the possibility if not probability of a vast number of variations that might have occurred in the understanding of the teaching of Jesus and in its transmission from one to another, there yet remains this remarkable uniformity on the points which have been presented in this Appendix. This uniformity must have come about in a natural way, without any attempt to produce an artificial result, and in its form and contents it is itself conclusive that it expresses the message which the Christ gave to his disciples; and this conclusion is emphasized when we meet a like uniformity in other and allied subjects and the absence of any ulterior objects.

APPENDIX P, SECTION 386

THE SERPENT'S GOD

The promise of the serpent to the woman needs correct interpretation, and three peculiarities of the narrative will aid in understanding it: throughout the story the Lord God is the chief actor, and God does not once appear; the serpent has apparently no recognition whatever of the Lord God, but always speaks of every act as though it were the act of God, though it is distinctly stated in this second story that it was an act of the Lord God; and following this plan, the serpent

attributed everything to God, though in every instance the actor to whom he referred was the Lord God. To use a familiar form of expression, but with a meaning deeper than the usual, the serpent's "God" was the Lord God.

His first question referred to the prohibition made by the Lord God, though he pretended it was God's act when he asked, "Hath God said ye shall not eat of the trees of the garden?" He expected to confuse the woman by the use of the wrong name, and she fell at once into the snare, thereafter herself speaking of the Lord God's acts as though they were the acts of God. The same conditions relative to the names extend throughout the serpent's conversation, as he always says God when he means Lord God; if we substitute Lord God for God wherever the serpent uses that word, it will give a correct understanding of his meaning, although he evidently intended it to be understood otherwise.

He says, "For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." In both places in this declaration of the serpent the Hebrew has the same word, Elohim, which elsewhere is translated God, and is used with a capital letter. Because of the peculiar convictions of the translators the word "Elohim" is here rendered "gods" and is not capitalized. There is no more reason in the form of the Hebrew word for ren-

dering it "gods" here than in any other place where it occurs in the Bible and is translated God. There are no capitals in the original manuscripts of the Bible, therefore capitalization is always a part of translation.

Up to this point in the story the man and the woman have not had any experience with good-and-evil and do not know it, hence the promise of the serpent, which, as he intended, they understood to mean that they should be like God Himself, had the more importance to them. After eating of the tree "The eyes of them both were opened," and then they knew that what they had thought to be good was really evil. The real meaning of the promise of the serpent was fulfilled in all its bitterness, and they were indeed like the Lord God, knowing both good-and-evil. It was a terrible awakening.⁴

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J.P.

