

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *Bibliotheca Sacra* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bib-sacra_01.php

The review we have taken of ministerial education and supply shows, beyond a doubt, that as it always has been, it always must be, maintained by Christian beneficence — and that in our country the demand for ministers can never be met, without generous contributions by the church to aid its rising clergy through that expansive course of education which is so essential to success. Nor can this be esteemed a hardship, by any pious and intelligent layman. On him as well as on others rests the command, Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. Should he bear the full pecuniary burden of a young man's education, the young man himself who gives years of preparatory study and then a life to the work, sacrificing his chances to accumulate property or secure worldly honor, makes by far the greatest sacrifices of the two. When this matter is fully understood, the church instead of talking of her charity students will realize that the true beneficiary is not the hard toiling scholar scantily sustained while he struggles forward to the ministry, but **HERSELF.**

ARTICLE II.

SPECULATIVE PHILOSOPHY.

By Rev. Robert Turnbull, Hartford, Conn. [Concluded from p. 135.]

BUT what is the relation of the external or created universe to God? This is a great question which Descartes attempts to answer. It is produced, he says, by God at first, and not only so, but constantly reproduced. The whole dependent world both of matter and of mind is a vast mechanism carried on by external laws, demanding the constant interposition of the Divine hand. Matter has no direct action upon matter, neither has matter any direct action upon mind, nor mind upon matter. Their action and interaction depend upon the all-creating, all-renewing force. Therefore, concludes Descartes, there are no secondary or occasional causes, and the whole universe, material and spiritual lies, like a passive machine, in the hands of God, moved, modified and controlled by his resistless might.¹

¹ It is on this ground that M. Jules Simon, in his Introduction to his edition of the works of Descartes, speaks (p. 57) of Cartesianism as "Une système Mécanique." See Descartes, Sixth Meditation. — *Oeuvres*, p. 109.

Here then we find the fruitful germ of a system of pure idealism, which speedily evolved itself in the speculations of Malebranche and Spinoza.

In Descartes we see what is by no means singular in the history even of profound and philosophical minds, the most startling combinations of strength and weakness, of truth and error. For, he not only denied the existence and operation of occasional causes, but he placed the essence of mind in thought, of matter in extension, thus confounding being or substance with attribute or quality, insisted that the lower animals are mere machines and actually lodged the immaterial spirit in the conarion or pineal gland!

Malebranche, whom we mention now, though actually following Spinoza in the history of philosophical opinions, was a minister of the papal church, quite orthodox of course, and certainly a man of a reverent and lofty spirit. He seized with avidity, upon the principles of the Cartesian philosophy; and since all finite being has its life and action in God, and mind can communicate directly with God; and since also, the ideas of all things, as Plato has shown, exist in the mind of God, it follows, argues Malebranche, that the human mind sees everything in the Divine, and that God himself is "our intelligible world."

What then is the use of the external at all? It exists, says Malebranche, by the will of God, as discovered to us in the Scriptures, thus deserting the reasonings of philosophy for the teachings of revelation.¹ Hence it only required some bold, consistent, sceptical spirit to adopt the same fundamental notions, and rush with them into absolute spiritualism.

Such a man was Spinoza, that singular and subtle Jew, whom Novalis, in a 'furor' of admiration, calls "the God-inspired Spinoza," and whom even Schleiermacher and Schelling, as well as Cousin and Coleridge, delight to honor.

Assuming clearness and distinctness as the criterion of the validity of necessary ideas, the fundamental position of the Cartesian philosophy, starting from the supposition of necessary, self-subsistent being, making use also of those peculiar notions of Descartes that there are no secondary or occasional causes, God himself being the only neces-

¹ Malebranche's views are developed with much ingenuity and eloquence in his "Search for the Truth" (*Recherche de la Verité*). A beautiful and convenient edition of his works has been published by Charpentier, under the supervision of M. Jules Simon, who has prefixed to it an instructive and elegant Introduction. Tennemann calls Malebranche "the most profound of the French metaphysicians."

sary and efficient cause, that matter can exert no direct influence upon mind, nor mind upon matter, that the essence of mind is thought, and of matter extension, Spinoza, by a consistent, relentless logic, deduced the following positions:¹

1. That there is in the universe only one substance, that is, one self-sustaining, universal, absolute and eternal Being.

2. That this substance has two attributes, *thought and extension* — thought being manifest in mind, extension in matter.²

3. That matter and mind, proceeding from the same source, or being the same attributes of one substance, are identical. Mind is real, matter is phenomenal. And as all things come from God, and exist in God, all things, that is, the universe of matter and of mind, are God, not indeed God, in his absolute essence, but "God immanent," that is, God embodied, God manifested.³

A fundamental and favorite position of Spinoza is, that one substance cannot produce another; and if God therefore produces finite matter or finite mind, it is but an extension of himself, or projection into space and time of his own inscrutable being. The cause passes into the effect⁴; the effect, in this sense, is the cause, and the cause is the effect; so that the ordinary distinction of cause and effect is lost. The one is God absolute, the other is God conditioned, or as he chose to express it, the one is *Natura naturans*, the other *natura naturata*.⁴

Nor can we deny, if these fundamental positions are granted as just, in a word, if the universe is constituted by ideas, and thus human thought and absolute being are one and identical, that there can be in the sense of Spinoza, only a single all-comprehending substance. All else which we call finite, must be attribute, quality, phenomenon,

¹ In proof of these statements, we refer to Spinoza's "*Principia Philosophiæ Cartesianæ*," in the first volume of his Works (Tauchnitz's edition, 3 vols., edited by Dr. Bruder, an edition of great completeness and elegance, and to which all our references are made), as also to his little tract, "*De Emendatione Intellectus*," (Opera, Vol. II. p. 7.) in which he lays down the true method of philosophical investigation. The following passage (Vol. I. p. 24) deserves particular attention, as the basis at once of the systems of Descartes and Spinoza: *Hæc igitur detecta veritate simul etiam invenit Omnium scientiarum fundamentum, ac etiam omnium aliarum veritatum mensuram ac regulam; scilicet Quicquid tam clare ac distincte percipitur quam istud verum est.*"

² Opera, Vol. I. "*Cogitata Metaphysica*," p. 117. "*Ethica*," pp. 187, 190. See also "*Ethica*," Part II. p. 225.

³ Opera, Vol. I. (*Ethica*) p. 197. Compare pp. 190 and 204, particularly Prop. XVIII. "*Deus est omnium rerum immanens non transiens.*" See also Prop. XXVI. p. 208.

⁴ *Ethica*, Props. XXIX, XXX, XXXI. Opera, Vol. I. pp. 210, 211.

however vast and varied, however grand and beautiful. If all things are in God, in an absolute, literal sense, then God is in all things. The universe is not *dual*, but one, and that One, THE ALL. For, as God, the universal, self-existent, eternal Being, the substance par excellence, *id quod stat per se*, or, *id quod stat sub omnibus*, the necessary substratum and fount of being and thought, action and form, is infinite, he can neither be diminished nor increased; he can neither give more than he is, nor take more than he is; so that if he creates or produces — to use the language of men — he creates or produces out of nothing, that is to say, out of himself; therefore, in the universe, and throughout eternity, there can be no more than God, no less than God. Of course the supposition that matter is necessary and eternal, is thrown out. The fact, conceded by Descartes, and by the whole thinking world, with the exception of the materialists, that matter is a produced and temporary existence, on the same ground that the finite mind is a production of God, plays a most important part in the reasonings of Spinoza.¹ On this ground, therefore, he concludes that God is one and not two, one and not many, and yet the one becomes the two, the many, the all. So that, in a strict and absolute, not popular or figurative sense, God is all and in all. Thought is absolute, infinite, universal, and matter is its form or shadow. The omnipresence of God is what Spinoza calls extension — not meaning by extension anything gross or palpable, but the universal, all penetrating presence of the infinite and eternal essence. Particular things are only modifications of God.²

As self-existent, God, according to Spinoza, is free; for there is nothing to limit his power; this, however, amounts to nothing more than exhaustless and everlasting activity, constantly evolving itself, by necessary laws, without anything like what we call will, volition, or purpose. He thinks, thinks eternally, but contemplates or thinks only himself, without ideas, without the flow of consciousness, without the succession of reason or intellect.³

From this it is easily seen how Spinoza explains the finite, or phenomenal world. The question is asked, is it eternally distinct from God, or is it produced or created by God? No, says the subtle and consistent pantheist, God does not really change, God does

¹ Spinoza's fundamental error consists in his denying or obscuring the idea of *Cause*. Properly speaking, he does not admit the possibility of an effect. *Creation*, therefore, is ruled out of his system. The external universe is only a manifestation, not a creation, of God. *Opera*, Vol. I. pp. 139, 213.

² *Opera*, Vol. I. p. 208.

³ *Ibid.* pp. 213, 215.

not create, "in the vulgar sense of the term," he simply is. He is the "I am that I am." He is the one, unchangeable, absolute, necessary being that underlies, and in fact, constitutes all that exists. Thought and extension are attributes of his being, as unchangeable as himself. Hence all individual or particular thoughts, or extensions, are mere abstractions, or forms, unless they are referred to the absolute thought and infinite extension of God. That is to say, in themselves they are nothing. The phenomenal world, therefore, says Spinoza, is constituted by an infinite number of "particular determinations or expressions" of the one absolute Being, infinite thought giving rise to finite minds, and infinite extension to finite or material forms.¹ God, then, may be viewed absolutely, as *natura naturans*, or relatively as *natura naturata*, the one containing all things potentially in itself, the other being an evolution of this nature into all the modifications of thought and extension of which the universe is composed; or, as we might say, the one being *Brahm*, or absolute, eternal being, the other *Brahma*, or relative being, distributed in finite forms, "lying on eternity and the stars."² In a word, God is *εὐ νᾶς*, the universe, of which all things past, present and to come are but modes or manifestations, or, in Spinoza's own words, "*Deus est omnium rerum causa immanens non transiens*," while "man is but a mere balance of powers, and passions, the tension by which he subsists." Right is the correlate of power, while sin is weakness, negation, or deficiency; whence the object of all law is the exercise of force, and all law is limitation.³

How little all this differs, in the end, from the grosser system of Hobbes, or from the dreamy conceptions of the old Hindu philosophers, who, according to Sir William Jones, "believed that the whole creation is rather an energy than a work, by which the infinite mind is present at all times, and in all places, and exhibits to his creatures a set of perceptions, like a wonderful picture or piece of music always varied but always uniform." So that we may well say with Dugald Stewart, in reference to the reproduction of old and exploded errors, "One is almost tempted to believe that human invention is limited, like a barrel organ, to a specific number of tunes."

And yet, conceding the fundamental positions from which the sys-

¹ The mode in which this is done, is explained in the Second and Third Parts of his "Ethica."

² Opera, Vol. I. p. 228. See p. 233, in which he shows that matter, or body, is a mode of the Divine extension.

³ Ibid. p. 115. Compare pp. 131, 212, 217.

tem of Spinoza is drawn, with a perfection of logic which has all the force of mathematical demonstration, conceding, for example, that grand assumption of his, that being and thought are identical, and consequently that the order of ideas is the order of the universe; or, that other, that the cause must always pass over into the effect, in fact, constitute the effect; or that other, that the infinite Being or Cause can never produce anything different from, or separate from himself — its absurdity instantly vanishes, and one cannot help being struck with involuntary wonder at the stupendous force of that single, solitary thinker. Ah! who can tell into what depths the noblest mind, once adrift on the ocean of speculation, may involuntarily sink. One false movement, the loss of a chart, of a compass, or a star, may involve the greatest philosopher in irretrievable difficulties, nay, insure his final and eternal shipwreck.

That Spinoza, strange and wayward in many respects, was a man of transcendent mental power, nay more, of great depth, simplicity and earnestness of character, can scarcely be questioned by those acquainted with his life and writings. Perhaps metaphysically fanatical if not absolutely mad (*ferox ratiōne*); for it seems to us there is a metaphysic, as well as a natural, lunacy; he was carried away, as by an evil genius, into the bogs and quagmires of pantheistic doubt and despair. Yet, poor man, he followed this *ignis fatuus*, with a sublime enthusiasm, worthy of a better fate; so that his whole life, according to Schleiermacher and Cousin, was a long and lofty aspiration after the absolute and divine. But alas! we fear the God he sought was but the dream of a distempered fancy, which so far from conducting to the bosom of infinite love, only plunges the weary spirit into the blackness of darkness forever.¹

It may be well inquired here why Spinoza uses the term God at all to designate the great, primal, immanent, universal Substance, the *Causa causarum*, if not for the purpose of softening the horrid aspect of his opinions. Indeed Professor Norton of Cambridge states, on the authority of Le Clerc, that "Spinoza composed the work in which his opinions are most fully unfolded, in the Dutch language, and committed it to his friend the physician Mayer to translate into Latin; that where the name of God now appears, Spinoza had writ-

¹ The works of Spinoza were published a few years ago at Heidelberg by Dr. Paulus, with a highly laudatory preface. Dr. Bruder, the editor of the Leipzig edition, speaks of him in terms of equal admiration. A German translation has appeared from the pen of Auerbach, and a French one from that of Saisset. Amand Saintes has written his life with great ability; and while dissenting from his system, commends Spinoza as a great and a good man.

ten Nature; but that Mayer induced him to substitute the former word for the latter, in order partially to screen himself from the odium to which he might be exposed."¹ We do not attach much importance to this anecdote, indeed we have good reason to doubt its authenticity; but assuredly the term Nature would seem quite as appropriate, as that of God, in the system of Spinoza. His absolute Substance is certainly not God, in any proper sense of that expression. What then shall we think of a philosophy or of a religion, professing to be Christian, which recognizes Spinoza as the rejected saint, "verstossenen heiligen Spinoza," and speaks of him as "full of faith and full of the Holy Ghost?"²

It has been supposed by many, by Göthe for example,³ that Spinoza carried philosophical speculation to its highest point, that here it found its limit beyond which no human intellect can go. Leibnitz however, a man of almost illimitable range of thought, had no such idea; for correcting, as he supposed, the errors both of Descartes and Spinoza, he endeavored to lay the foundations of a vast structure of spiritual philosophy. His system indeed was not thoroughly matured and developed, and it has to be collected from a considerable mass of brief and fugitive compositions, including his letters, as well as from his Theodicea, the object of which is rather theological than philosophical. The aim of Leibnitz was practical, rather than theoretical, though founded upon profound and original investigation. He wished to harmonize conflicting opinions, both theological and scientific, and find a basis, upon which original and independent thinkers of all sects and schools might stand together, in the defence of a common philosophy and a common religion. He refuted the sensational origin of ideas, defended as he supposed by Locke, carried out the spiritual views of Descartes with reference to mind, giving a better exposition of fundamental ideas, and enlarging the criteria of their validity. Taking the human mind, in its necessary laws, as the groundwork of his philosophy, and having attempted to reduce all

¹ "The Latest form of Infidelity," By Andrews Norton. It will be recollected that when this earnest protest appeared at Cambridge a few years ago against the transcendental Scepticism of Emerson, Parker and others, Dr. Ware, Jun. published a discourse on the "Divine Personality," the object of which was to show that no proper idea of God could be formed which did not involve the attributes of intelligence, freedom and will.

² Schleiermacher's Reden Ueber die Religion. See also "History of Rationalism in Germany, by Amand Saintes, p. 239, English trans. A fuller statement upon this point may be seen in "Vie et Ouvrages de Spinoza," by the same author.

³ In "Wahrheit und Dichtung."

things to pure ideas, he endeavored thence to construct the universe.¹ His method, therefore, though apparently more thorough and comprehensive than that of his predecessors, was yet ideal and rationalistic. Rejecting the criterion of Descartes, that of clearness and distinctness, he took that of identity and contradiction as the criterion in necessary matter, and the principle of "sufficient reason" in contingent matter. The first of these involves the possible, that is, whatever may be conceived of as not contradictory, or, if you please, whatever must be conceived of without a contradiction. This gives us the absolute and the true, or that which must necessarily be. The next, that of the sufficient reason, measures the actual, not that which must be, but that which may be, that, in a word, for which, as actually existing, there is sufficient reason. To discover what ideas are valid respecting the contingent world, must be determined by reference to use, or final causes.²

Applying these criteria to things themselves, he finds not only the idea of substance, with its attributes of thought and extension, (that is of embodiment, for such is Spinoza's idea) but also of cause or power, spontaneous and creative; so that God, as the great primal Substance, or Subsistence, not only is, but acts and produces. Power does not reside in masses, for these are infinitely divisible; power is inherent in substance from which all material qualities must be excluded. So that, strictly speaking, we come to power or force, as a pure and immaterial essence.³ This constitutes the basis of existence. Thence spring all the forces and forms of the universe.

On this principle Leibnitz constitutes the world (kosmos) of immaterial energies. His system is developed as a *Monadology*; that is, one absolute, infinite, immaterial, eternal *Monad* (or *One*) being assumed as a conscious and voluntary cause, he proposed to show how from this source all the finite monads or forces of the universe derived their existence, whether these appear in immaterial souls, or in what we term physical forms.⁴ Leibnitz's mind, like those of

¹ Leibnitz's method is not inductive and psychological, but abstract and ontological. This point is well brought out by M. Jaques in his Introduction to the edition of his works, from the press of Charpentier, Vol. I. p. 31. His views of the human mind are developed in his "Essays on the Human Understanding," his *theosophy* or *theology*, in the "*Monadologie*," and "*Theodicée*."

² Spinoza decisively rejects final causes, Leibnitz as decisively maintains them.

³ While the system of Descartes is mechanical, that of Leibnitz is dynamical. The universe in his view, is composed of simple forces, or monads, which he says expressly are without extension or divisibility. *Monadologie*, *Oeuvres*, Vol. II. p. 463.

⁴ *Oeuvres*, Vol. II. p. 469.

Pythagoras and Plato, as well as Descartes and Spinoza, was pre-eminently mathematical, and his problem of the universe is little less than a geometrical proposition. Given one necessary, universal and eternal Monad or Force, to find all other monads or forces. Indeed, he speaks after the manner of Plato, of Jehovah as the supreme and eternal Geometer.¹ From this system all dualism is excluded. Of matter, in its ordinary import, there is none. Force is the primal element which underlies all other elements, and constitutes all finite essences, all finite forms. Identity runs through matter and mind; substantially they have the same origin and the same end. They involve, indeed, infinite diversity of quantity, quality and form, but spring from one source, partake of one nature, constitute one universe. In a word, they are a combination of spiritual monads or forces, which spring from the one indivisible, absolute, everlasting Monad, or Force which we call God.

It ought, however, to be recollected that the name, monad, does not precisely determine the nature of the essence or power to which Leibnitz applied it. It is given for the sake of distinction, and simply signifies *one*, one elementary something, essence or force,—in God, creative, conscious, intelligent, designing,—in finite mind or matter, one essence or force, not gross and material, like an atom or a corpuscle, but pure and spiritual, like the being from which it derives existence. Indeed, Leibnitz wished to avoid the difficulties which spring from the ill understood distinctions, which we make in reference to matter and mind; he therefore gives this name to the simple idea of a force, or energy, capable of developing itself in outward act and shape. God is the original Monas, or Force, from which all others are created or generated, by a conscious act of productive volition; so that in this respect, his views differ from those of Spinoza, and on the whole, harmonize with some of the highest forms of theological truth.² The created monads vary in character and power.³ Some are in a state of stupor, so to speak, and constitute dull matter, yet possess a sort of perceptive power; while others are conscious and form in the case of those distinct and clear,

¹ "So completely, indeed, and so mathematically linked did Leibnitz conceive all truths, both physical and moral, that he represents the eternal Geometrician as incessantly occupied in the solution of this problem. The state of one Monad (or elementary atom) being given, to determine the state, past, present and future, of the whole universe."—Stewart, *Dissertations*, Part II. p. 75.

² It is on this ground, that in his *Theodicea*, he maintains the conformity of faith with reason, *la conformité de la Foi avec Raison*.

³ "Monadologie," § 9. *Oeuvres*, Vol. II. p. 464.

the souls of men and angels, in the case of those somewhat dull or indistinct, the souls of the lower animals. All these have their own inherent energy and their own peculiar sphere, and thence exert no direct or immediate influence upon each other. Each one, however, is a microcosm, and contains an image of the universe.¹ They act in harmony, by a preëstablished divine arrangement, just as two automata constructed by the same artist and made to move together by the same impulse, act in harmony, by means of a preformed arrangement.²

Mind and matter, however, according to this theory are not essentially different. They are identical, being one in their origin and their end. They act according to the same fixed and necessary laws. All things, physical and moral, are preëstablished. All obey one impulse, and subserve one end. Hence the doctrines of preëstablished harmony, of philosophical necessity, and Optimism.

And what is all this, however grandly and beautifully developed by its author, but a scientific basis for pure idealism? Ideas not realities, forces not beings, construct the universe, and nothing but idealism or rationalism, in other words, absolute spiritualism can spring from such a system. Still, in the hands of Leibnitz, it is made subservient to the loftiest faith, the warmest devotion. His *Theodicea* has the force of a grand moral Epic, in which are celebrated the perfections of the eternal God. The celebrated Genevese philosopher, Bonnet, tells us that he used it as a manual of devotion.

Leibnitz, though speculating beyond the bounds of the human intellect, and losing himself in the untried depths of absolute being, though pouring contempt upon some of the greatest discoveries of the Newtonian philosophy, and giving ample evidence of possessing many of the weaknesses of our common humanity, was probably one of the greatest philosophical geniuses which Germany or the world has produced. His speculations found a congenial home in the minds of his countrymen. In nearly all the theories which have successively followed among that speculative people, Leibnitz constantly reappears. It is the same lofty, but strange and fanciful melody, with infinite and ever recurring variations.

Wolf methodized the Leibnitzian philosophy, but not possessing the warmth and genius of his master, presented it to the schools of

¹ *Oeuvres*, Vol. II. p. 471. "Monadologie," § 51.

² *Oeuvres*, Vol. II. p. 473. "Monadologie," § 62. "Cheque monade créé représente toute l'univers."

Oeuvres, Vol. II. p. 473. "Monadologie," §§ 63. 65. 78.

his native land, as a vast and complicated system of ideal abstractions, giving rise as usual, to an arid and destructive scepticism, which lasted for many years.

But the eighteenth century closed with Kant and the Kantian philosophy, in which the possibility of metaphysics or ontology as a science, is positively denied, and as many think demolished, and a basis laid for consistent, philosophical scepticism. By those not acquainted with the subject, Kant is spoken of as the father of German transcendentalism; while the fact is, while often using the term, he endeavors to extinguish the very idea of transcending our subjective states. To speak of the Kantian *metaphysics*, as many do, is a gross misnomer; for in the system of Kant, metaphysics is an impossibility. The great problem of the "Kritik of Pure Reason" is the possibility of "synthetic judgments *à priori*," or, in plainer words, the possibility of attaining absolute (unconditioned) truth, which Kant decides in the negative. He does not, as many well-informed persons seem to think, deny the reality of the external world, or the reality of mind; far from it; but he brings subject and object together, the inner and the outer world, and shows that it is only their synthesis or union, their point of contact, so to speak, of which we can know anything. Nature is real, but is given us only in consciousness, and under the forms of perception, space and time, which are simply laws of mind, not objective realities. But in addition to perception, the mind possesses the faculty of understanding (*verstand*), which has its principles and forms equally subjective, and for aught that we know artificial; while higher still, it possesses the power of reason (*vernunft*), which simplifies and coördinates the whole as unity, giving us as a principle of generalization and order, the one, the absolute, the unconditional, the causative, in other words, God, the soul, and nature. But these, too, are subjective; whence objectivity or reality is assumed and cannot be demonstrated scientifically.

Thus, again, are all things reduced to the region of ideas, of dim and visionary abstractions. Reality escapes into the void, and truth remains, like a shadowy island, in the midst of a boundless gulf. "The region," says Kant, "of the pure understanding is an island, and enclosed by nature itself in unchangeable limits. It is the region of truth (an engaging title) surrounded by a wide and stormy ocean."¹

But the heart, Kant's heart itself, demands God, duty, immortality, not merely as ideas, but as realities. For these great truths, then, Kant in a subsequent work, which he calls the "Kritik of Practical

¹ Kritik of Pure Reason, English translation, p. 222.

Reason," finds a basis in the wants of the individual and of society. As the eye is adapted to light, and light to the eye, and the one being given, the existence of the other follows, as a matter of course; so, also, God exists for man, man exists for God. Deity, religion, immortality, are absolute necessities; society is organized around these ideas, and cannot exist without their influence. Here, then, he lays what he deems a broad and substantial foundation for religion and morality. But as to a proper scientific basis for these truths, according to the Königsberg thinker, reason furnishes none.¹ They may be believed, but cannot be demonstrated. So that the boasted Kantian philosophy, grand and imposing at first sight, as one of the castles of the dark ages seen through the misty twilight, turns out after all, to be a comparatively small affair. "Too frequently," as Carlyle remarks, "the anxious novice is reminded of Dryden in the battle of books; there is a helmet of rusty iron, dark, grim, gigantic — and within it, at the farthest corner, is a head no bigger than a walnut."²

Its effect upon Germany, however, was prodigious. Neglected for a time chiefly on account of its obscure and difficult terminology, "witch jargon," as Herder calls it, it found ardent admirers, and spread like wild-fire through all the German universities. It gave rise to the most violent contentions and agitations. Heresies innumerable sprang up in its pathway, and the young divines of Germany who were especially enamored with it, seemed to run wild with a sort of metaphysical mania. Kant was hailed by his admirers as something more than a philosopher, as a prophet, and the entire metaphysics of past ages were trodden under foot as salt that had lost its savor. Even Leibnitz, the great German favorite, was for the time forgotten. The air of mysticism and depth connected with the Kantian system, its vast, "forest-like terminology," where the panting intellect of ordinary minds wanders amid inextricable labyrinths, or sinks exhausted with "scholastic miasma," though appalling enough at first, possessed for the speculative and enthusiastic German mind, an extraordinary attraction.

While Kant's philosophy cleared the atmosphere of Wolf's ab-

¹ Sir William Hamilton (Article on Cousin, in the Edinburgh Review for 1820) gives it as his opinion, that Kant's grand error consisted not in representing reason to be *weak*, but *deceptive*. Certainly it may be the one without the other.

² This passage occurs in Carlyle's "Life of Schiller," a work containing more good sense than some of the later and more boastful works of the Scottish Teufelsdrückh.

stractions, it introduced others in their room, and opened, in the case of many who carried out his logic to its legitimate results, an easy path into the Serbouian bog of absolute scepticism. But Kant himself was no infidel, in the ordinary sense of the term. He lost sight of the object in the subject, and failed to solve the problem of the universe, but he never denied the fundamental truths of religion, or transcended the dictates of common sense. A quiet, solid, thoughtful man, he performed his round of duties, and died in the bosom of the Lutheran church. Enter the gloomy and apparently interminable wilderness of his logic, and every now and then you will come to some beautiful, sunny glade, with the blue heavens overhead, and the song of summer birds among the trees. Occasionally, after long toiling among the brambles, foot-sore and weary, you reach some craggy elevation, and, forgetting all your toils, descry in the distance vast continents, with oceans of light, and islands "green as emerald." Take, for example, the following passage regarding the Divine existence, than which nothing can be found grander or more striking in the range of literature.

"The present world opens to us so immense a spectacle of diversity, order, fitness and beauty, whether we pursue these in the infinity of space, or in its unlimited division—that even according to the knowledge which our weak reason has been enabled to acquire of the same, all language fails in expression as to so many and undiscernibly great wonders—all numbers in measuring their power, and even our thoughts in bounds, so that our judgment of the whole must terminate in a speechless, but so much more eloquent astonishment. Everywhere we see a chain of effects and causes, of ends and means, regularity in origin and disappearance; and since nothing has come of itself into the state in which it is, it thus always indicates, farther back, another thing as its cause, which renders necessary exactly the same further inquiry—so that in such a way the great whole must sink into the abyss of nothing, if we did not admit something existing of itself, originally and independently, external to this infinite contingent, which maintained it, and as the cause of its origin, at the same time secured its duration. This highest cause, (in respect of all things in the universe,) how highly are we to think of it? The world we are not acquainted with according to its whole contents; still less do we know how to appreciate its magnitude by comparison with all that is possible. But what prevents us, since we once require in respect to causality an external and supreme Being, we should not at the same time, in respect of the degree of perfection, place it above everything else possible; which we can effect easily, although certainly only the delicate outline of an abstract conception, when we represent to ourselves, united in it as a single substance all possible perfection—which conception, favorable to the claim of our reason, in the midst of experience,

by means of the direction which such an idea gives towards order and fitness, and yet is never opposed to experience in a decided manner.

"This proof deserves at all times to be mentioned with respect. It is the oldest, the clearest, the most adapted to ordinary human reason. It animates the study of nature, just as itself has its existence from this, and thereby ever receives fresh force. It manifests ends and views, where our observation had not discovered them, and extends our cognitions of nature by means of the clue of a specific unity whose principle is out of nature. But these cognitions react back again upon the cause, namely the occasioning idea, and increase the belief in a higher being into an irresistible conviction."¹

Fichte, young, ardent, enthusiastic, with great logical power, and an imagination which nothing could limit, took up the problem of the Kantian philosophy, at the point where his predecessor left it, and endeavored to determine the relation of subject and object, of the world within and the world without. His mode of resolving the problem was bold and summary; subject and object, in his system, are one. The subject "posits" or realizes, or, if the term be clearer, embodies, the object. Each soul, or subject, makes its own world. The Ego posits the Non Ego and makes it real. The external world exists, exists necessarily, but exists by means of the internal world, and is dependent upon it. Mankind, in attributing a real existence to the external world, the world of outward forms, are right, but wrong in supposing the object independent of the subject. Both exist, but not separately. Mind and matter are identical. There is only one existence, having the twofold aspect of subject and object.²

Thus we have an immediate knowledge of all things. We are our own universe, our own world; we are spirit, we are matter; nay, in some sense, we are God. The development of self forms our world, constitutes our duty and destiny.

In this system, then, God and duty, though seen under a peculiar aspect, and perhaps belittled, are not denied. The result is subjective idealism, or, as in similar cases, the reduction of all things to pure ideas, and those ideas united in the single, individual, indivisible

¹ Kritik of Pure Reason, p. 474. It may seem to some that Kant is here somewhat inconsistent with himself, for he denies that the argument possesses what he calls *apodictical* force; and yet he allows it to be consistent with reason, and fitted to produce "irresistible conviction." The discrepancy, however, may arise from his variant use of the term *reason*; for, notwithstanding his imposing technology, he uses this term, as Sir Wm. Hamilton says, in fourteen different senses.

² Like Descartes and Spinoza, Fichte affects absolute demonstrative certainty, not philosophy simply, but *Gnosis, Wissenschaftslehre*. The principal work in which his views are developed is entitled, "*Begriff der Wissenschaftslehre*."

Ego. God, says Fichte, cannot be inferred, he must be believed in. Faith is the ground of all conviction. You believe in the existence of the world, which is nothing more than the incarnation or embodiment of that which you carry within you. It is, so to speak, your own shadow, yet to you and all of vast moment, for it is the means of your development and perfection. In the same way God exists in your consciousness, and you believe him. He is the Moral Order (*Moralische Ordnung*) of the world, as such only can you know him.¹ In other respects, he is unknown and inaccessible. In a word, he is infinite, an object not of reason but of faith. But we cannot attribute to him intelligence and personality; for thus we fall into anthropomorphism. Properly speaking, God *is* — is everything — consequently he cannot *have*.² Neither intelligence nor will can be predicated of his infinite nature. He is himself intelligence — he is himself will. Consequently Fichte, in his later works, where his system is somewhat modified, speaks reverently of God, as the supreme and everlasting Will. God, therefore, is not you, nor I, nor aught else specifically, but is in all and through all, the moral order, the infinite medium, the grand ideal of the whole.

That such a system of subjective idealism should give rise to errors, the most startling, cannot be matter of surprise. Fichte, at the best, is seen evermore hovering over the abyss of absolute nothing, and occasionally losing himself in its fearful depths. "Tomorrow, gentlemen," he said on one occasion with startling audacity, "I shall create God!"³ By this he meant that he would develop the process by which God comes into consciousness as subject and object.

It must be said that the system of Fichte logically carried out extinguishes both nature and God, and leaves us nothing but thought, or subjective idealism, which creates its own Deity, its own world, and its own immortality. Fichte however earnestly denied the charge of atheism, and appalled by his own principles, took refuge in a sort of stoical and mystical devotion in which God and the immortality of the soul are recognized as objects of simple faith.⁴ He represents himself as standing between two worlds, "the one visible,

¹ *Sittenlehre*, (1798,) pp. 184, 189.

² These views are brought out to their legitimate consequences, in the work which may be regarded as a supplement to the "*Wissenschaftslehre*," entitled, "*Ueber den Grund unseres Glaubens an eine Göttliche Weltordnung*" — "On the ground of our Belief in a Divine World-Order."

³ *Amand Saintes*, "*Histoire du Rationalisme*."

⁴ On what grounds he did this, see Tennemann's *Manual of Hist. of Philos.*, p. 437. Morrell, p. 431.

in which the act alone avails, and the intention matters not at all; the other invisible and incomprehensible, acted on only by the will," and where he sees "the Divine Life, self-forming and self-representing Will, clothed to the mortal eye, with multitudinous sensuous forms, flowing through him and through the whole immeasurable universe, here streaming through his veins and muscles — there, pouring its abundance into the tree, the flower, the grass. The dead, heavy mass of inert matter, which did but fill up nature, has disappeared, and, in its stead, there rushes by the bright, everlasting flood of life and power from its Infinite Source." Here, then, recognizing the Eternal Will as the creator of the world, and the creator of the finite reason, who exists in Himself, "and in whose light we behold the light and all that it reveals," he cries out with adoration: "Great living Will! whom no words can name, and no conception embrace! well may I lift my thoughts to thee, for I can only think in thee. In thee, the Incomprehensible, does my own existence, and that of the world, become comprehensible to me; all the problems of being are solved, and the most perfect harmony reigns. I veil my face before thee, and lay my finger upon my lips."¹

Schelling, who is yet alive, and whose system, not yet thoroughly coördinated and developed, comes after Fichte, in the order of philosophical speculation. Fichte had laid the foundation of his philosophy in simple consciousness, and made it entirely subjective; Schelling rejects this as a ground of absolute certainty, and maintains that in addition to understanding and reason, man has a higher power which may be denominated transcendental intuition, or the vision of absolute truth; whence his system is that of an absolute objectivity. Plotinus had called this faculty ecstasy, Schelling called it intellectual intuition. Assuming, therefore, as existing at least in some minds, those for example, of a higher order, this vision of things as they are, Schelling attempts to construct a magnificent and all-comprehending Nature-Philosophy, by which all science, natural and supernatural, is to be explained. Schelling adopts one of the great principles of Fichte's philosophy, the identity of subject and object, but goes a step further, by maintaining that they find this identity in a higher power. The Ego and the non Ego which in Fichte create each other, in Schelling are created by the absolute. In themselves they are real, but identical in a single essence. Knowledge and being correspond. They are correlates. The one mirrors or represents the other.

¹ "Bestimmung des Menschen," as quoted in Lewes's Hist. of Ph., Vol. IV. p. 164.

Subject and object, the finite and the infinite, are one in God. In a word, Schelling reduces the universe to the region of pure ideas and thence takes the ideas or notions of his own mind as the types of all possible knowledge. Nature is spirit visible, spirit is nature invisible. Man is divine, that he may see God the divine. He knows all things in God.

In this system we have first the absolute Substance, not the finite Ego of Fichte, but the infinite and eternal Ego, the cause creative, immanent, universal, invisible, as Bruno and Spinoza taught; and secondly, the created or finite result, or the visible, tangible, universe. But the absolute Ego produces the non Ego, not by its own force or out of its own nature, but out of us, by an interior creative energy. "Men are but the innumerable individual eyes with which the infinite World Spirit beholds itself."

The principle of identity, though recently modified, and to some extent abandoned by Schelling, runs through the whole of his philosophy, and pantheism is its necessary result. Man becomes subject and object by becoming conscious of himself. God, the absolute, in the same way, becomes subject and object by becoming conscious of himself. He finds himself by an external realization, "The blind and unconscious products of nature," says Schelling, "are nothing but unsuccessful attempts of Nature to make itself an object (*sich selbst zu reflectiren*;) the so called dead nature, is but an unripe intelligence. The acme of its effects — that is, for nature completely to objectize itself, is attained through the highest and ultimate degree of reflection in man, or what we call Reason. Here nature returns into itself, and reveals its identity with that which in us is known as the object and subject."¹

Thus nature and the universe form a circle. First, the absolute embodies itself in what we call finite forms, which are only reflections of itself, and thus sees itself mirrored in the productions of the external world. This is the first movement by which the absolute develops itself. The second movement is a "subsumption, or the regress of the finite into the infinite," in other words, it is nature, as finite, again making itself absolute, and reassuming the form of the eternal. "The combination of these two movements is the reunion of the subject and object in divine reason; it is God, not in his original and potential, but in his unfolded and realized existence."²

¹ System des Transcend: Idealismus, p. 5.

² This will strike the reader at once as precisely the view of Bruno and Spinoza, expressed by the *Natura Naturans*, and *Natura Naturata*. Schelling's sys-

This is pantheism as perfect as that of Spinoza. To relieve himself of the terrible embarrassment, felt even by the German mind, in a pantheism so absolute and overwhelming, Schelling has started upon a new track, and claiming that he had only given the negative or simply ideal side of philosophy, which springs from thought, but can never come to being, an admission of the highest moment, he proposes to give the positive side, which starts from being and comes to thought. By this means he attempts to rise above the pantheistic view of his ideal philosophy, and exhibits God as the supramundane Being, creation as an emanation from God, and man as a being at once dependent and independent — dependent as to the principle of his being, independent as to his free personal existence. But the effort, instructive as it is, is a decided failure. The two systems are not coördinated; and in the second, as in the first, there are serious and fundamental errors. The absolute God is yet retained, without consciousness, intelligence and personality, except as he becomes real and personal to us by an embodiment of himself in the external creation.

Hence Schelling's doctrine of the Trinity, for he ventures upon an explanation of this mystery, as three divine potencies, and his doctrine of redemption through Christ, as the return of the finite into the infinite.¹

Schelling pours contempt upon physical science, as an outward and empirical thing, and even casts away psychology as useless in a system of absolute nature-philosophy. Copernicus, Newton, Bessel, Leverrier, are plodders in the world of sense; Locke, Reid and Stewart mere empirical seekers in the outer courts of philosophy.² He goes to the inner shrine and centre of truth, "the prima philosophia," as he terms it, and constructs the universe of science from *a priori* principles. In Germany, his speculations on nature have been much admired, but are incapable of verification, and though ingenious and often splendid, lead to no practical result. On this theory, being and thought must be identical, though Schelling honestly confesses

tem, as a whole, may be described as a Transcendental or Absolute Idealism, the title indeed of one of his principal works, "System des Transcendentalen Idealismus."

¹ For a clear and interesting statement of Schelling's views upon this subject, consult Morell's Hist. of Phi., pp. 451-454.

² See Jahrbucher der Medicin, Vol. I. His great aim here is to show, that science is valuable only so far as it is speculative — that it is not "phenomenal or relative, but absolute." Reason as finite, and science as finite, are nothing. His "Natur-Philosophie," is the construction or science of nature, *a priori*.

that he has lost himself between them. Finite and infinite must be one. God is centre and circumference, subject and object, the universe without and the universe within. Thought, then, is impersonal, is divine. Hence, whatever is known or thought by man exists. Ideas are the measure of the universe. So that, instead of studying nature and facts, whether as given in the world of matter or of mind, or by means of a specific revelation, we ought simply to study God in ourselves. All knowledge is given us in our existence. God is in us, we are in God. In a word, man is in some sense, *omniscient*! Thought (*Das Denken*) is not my Thought, and Being (*Das Wesen*) is not my Being; for everything belongs to God or the All. We know God, then, as we know ourselves. Subject and object are identical in a third, which is the absolute, which absolute is neither ideal nor real, neither mind nor matter, but both. This absolute is God. He becomes "conscious of himself in man," and thus man, under the highest form of his existence, manifests Reason, and by this reason, "God knows himself."¹

In what respect this is an improvement upon the old idolatrous pantheism of the Brahminic faith, it would take Schelling himself to say. Such a philosophy gives us nothing but abstractions, apparently grand and beautiful at a distance, like the mirage of the desert, but mocking the thirst of the traveller, and leaving behind it and before it only "the waste howling wilderness." Is it wonderful, then, that one of the most powerful of the writers of young Germany, who reprinted the Letters of Schleiermacher on the "Lucinde" of Schelling, which urge fundamentally the same views on the subject of religion, should in the preface blasphemously declare "that he would rather be in hell with Schelling, than in heaven with Marheinecke," and that the world would have been happier "if it had never heard the name of God!"² Such are the horrible results of boldly speculating beyond the necessary bounds of the human intellect. Under the influence of such a philosophy, the poetic and gifted Steffens mournfully said, "All living nature, the whole of varied life seemed to me faded and gray; all my wishes and hopes vanished, for

¹ We may be suffered to say here, that Coleridge was caught in this philosophy of the absolute, and was even more mystified and bewildered than Schelling. It appears, from innumerable coincidences, and even identities (plagiarisms on the part of Coleridge,) that the Englishman helped himself from the writings of the German *plenis manibus*. Coleridge was a genius of the highest order, but not a remarkably clear or consistent philosopher.

² History of Rationalism, by Amand Saintes, p. 244.

I was compelled to confess to myself that as such they contained falsehood. * * * The total abrogation (of finite personality) seemed to me to destroy all that I considered dear and holy." Philosophers like Spinoza, Schelling and Hegel, to borrow a figure from Carlyle, or rather from Schiller, who in his *Philosophische Briefe*, paints the struggles of a doubter, are like the conjurer that has pronounced the spell of invocation, but has forgot the counter-word; "spectres and shadowy forms come crowding at his summons; in endless multitudes they press and hover around his magic circle, and the terror struck Black Artist cannot lay them." Nothing but the darkness of an eternal night opens before our terrified vision, and an infinite wail, as of perdition, echoes through the universe.

It is but justice however to Schelling to say that it is asserted, on high authority,¹ that the Berlin philosopher has renounced, or essentially modified, the system of *identity* and now teaches the supreme and personal sovereignty of the one true and living God; that he extols Christianity as the completion of reason and the last hope of the world. It may be, that, as he grows older, he feels the need of some better faith both for himself, and for the distracted church of his native land; but whether he will succeed in giving a true exposition of philosophy or of Christianity is yet to be seen.

We may here take occasion to remark, that the recent German philosophy has all turned upon the solution of a single problem, the relation of subject and object, of the *Ego* and the non *Ego*, or at a higher point of thought, the relation of the infinite and the finite, and has uniformly resulted in pantheism, or the identity of subject and object, of God and the universe.

But pantheism has various forms, and it is not a little curious that both Fichte and Schelling reject what they call pantheism as opposed to their peculiar theories! Upon this subject their distinctions are amazingly delicate, and would scarcely strike ordinary thinkers as distinctions at all. Generally speaking, however, by pantheism they mean the deification of the visible or palpable universe, the universe of mere forms and phenomena. This species of pantheism, Hegel himself unhesitatingly rejects.

But this is unnecessarily to limit the import of the term. By pantheism is generally understood any system which maintains the identity of all things, which makes the finite universe not so much a product, as a manifestation of God, which denies all occasional causes

¹ Dr. Neander, as quoted by Amand Saintes, "Vie et Ouvrages de Spinoza," p. 288.

and merges the whole in the infinite essence, in a word, any system which denies or doubts the Divine personality, freedom and intelligence, and represents God simply as Being, absolute and all-comprehending, whether such Being be regarded as material and mechanical, or ideal and spiritual.

Indeed, according to the view we have given, pantheism may assume *four* distinct forms. It may deify nature as it is, making matter, or some form of vital, or of mechanical force, the single substance, or essence of the universe, infinite, absolute, eternal, but undergoing perpetual changes, and giving rise to all the peculiar manifestations of what we term soul and body. This is the pantheism of the ancient Ionian school, and of some of the oriental mystics. Had Hobbes of Malmesbury possessed the feeling of worship, such would have been the form of pantheism he would have favored. Auguste Comte might be brought to worship such a God, if indeed he does not regard all worship as folly and superstition. This theory, however, is much more likely to take the form of pantheism, denying the very possibility of religion and virtue; or, if allied to superstition, to lapse into polytheism, and adore the manifold forms of matter, whether these be the starry host of the Persian magi, or the crocodiles of Egypt.

The second form of pantheism may be the deification of the human soul, or as the Germans call it, the Ego, making that the fountain of the universe, the All that exists substantially, everything else being the Ego realized or objectified. This is the subjective, pantheistic idealism of Fichte and his followers.

The third form of pantheism might be the rejection of what we call nature or the universe as mere form or appearance, and the deification of spirit, as the only substance, having the fixed attributes of thought and extension, and thus producing by an absolute and eternal necessity both nature and man. Such a theory would justify its abettors in speaking of finite beings and finite things, but always with the reserved, or implied idea, that they are only manifestations or emanations of the universal Spirit, into which they are perpetually returning. This is the pantheism of Spinoza, and in a modified form, that of Bruno and Schelling.

The last and most complete form of pantheism would be the reduction of all things, matter and spirit, to *pure thought*, and the construction of the universe from nothing, and its consequent *possible* return to nothing. Outward manifestations, limited forms, need not of course be deified in this system, on which account, the author of such a theory, might reject the vulgar pantheism; but his only God would

consist of mere thought and relation, with their constant changes, and eternal succession. This is the absolute pantheism of Hegel, beyond which speculation cannot go. The universe is at last reduced to a pure abstraction, thought itself springs from zero, and returns to zero.

Das Nichts, Nothing— is the beginning and end of the Hegelian philosophy; and here therefore German metaphysics finds its completion. Between the two zeros or the two nothings, a magnificent field, including God, science, history, art, present themselves for contemplation and study; and all these Hegel, with amazing logical subtilty, has discussed. But his philosophy, whatever in other respects it may be, begins in nothing, from which come all things, and ends in nothing, to which tend all things.¹

But such a statement appears so extravagant and startling that we must justify it by a few remarks. Pantheism, we have said, is the true secret of the German philosophy. The only chance, therefore, which a new theorist has for originality, must lie not in the adoption of a new view, but of a new method. He must still tread, though in different style, and in an apparently new direction, the circle of the absolute. Hegel at first agreed with Fichte and Schelling. Common science he rejected as empirical, as belonging to the outer world of mere forms and shows. The observation of facts, patient investigation, induction, deduction, what indeed most persons call science, he treated with disdain. Hence, in his first work, *De Orbitis Planetarum*, founded on Schelling's Nature-Philosophy, he poured unbounded scorn upon Newton and the modern astronomy! Gradually, however, he found it necessary to recede from Schelling. His mind was more orderly and logical; and he wished to establish philosophy upon an absolute basis. He would assume nothing, not even the Ego of Fichte, or the *intellectual intuition* of Schelling. He would construct, on strictly logical principles, a system of universal and irrefragable truth. Instantly he gave himself to the task with all the energies of his subtile and vigorous intellect. So absorbed was he in his work, that he went on writing when the cannon of the French army was roaring under his window in the memorable battle of Jena.

Unconsciously, however, Hegel assumed one thing, yet only one, though that one the real basis of the entire German Ontology, namely,

¹ We presume that the Hegelians would not say that the universe will ever be actually reduced to absolute nothing. All they maintain is, that nature is a constant *transition* or oscillation between nothing and something, between the *abstract* which is nothing, and the *concrete* which is something; consequently that nature never is, but is always becoming.

the identity of subject and object, and consequently of being and thought. Taking it for granted that fact and idea must be coincident, he took the genesis of thought for the genesis of the universe, the process of logic for the process of God. This given, his whole system follows without an effort, and taken alone it is one of the most wonderful specimens of a gigantic and pitiless logic. Except this, however, he assumed nothing, not even consciousness, or the ordinary axioms of human thought. Literally he began with nothing. But nothing is a negation, and a negation implies the existence of something which it denies. Something and nothing are the two poles of a truth, or idea, which consists of the union or contact of the two. Neither of these exists by itself. They exist in their relation only; so that the relation in this case is the only truth.

But how can nothing be said to exist, we may well inquire, our Saxon *dummheit*, and want of Teutonic *Anschauungsvermögen*, as the Germans say, making our question seem quite a poser. Hegel, however, promptly replies, It exists as a thought, that is, as an abstraction. *Das nichts ist; denn es ist Gedanke.* And so also pure being (*seyn*) which is only a thought, an entirely unconditioned thought, exists in the same manner. Thus his famous maxim is that *Being and Thought are the same*, whence also *Seyn und Nichts ist Dasselbe*.¹

Thought and being, or ideas and realities being the same, according to Descartes and Spinoza, Leibnitz and Schelling, Hegel's conclusion fairly follows.

The Hegelian method may be described as the identity of contraries, which has a basis of truth in the fact that all things have, so to speak, two sides, and appear to us as contradictions; and the entire problems of metaphysics turn upon the reconciliation of these opposing dualities, as a distinguished thinker has expressed it, *les conciliation des dualités desesperantes*.² All things in the created universe spring from the infinite, whence the duality of the finite and infinite — the finite — the non or not-finite, — they have two sides, therefore, one dark, the other luminous; the one bounded, the other unbounded; the one known, the other unknown, except by faith. Man is finite, yet he lies in the infinite; but how, who can tell? He discerns, or believes the infinite, but he sees, he comprehends only the finite. He sprung from the *Absolute*, the unconditioned, the unbounded and

¹ Encyclopaedie, pp. 89—97. For admirable accounts of Hegel and Hegelian pantheism, see Amand Saintes' "Vie et Ouvrages de Spinoza," pp. 290—333. Dr. Ott's "Hegel et Philosophie Allemande." Willm's "Philosophie Allemande," Vol. IV.

² Vinet, "Essaies de Philosophie Morale."

eternal, which he adores, but the secret nature of infinite Being or of God he cannot explore. His *thought*, like himself, seems to hover between the finite and the infinite. It reposes apparently upon the absolute, yet understands it not; for whatever is understood has relations, and never can measure the absolute. There are certain fundamental axioms of thought, which bring with them no reasons, no conditions, and rest therefore upon a simple, fundamental belief; but the instant we conceive them, apply them, or reason with them, they enter into relations and limits. All positive thought, indeed, as Sir William Hamilton maintains, by irrefragable reasons, is conditioned. It is never absolutely simple — it involves two sides, as it were two contrary poles, vibrating between the finite and the infinite, the local and universal, the absolute and related, the subjective and objective, the self-subsistent and the phenomenal. Cause and effect, one of our most essential and common ideas is, fundamentally, but the idea of the infinite passing into the finite, or producing the finite, the unlimited passing into bounds, the eternal into time. For all finite causes, in the process of thought, must hang upon the infinite Cause; and there is a sense, both logical and religious, in which God is “all and in all.” This double character of human thought, and this apparent corresponding duality and contradiction of the universe, may be found in all science, in all knowledge; for here evermore are cause and effect, being and relation, action and reaction, darkness and light, time and eternity, finite and infinite, man and God. Even without reference to the infinite, man himself is dual, being soul and body, mind and matter, subject and object, and viewing all things, somehow, as intermediate between them both, or as having relations to both. In a word, thought is dual, being at once subject and predicate, cause and effect, analysis and synthesis,—in its simplest forms and highest generalizations, uniting contraries, reconciling contradictions.

Hegel had some idea of the true method of thought, but he carried it into extremes. Confounding all thought with being, all object with subject, he had to begin with nothing, as we have said, and end with nothing.

Two contraries, such as existence and non-existence, appear to exclude each other. Hegel pronounces this notion to be false. Everything, he says, is contradictory in itself—this, in fact, is its essence; and its identity consists in the union of the two contraries. Thus Being (*Seyn*) in the abstract or unconditioned is nothing, that is, apart from any individual or particular thing, is the same as nothing. Existence, therefore, is identical with its negation, that is, with

nothing. The two ideas involve each other. The middle term, the union or relation of the two, is conditioned existence, that is, the universe. Take another example, the idea of weakness is a negation, but it implies the idea of force; but force in the abstract is nothing. They are identical; and here, therefore, in their union or middle term appear as a positive or concrete power. Pure or absolute light is no better than darkness; for light without color or shadow is invisible. Absolute clearness is identical with absolute obscurity, that is, with its negation; their union, however, or their middle term gives us light!¹

If you say, this is word-quibbling, Hegel would reply, on his ground-principle, the identity of thought with reality, that whether it is word-quibbling or not, it is absolutely true. But it leads to contradictions and absurdities, you say. Hegel rejoins, it must lead to contradictions, of course, but not to absurdities. Reality is found only in the clash and final union of innumerable contradictions.

According to this logical process, then, nature and thought may be constructed. Subject and object do not exist as separate realities, but exist only in their identity. Their relation is the only thing conceivable. So also finite and infinite, which appear to exclude each other, are identical. Mind and matter, too, are identical, indeed they are only subject and object viewed in different aspects. The two poles unite and form the truth, which is an eternal relation. God and the universe would seem to exclude each other, but they are identical after all, and their identity is the truth.²

On this ground Hegel contended that Schelling's views of the identity of subject and object is not exact. The latter assumed the reality of both sides or poles of the magnet, or the reality of two contraries; and the identity he called the point of indifference between them. Hegel decided that the positive truth or reality is found not in the two terms related, but in the relation itself. Thus he gives us an absolute idealism, or a universe of mere relations. All things therefore are not mere appearances to us, as taught by Kant, but mere appearances in themselves. Thoughts are the only realities. "The real objectivity is this: that our thoughts are not merely thoughts, but are, at the same time, the reality of things."³

¹ "Hegel et Philosophie Allemande," par Dr. Ott. See also, Lewes' *Hist. of Philos.*, Vol. IV. pp. 203, 204.

² Our thoughts, according to Hegel, are the reality of things, and thoughts are only relations, or give us only relations. "Encyclopædie," p. 97. "Geschichte der Philosophie," Vol. III. p. 690. Willm, *Hist. de Philos. Alle.* Vol. III. pp. 398, 399.

³ *Geschichte der Philosophie*, Vol. III. p. 689.

If there be a God, then, according to Hegel, he is only the *Absolute Thought*, or rather the Absolute Relation. So that God, or thought, comes to consciousness only in man! He finds the highest sphere in scientific thought. "It appears," says he, "that the World Spirit has finally succeeded in freeing himself from all impediments, and is able to conceive of himself as Absolute Spirit (or Intelligence, *Geist zu erfassen.*) — For he is such only so far as he knows himself to be the absolute Intelligence: and this he knows only in science, and this knowledge alone constitutes his true existence."¹

In the logic of Hegel, *this* and *that*, here and there, now and then, nothing and something, finite and infinite, good and bad, right and wrong, time and eternity, are the same things. These too, all are as nothing except in their identity or relation. Properly speaking, things do not exist — they are only coming into existence. They form a Trinity, Nothing, Something, and the Relation between them. These, then, are one, one in the identity or relation. So that Hegel pretends to accept the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God the Father is the eternal Idea — *Idee an und für sich*, that is, the Idea as an unconditional Abstraction, which is the same as Nothing. God the Son, engendered by the Father, is the *Idee* as *Anderseyn*, that is, as a conditioned or realized object. God the Holy Spirit is the Identity of the two, that is, the Absolute Relation, the negation of the Negation, and the totality of all existence. Separate from the world, then, there is, according to Hegel, no God; so also, separate from the consciousness of man, there is no Divine consciousness or personality. The Deity is only the eternal process of Thought, uniting the objective movement in nature and the subjective in reason or logic, and coming to a full realization of itself only in the universal genesis or spirit of humanity.²

Thus vanishes, as a reality, the whole external world. Thus vanishes God as a self-existent, personal essence, a being of intelligence and will. Thus vanish, in fact, all possible beings and things, swallowed up in the vortex of a vast, all-devouring logic. Thought only remains, or rather relation, that is to say, abstraction, and what is this in its last analysis but nothing? The world is reduced to an idea, the foundations are destroyed. God and the universe are gone!

And yet hundreds of minds in Germany, some of them of the highest order, and all of them above mediocrity, have received all

¹ Geschichte der Philosophie, Vol. III. p. 689.

² "Philosophie der Religion," Vol. II. pp. 480, 481. "Geschichte der Philosophie," Vol. III. p. 377.

this as the last revelation of human wisdom, the most perfect triumph of philosophic thought! What, then, can we say but this, that the sophists (*σοφῶτα*) of this world are caught in their own subtlety? "Professing themselves wise, (*σοφῶτα*, philosophers,) they have become fools."

"Gens ratione ferox, et mentem pasta chimæris."

A race with reason mad, and fed upon chimeras.

The German philosophy has been imported into France, and to a slight extent into England and the United States; but thus far has not, in these countries, assumed a definite form, except perhaps in the Eclecticism of Cousin and his followers. It is well known, that subsequent to the revolution of 1798 in France, a decided reaction against the sensual philosophy took place, and a few intelligent thinkers, aided chiefly by the Scottish philosophy, were gradually approaching a higher and purer system. Under the auspices of Laromiguière, Royer Collard, Jouffroy, and Cousin, for a time, the Scottish philosophy of Reid and Stewart was all the rage. Cousin's inquiring spirit, however, led him to the study of Kant, and he began to promulgate in his lectures the doctrines of the Königsberg sage. But he did not stop here. Having introduced the Parisians to the labyrinths of the Kantian philosophy, he became enamored of Proclus, the Alexandrian mystic, who revived the study of Plato and introduced among the speculative thinkers of his day a sort of vague and mystical pantheism. Cousin edited Proclus, lectured on him, borrowed some of his ideas, vamped up others, and would have made him the demigod of the popular philosophy, had the giddy public been willing. A visit to Germany made him acquainted with the philosophy of Fichte, Schelling, and especially Hegel, who has been styled "the modern Proclus of Germany."

On his return to France, Cousin made the public acquainted with as much of the doctrine of Hegel as it could bear, adding something of his own to make the mixture "slab and good." He adopted, especially, Hegel's principles of historical criticism, and reproduced, in clear and elegant French, the comprehensive and striking views of his master on the development of speculative philosophy, as a natural growth of humanity, a necessary movement of "the divine spirit in the soul of man."

But Cousin, to be original, must find a method of his own. He admired somewhat the old Greek philosophers, especially Proclus, and yet cherished no slight respect for Locke and the Scottish philosophy.

His mind is clear, methodical and comprehensive, and his style a model of grace, vigor and elegance. What, then, more promising than the idea of *Eclecticism*. Indeed, it was the only method left for anything new by means of the old. Philosophy had run out into two extremes, as it were opposite poles, of what might be, as Cousin supposed, a common centre. Might they not be brought together, and the truth at last discovered? In a word, might not Locke and Kant, Stewart and Proclus, Reid and Hegel, be reconciled, and a grand and beautiful system thence deduced? Yes, Eclecticism is the only system now remaining to the aspiring philosopher, who should advance the domain of science, and make himself a name in the annals of speculative thought.

Behold, then, the origin of Eclecticism, and its claims to the admiration of the world. The experiment has been successful, and now Eclecticism is the prevalent philosophy in France. It has been treated with some respect in England, though demolished in its fundamental positions by Sir William Hamilton. It has been welcomed, but not thoroughly grasped, by a certain class of minds in the United States. Its impression, however, upon the great body of our thinkers has been comparatively slight. Recently Mr. Morell of England has taken it under his protection. While objecting to some of its minor positions, he seems to regard it as the true method, and obviously adopts its fundamental doctrines. He defends it from attack, and clearly conveys the impression, that in his view, it has solved the great problem touching the passage of psychology to ontology, or the relations of the finite and phenomenal to the infinite and the real. Mr. Morell, however, has not grappled with the difficulties of the question, and has turned away, as if in conscious weakness, from the strong statements and striking arguments of Sir William Hamilton.¹ His history, however valuable in other respects, only reëchoes the historical criticisms of Hegel, Damiron and Cousin. It indicates industry, learning and skill, with a commanding use of clear and elegant English diction, but no originality, vigor or profundity of mind.

But what is Eclecticism? Is it a simple collection of philosophic fragments, in which the most incongruous and contradictory methods, processes and notions are coördinated by a thin spider web of system; or is all the error first eliminated from the great mass of divergent theories, and nothing left but the residuum of pure gold? This were much to claim certainly. Still, if Eclecticism means anything worth

¹ The passage in which this occurs is curious enough, and worthy of attention. "Hist. of Philos." p. 656.

while, it must mean the latter. A mere collection of notions and hypotheses, though interesting as materials for a history of philosophy, would of itself possess no intrinsic value as science. A *critérium* must be found. Truth must be tested, and separated from falsehood. How can this be done? Where is the criterion referred to — where the purifying fire, the separating process, and the final touchstone to endorse the golden treasure? M. Cousin's ingenuity alone? By no means. What then? M. Cousin's system, or what M. Cousin assumes as the true philosophy? Nothing else is conceivable. So that in Eclecticism we have only a new system, added to the thousand and one which have preceded it. This must be admitted; but recollect it is a system taken out of all other systems and bringing them into fraternal unity. How? For that is the question already put — and here we begin to detect a fallacy, a sort of vicious logical circle. The gold or the true system is taken from all other systems which, according to M. Cousin, are dross and gold together. How? By the true system — that is to say, the gold is taken from this huge pile of rubbish, by means of itself!

But you mistake, exclaims the Eclectic; all error, according to M. Cousin, is only incomplete truth, not dross and gold exactly, but gold out of place, gold incomplete. To get the truth then, or the philosophic gold in its completeness, the different parts, Kant, Reid, Hegel, Proclus, Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Hume, Spinoza, have only to be brought together.

But is there not a palpable fallacy here also? What! is error in reality only incomplete truth? You might as well say, that brass, iron, tin, nay, absolute dross, are only incomplete silver and gold. Error is often an absolute denial of the truth, and bears the same relation to it that darkness does to light, or wrong to right. A few grains of truth may be found in all erroneous systems, and in this their plausibility may consist; but two, or half a dozen errors, even if they consist of incomplete truths, that is, of one sided, imperfect, partial views, brought together, will not give us more than they contain. Nor can an error, on one extreme, be corrected by bringing it into contact with an error, on the opposite extreme. Something must be thrown out of both; that is, whatever is misstatement, false logic, or false inference must be thrown out. In a word, all the dross and baser metal must be separated from the precious ore. Error doubtless is often an incomplete view of the reality, a half truth, as we call it, by courtesy, but more frequently it is something positively false; as for example, the assumptions that all clear and distinct ideas

are necessarily true, that subject and object are identical, that like can never produce unlike, that spirit cannot create matter, that the infinite cannot produce the finite, and cause it to exist separate from itself, that human thought is identical with being, the finite reason commensurate with infinite existence. So also, the opposite assumptions are positively false, namely, that all thought is derived from sensation, that there is no real distinction between mind and matter, the former being only a modification of the latter, that there is no God but the vast combination of mechanical forces, no duty but expediency, no heaven but political freedom or carnal pleasure. All these are not simply incomplete views of truth, but plain and palpable falsehoods. They deny the reality of things, and by no process can be transmuted into truth. Light and darkness, right and wrong, *yes* and *no*, God and Satan, can never be made one.

It is evident, then, that a criterion is demanded, in some intermediate system, some higher and better views? Does Eclecticism furnish such? In other words, what are Cousin's peculiar notions, which bring the most opposite systems together, and from the whole, give us absolute, philosophical truth? We reply, the "pure spontaneity," and especially the "impersonality of reason," and the passage thence from the finite to the infinite, from the related and conditioned, to the absolute and eternal.

As to the impersonality of reason, the organ to M. Cousin of pure truth, what does that amount to, if not to this, that reason, while in man, does not belong to man at all; and if in any sense finite, is also infinite? Well, then, whose reason is it, if it is not mine, nor thine, nor man's in general? The only reply possible is, that it is God's. In other words, it is the absolute, universal reason, and is thus identical and commensurate not only with thought, but with existence. Man's reflective power, his intellect and senses, including his affections, according to Eclecticism, lead him into error, never at least, give him the pure truth. But reason, being impersonal and divine, is the immediate inspiration of the Almighty, nay more, is absolutely infallible. It is enthusiasm, says Cousin, who defines inspiration by that term, that is, *God in us*.¹

How does M. Cousin and Mr. Morell, who also adopts and defends all this, prove the impersonality of the reason? They do not prove it—they merely affirm it. The whole thing is an assumption; for surely it is no proof of the impersonality and divinity of reason to

¹ *Gods in nous*. See "Histoire de la Philosophie," 2 s. Tome II. p. 135.

say, that it is not under the control of the will or the affections, or that it has its own sphere and its own laws.¹

Now, we respectfully ask, can such a position touching reason in man, be entertained except on the ground of subjective pantheism? Is reason, that which is highest in man, really not himself, but God? Is the soul of man finite by its personality, infinite by its reason? In a word, is it God in humanity, as Hegel also teaches, who thinks, and thus comes into consciousness and joy, in the palpitating spirit of the human race? In a word, are God and humanity one?

That the human spirit is so constituted as to form not only ideas according to sense, but ideas according to spirit, in a word, that it is endowed with the capacity of forming fundamental and universal axioms, which are the basis of all conviction, we cheerfully grant. But to assume that reason in man is the absolute and universal Reason, in other words, God; for God and universal Reason are one, is assuming one of the fundamental positions of Spinoza and Hegel, namely, that thought is absolute and divine, or, that Being and Thought are one.² It makes man literally nothing, except as a manifestation or expression of God. Logically carried out, it would establish the complete identity of all things, and swallow up mind and matter, the universe and man, in an absolute, universal spiritualism.

But Cousin's great claim to distinction, as an original thinker, is said to be his mode of crossing the chasm between the finite and the infinite, by means of "the impersonal Reason." This, then, will test the worth and power of his philosophy: for this is the grand problem, the *pons asinorum* of metaphysics. Let it be remembered, however, that simply to assume the two points or poles of this double fact, and the relation between them, is not to solve the problem. Any one can do that, and leave the whole question just where it was before. The solution sought, must show how the one has sprung from the other, and in what sense the one is involved in the other, especially how finite beings are dependent, and yet not dependent, as in the case of free agents, upon the infinite Being—how they are united, and yet separate, one and yet many. In a word, the problem to be solved is, how can there be unity and yet duality, or plurality, God and yet man? Are both, or all of these, in the higher elements of their existence, *identical*, the difference between them being only apparent

¹ Morell Hist. of Phil., p. 54. Compare p. 649 et seq.

² Indeed, Morell admits that, in his general positions upon this subject, Cousin is only "treading in the footsteps of his German predecessors."—Hist. Phil., p. 649.

and incidental? Is reason, for example, which gives to man his peculiar distinction in the scale of being, only God as the real essence and substratum of the human soul, and is it through this medium we reach the absolute, and thus identify ourselves with all that exists? Are Reason and Being one, and is God really infinite and finite at once; in other words, the All, not in a popular and moral, but absolute and metaphysical sense?

This, we maintain, is the real theory of M. Cousin. Through impersonal reason in man, he claims to reach the absolute, the infinite and eternal. Having risen to this elevation, how does he construct the universe of finite beings and finite forms? In a word, how does he solve the great problem to which we have referred, and briefly described as the problem of creation? Does God create out of nothing? No, says M. Cousin, God creates out of himself, he creates out of a creative energy. It is his nature to create. God is a cause, a cause which must necessarily pass into effect, which therefore eternally passes into effect.¹ Very well; but how? Please to solve the problem scientifically. How passes the infinite into the finite, mind into matter, God into man and angels? In other words, how does God, from his own spiritual and creative energy, construct the outward universe of finite beings and finite forms? It would seem to most persons an inscrutable mystery, and certainly no metaphysician, in ancient or in modern times, has made the slightest approach to its solution. M. Cousin, however, considers it the easiest thing imaginable. A few strokes of his facile and elegant pen are sufficient to reveal the mighty secret. "To create," says he, "is a thing not difficult to conceive, for it is a thing which we do every moment; in fact, we create whenever we perform a free action. I will, I form a resolution, I form another and another, I modify it, I suspend it, I prosecute it. What is it that I do? I produce an effect, which I refer to myself as its cause, as its only cause; so that, with reference to this effect I seek no cause above and beyond myself. This is to create. We create a free action, we create it, I say; for we impute it only to ourselves. It was not; it begins to be, by virtue of that principle of causality which we possess. Thus, to cause is to create; but with what? with nothing? By no means. On the contrary, with that which constitutes the very basis of our being. Man does not draw forth from nonentity, the act which he has not yet done, and which he is about to do; he draws it forth from the power which

¹ It will be seen that Cousin here endorses one of Spinoza's fundamental errors.

he has to do it, that is, from himself. Here is a type of a creation. The divine creation is the same in its nature.¹ God, if he is a cause, can create; and if he is an absolute cause, he cannot but create; and in creating the universe, he does not draw it forth from nonentity, which does not exist, which is only a word; he draws it from himself; for that power of causation and of creation, of which we feeble men possess a portion; and all the difference between our creation and that of God, is the general difference between God and man, the difference between the Supreme and Absolute Cause, and a relative, secondary cause."²

Well may we exclaim, as we gaze upon this product of the laboring mountain, What! is this all? Is creation nothing more than action, and especially a necessary, absolute, eternal action? Such is Cousin's position, and such, too, is Spinoza's. I move my hand—I trace lines upon paper;—is this creation? Does this bear even the remotest affinity, except in the idea of cause, to the Divine production of the universe, not from preëxistent materials, but from nothingness, that is to say, from God himself? You build a house, that is an act, or series of acts, which have a cause, a voluntary cause. Is it then a creation? Does it bear any proper analogy to the creative energy of God, springing, at his infinite volition, into worlds of light and beauty, or constructing, by a process utterly unknown to man, the numberless forms of concrete being? *Let there be light, and there was light!* God said, Let us make man in our image; and man, the lord of creation, walked in glory and in joy through the groves of Eden. Can man do such a thing as that; nay, can he form even the slightest conjecture as to the rationalé or mode of its production. We talk metaphorically of poetical creations and what not; but who, in his sober senses, believes that any one creates in the same sense that God creates? Is Milton divine? Great indeed, and so to speak inspired, but as incapable as a Hottentot, of creating a single ray of light, the petal of a flower, or the down upon an insect's wing. Creation, forsooth, it does come, on Cousin's notions, to a very small affair.

But, no, the chasm between the finite and the infinite cannot be crossed at this rate. A pretty figure of speech, or a handsome play upon words, does not solve the problem of the creation.

¹ To create "out of nothing," is not what Cousin represents it to be, when the expression is used by intelligent persons. It does not mean the production of an effect, without a cause; for, in this sense, *out of nothing, nothing comes*; it means simply to create, not out of pre-existent materials, but by an inherent creative power.

² Cours de l'Histoire de la Phil. (Introduction,) pp. 101, 102.

But Cousin admits that God creates; that is a good deal for a philosopher who goes into raptures at the name of Benedict Spinoza; and yet by the very terms it is quite evident that he denies it. God it seems, according to Cousin, is an absolute, necessary and eternal cause, or creative force, which cannot but pass into effect. The cause then exists for the effect, is controlled by the effect. Whence it follows, as Cousin avows, that God is "creating without cessation and infinitely." God then *must create*—this is his characteristic according to Cousin. He has no real choice in the matter; and the idea of a creation in time, a creation which has a beginning, is denied. The cause must pass into the effect whether it will or no; indeed, it was always cause, always effect. In which case creation is not, properly speaking, a *work*, but an *energy* or *act*, a necessary, perpetual, everlasting act. Cousin may admit, that God is first in the order of ideas, but in reality *creation* is as eternal as God, and can never be separate from God. God and the universe are eternally one. The whole is like the genesis of thought; subject and object, infinite and finite, go together, so to speak, necessitate and involve each other. Once more, then, thought and being are identical. God and nature are one, but one as subject and object, cause and effect. Hence Cousin's *Trinity*, bearing a striking resemblance to Hegel's; God absolute, and God conditioned, or God in himself, and God in the universe, and the relation between them, producing unity. Human consciousness has "three momenta"—a reflected Trinity, *unity*, *multiplicity* and the *relation* between them. So also, in God, according to Cousin, there is first, the absolute unity—then creation or plurality, and the relation between them. "The unity of the Triplicity, alone, is real; and at the same time this unity would utterly perish, if limited to either of the three elements which are necessary to its existence; they have all the same logical value and constitute one indecomposable unity. What is this unity? The divine intelligence itself. Up to this height, gentlemen, does our intelligence upon the wings of ideas—to speak with Plato—elevate itself. Here is that thrice holy God, whom the family of man recognises and adores, and before whom the octogenary author of the *Système du Monde*, bowed and uncovered his head, whenever he was named."¹

Here, then, in clear daylight, is Cousin's idealism, and notwithstanding all his protests, his pantheism, not indeed the vulgar pantheism which deifies only the outward creation, but a pantheism as

¹ "Histoire de la Philos." (Introduction), p. 95.

decided as that of Spinoza and Hegel. The result, on the fairest logical grounds is inevitable. God at last is *the All*, at once finite and infinite, cause and effect, immensity and space, mind and matter, divinity and humanity, eternity and time. Hence, with a boldness which is almost startling, he says: "God is at once true and real, at once substance and cause, always substance and always cause, being substance only just so far as he is cause, and cause only just so far as he is substance; that is to say, being absolute cause, one and many, eternity and time, space and number, essence and life, indivisibility and totality, principle, end and centre, at the summit of being, and at its lowest degree, infinite and finite together, triple in a word, that is to say, at the same time, God, nature and humanity. Indeed, if God be not everything, he is nothing."¹ Cousin, indeed, claims to believe in a personal God — a being of intelligence and will; but inconsistently and illogically, provided his language is to be taken in its ordinary sense. Protest against it as he may, an absolute pantheism, which he speaks of as "the bugbear of feeble imaginations" has swept him within its fathomless depths.

The fact is, Cousin, with all his fine genius and attainments, is caught in the snare of a bewildering Ontology. Adopting the fundamental error of the identity of being and thought, of reason and God, and discarding the very possibility of mystery, he speculates as if he were in the confidence of Jehovah, and had assisted at the creation of the world. He makes no account of the limited powers and resources of man, none especially of his imperfect and sinful condition. His system, therefore, imposing and beautiful as it may be, is constructed upon the false foundations of the German ontology. His psychology, in which are many interesting details, is an after-thought, brought in to buttress the falling fabric, but only lending it imaginary support. Embodying many fine details, and splendid historical criticism, it is nothing more than an artificial *Eclecticism*, in other words, a piece of magnificent patchwork.

Never ought it to be forgotten that ideas are not facts; and an ideal philosophy, however logical and imposing, must finally be brought to the test of reality. One theory after another may be

¹ "Fragmens Philosophiques," Preface. Quoted at p. 120 of the "Introduction à l'Hist. de Philos." Cousin claims to reject pantheism, but he explains it as the deification only of the outward or material world. In this respect his views have been greatly misunderstood. For, while this pantheism may be rejected, and proofs upon proofs of the fact cited from his works, he may reserve his faith for another form of pantheism, more beautiful, but equally false.

projected, like meteors on the brow of night, and men may stare and shout, but the calm heavens roll on in their silent majesty, and mock our folly from afar. The fact is, the powers of man are bounded. He may descry, — he may believe, — he may adore, the primal Source of being, the absolute and infinite Cause of all that exists; but he cannot make it a science or a philosophy. The attempt to do so has uniformly failed, will forever fail. It plunges the mind into an inextricable labyrinth of thought from which there is no escape. In this boundless “antrum,” or as it were, illimitable forest, philosophy, like Polyphemus of old, has wildly wandered, with vast and gigantic powers, but struck with a fatal blindness, and rushing into inevitable destruction.

On the other hand, instructed by common sense and Divine Revelation, as to the necessary limits of the human mind, and taking things as they are, acting upon the spontaneous impulses of a purified soul, above all, guided by the Holy Spirit, the most illiterate Christian, though a child, often knows more of God, of himself, and of the universe, than the profoundest philosopher. Guided by knowledge and love, conveyed to the world through the mission of Christ, he is made “to lie down in green pastures, and led beside the still waters,” while the proud metaphysician stumbles and perishes “on the dark mountains.” Hence, says Isaac Barrow, quoting, in combination several passages from Chrysostom, “by virtue of faith, rustic and mechanic idiots¹ do, in true knowledge, surpass the most refined wits, and children prove wiser than old philosophers; an idiot can tell us that which a learned infidel doth not know; a child can assure us that, wherein a deep philosopher is not resolved — for, ask a boor, ask a boy educated in our religion, who made him; he will tell you, the Almighty God — which is more than Aristotle or Democritus would have told. Demand of him, why he was made; he will answer you, to serve and glorify his Maker — and hardly would Pythagoras or Plato answered so wisely. Examine him concerning his soul; he will aver that it is immortal, that it shall undergo a judgment after this life, that accordingly it shall abide in a state of bliss or misery everlasting — about which points, neither Socrates nor Seneca could assure anything. Inquire of him, how things are upheld, how governed and ordered; he presently will reply, by the powerful hand and wise providence of God — whereas, among philosophers, one would ascribe all events to the current of fate, another to the tides

¹ Idiotal — common, ignorant persons.

of fortune; one to the blind influences of the stars, another to a confused jumble of atoms. Pose him about the main points of morality and duty; and he will, in a few words, better inform you than Cicero or Epictetus, than Aristotle or Plutarch, in their large tracts or voluminous discourses."¹

ARTICLE III.

RELIGIOUS BIBLICAL INSTRUCTION AND PASTORAL SUPERVISION IN COLLEGES.

By C. E. Stowe, D. D., Bowdoin College.

WHO can tell what tender affections, what earnest hopes, what fond anticipations are concentrated on a group of young men such as is found in all our colleges? Could we see the anxious, throbbing, agonizing hearts — the father's earnestness, the mother's solicitude, the sister's love — could we make present to ourselves the pride and joy which are diffused through the family circle by the young student's success and good reputation — or the mortification, distress and bitter disappointment which follow his failure and shame — we should look upon every member of college, of whatever character, as an object of deep and permanent interest.

Whatever he may be in himself, he holds relations to others which invest him with dignity and importance. Let any man watch the yearnings of his own soul towards his own son, and then let him remember that what his son is to him, the sons of other parents are to them, and he never can despise any one who is a father's or a mother's child.

Important as every young man is to his family friends, considered in reference to himself, he is still more important, still more interesting. *There* is an immortal soul, destined to a never ending existence — and what an existence! What capacities of enjoyment — what susceptibilities to suffering! What powers in that one mind to be developed or crushed — to be a source of joy to the possessor, or of misery unutterable — and that forever! And how delicate the mental and moral structure! How liable to injury! In what imminent

¹ Barrow's Works, Vol. II. p. 86, Edin. Edition.