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ARTICLE I.—*The Works of John Robinson, Pastor of the Pilgrim Fathers. With a Memoir and Annotations, by* ROBERT ASHTON, Secretary of the Congregational Board, London. 3 vols. 12mo. pp. 471, 506, 516. Boston: Doctrinal Tract and Book Society. 1851.

WE hold ourselves under lasting obligations to the Congregational Union of England and Wales for the republication of these works; and to the Congregational Board of Publication in this country, for their introduction here. It is one of the signs of good which we are ever ready to hail from New England.

Among all Congregationalists or Independents, there is perhaps no name that stands higher than that of John Robinson. "Both English and American Independents look with affectionate interest to Leyden as the refuge and home of their predecessors; and to Mr. Robinson as their father and friend."* "The father of New England Congregationalists," is a term by which he is continually recognized among us.

Robinson was born in the year 1575. The precise place of his birth is uncertain. It was probably in Lincolnshire. He was graduated at Cambridge, and commenced his public labours in the Church of England. Dissenting from the ceremonies, the vestments, &c., of the Church, he was suspended. It was

* Vol. I. page 5.

they were better than Rous, who, by the way, was no Scotch Presbyterian? Must he be told that there are other Presbyterians, besides those of Great Britain and America? Has he intentionally or unintentionally neglected all notice of the German poets of the Reformed Church, of whom at least twenty, including the two Blaurers, are in Wackernagel's great collection? But we will not pursue a sophism which stands so weakly on its legs, nor attempt to father Doddridge's heaviness of verse upon his creed respecting Church Government.

The learned and excellent man concerning whom we have been writing, died in 1751, in the fiftieth year of his age. When the Rev. Samuel Davies was in England, two or three years later, he found the grief of the non-conformists still fresh, for the loss of this their great ornament. But he also found that many of Doddridge's pupils had "imbibed the modern sentiments in divinity."

by
Hymen Atwater

ART. V.—*Institutes of Metaphysic the Theory of Knowing and Being.* By I. F. FERRIER, A. B., OXON. Professor of Moral Philosophy and Political Economy, St. Andrews. Second edition. William Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London. 1856.

THE term Idealism is familiar to all who have the slightest knowledge of the great questions and schools of philosophy. It has not, however, been used in a constant and uniform signification. It has been sometimes employed to mark a scheme simply opposed to sensualism or materialism, because it recognizes the existence of something more than matter, or contends that the soul has inlets of knowledge higher than the senses. With such Idealism we have no controversy. It is our own creed. It is quite another scheme which philosophic, and now indeed, common usage, generally denotes by this term. We understand by Idealism a philosophic theory, which denies to matter, including the whole material universe, any existence independent of, or separate from the mind which apprehends it.

Thus, to evaporate matter into ideas, or acts and states of mind, is Idealism. It is difficult to go thus far, and stop short of resolving all things into pure subjectivity, a sort of infinite ego, of whose consciousness all things are phenomena, in a word, Monism or Pantheism. Some, like good Bishop Berkeley, have paused before plunging into this bottomless profound. The greater number of idealists, however, who have been charmed thus far within the sweep of this maddening vortex, have been borne down, almost without a pause, to its nethermost "hell of waters." If there is good reason for regarding matter as only a phenomenon of consciousness, of the mind or ego, the same reasons are no less stringent for classing all known objects and truths in this category. They are all forms or manifestations of the same radical substance. Whether this one substance be regarded as the ego in the person perceiving, or the universal, absolute ego, manifesting himself in the consciousness of the individual of the race, the result is substantially the same. In either case we have the doctrine of All-One.

This Idealism, so far as it has fallen under our notice, is of three kinds, which may be conveniently distinguished, according to the methods pursued in supporting it, as the empirical, the transcendental, and the demonstrative. The empirical is that which reasons from our supposed experience as to the actual character of our knowing. It affirms that, in fact, *we* know nothing but our own mental states; therefore we know nothing more than these; therefore we know nothing of any material worlds over and above these mental states. But, while it affirms this as a fact with regard to *our* intelligence, it does not affirm it to be a necessary characteristic of all possible knowing, by any possible intellect. God and other grades of creatures may have powers of knowing what we, with our faculties, cannot know, *i. e.* the independent existence of matter. This was the idealism of Berkeley. Yet, even Berkeley sometimes uses language which would seem to imply the utter impossibility of material things existing out of the mind. He says, "As to what is said of the absolute existence of unthinking things, without any relation to their being perceived, that seems perfectly unintelligible. Their *esse* is *percipi*, nor is it possible they should have any existence out of the minds of the thinking

beings who perceive them." Further on, he speaks of this supposed possibility as involving a "manifest contradiction." While this seems to deny the *possibility* of any other than ideal existence to matter, yet from the general scope of his writings, it is reasonable to conclude, with Professor Ferrier, that he affirmed this relatively to human intelligence; not presuming with Mr. Ferrier to affirm it impossible *in rerum natura*, and to every possible intelligence. It had its basis in the theories of sense-perception, generally current before the time of Reid. It was an almost undisputed doctrine, that the mind does not cognize external objects immediately. It discerns only ideas of such objects. And through the medium of these ideas, it, by inference or intuition, comes to the belief of the reality of external objects corresponding to them. The process by which we know external things was often vaguely apprehended, without any distinct theory, only that it seems to have been taken for granted that we have no immediate perception of anything but our own ideas or mental states. On this foundation some reared systematic idealism, of whom Berkeley may be taken as the representative. Others built upon it the fabric of scepticism as to the certainty of any knowledge, and the trustworthiness of any belief. Of this class David Hume may be taken as the type. His dexterous use of this principle to accomplish his favourite work of undermining all faith, roused Reid and Kant to a new investigation of the faculties of the mind, and the extent and modes of its intelligence. The former confirmed that sound and safe habit of British thinking, which is intolerant of any pretended philosophy that discredits the original and intuitive beliefs of the human race. The latter, while he demolished the sensual scheme, and gave an autonomic authority to moral and super-sensual ideas, nevertheless subverted the legitimate confidence due to the senses as avenues of knowledge. He started that course of subjective, transcendental speculation, which, in the hands of Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, absorbed all objects known or thought of into the subject knowing or thinking, and developed itself as transcendental idealism, and unmitigated pantheism. This transcendental idealism is fitly so named, because in its methods it really, if not avowedly and boastfully, overflies all the recognized metes and bounds of

reason, and finds its solutions in some so-called "intellectual intuition" or other blind leap into that chaotic speculation which transcends all normal human insight. This account of this system is sufficiently justified by the following representations of Professor Ferrier, who undertakes to establish clearly and systematically, what Transcendentalism gives out in misty shadowings. So far as they imply commendation, we of course do not vouch for them.

"Passing over at present all intermediate approximations, we find anticipations of this first proposition, (on which Professor Ferrier rears his whole system,) in the writings of the philosophers of Germany. It puts in no claim to novelty, however novel may be the uses to which these Institutes apply it. Kant had glimpses of the truth; but his remarks are confused in the extreme in regard to what he calls the unity (analytic and synthetic) of consciousness. This is one of the few places in his works from which no meaning can be extracted. In his hands the principle (that we ourselves are a part of all we apprehend) answered no purpose at all. It died in the act of being born, and was buried under a mass of subordinate considerations before it can be said even to have breathed. Fichte got hold of it and lost it—got hold of it and lost it again, through a series of eight or ten different publications, in which the truth slips through his fingers when it seems just on the point of being turned to some account. Schelling promised magnificent operations in the hey-day of his youth, on a basis very similar to that laid down in this first proposition. But the world has been waiting for the fulfilment of these promises, for the fruits of that exuberant blossom, during a period of fifty years. * * * Hegel, but who has ever yet uttered one intelligent word about Hegel? Not any of his countrymen—not any foreigner—seldom even himself, with peaks here and there, more lucent than the sun, his intervals are filled with a sea of darkness, unnavigable by the aid of any compass, and an atmosphere or rather vacuum, in which no human intellect can breathe. * * A much less intellectual effort would be required to find out the truth for one's self than to understand his exposition of it. Hegel's faults, however, and those of his predecessors subsequent to Kant, lie, certainly, not in the matter,

but only in the manner of their compositions. Admirable in the substance, and spirit, and direction of their speculations, they are painfully deficient in the accomplishment of intelligible speech, and inhumanly negligent of all the arts by which alone the processes and results of philosophical research can be recommended to the attention of mankind." Pp. 94-6.

These criticisms by an admirer of the spirit and aim, fully sustain all that we assert in regard to the methods of the transcendental philosophy, as passing beyond any normal sphere of human consciousness and intelligence.

This brings us to the third type of idealism developed by Professor Ferrier, in the volume under review. We have called it demonstrative idealism, because the author attempts to prove, by a series of demonstrations, successively flowing from each other, by a necessity as stringent as the propositions of Euclid, that nothing can be known, or exist, dissevered from the self, or ego, or percipient mind. He is not content, with the empirical idealists, to maintain that this *is* so with respect to all human knowledge: nor does he lose himself in the dark platitudes of transcendental metaphysic; but he undertakes and claims to prove that this *must* be so, from the necessary laws of thinking, which are binding, not only on human, but upon all possible intelligence. He claims to have established his position, that matter cannot be separate or independent from the percipient mind, by a chain of reasoning, from a single necessary first truth, just as irrefragable as that by which, from the first axioms of geometry, we prove the three angles of a triangle equal to two right angles. According to him, close philosophic reasoning, which corrects the inadvertencies of ordinary thinking, shows any other view to be as unthinkable, as much a *surd* in contradiction of the necessary laws of thought, as that two straight lines should enclose a space. This he does, not in the barbarous and unintelligible nomenclature of German transcendentalists, but in clear, rich, vigorous and beautiful English. He resembles Cousin and Morell in his command of that luminous and glowing diction, which have done far more to commend continental metaphysics to the British and the American mind, than could have been accomplished by the cumbrous obscurities of their German masters for ages

and generations. Whatever else may be complained of, none at all familiar with questions of this sort, can complain that he does not make himself intelligible.

And it must be conceded, that in thus attempting a demonstration of idealism by a clear exhibition of all the parts and steps thereof, in a style as lucid as Reid, and after the manner of the most rigid, mathematical and syllogistical reasoning; as a doctrine, the opposite of which must be absurd not only to our intelligence, but to all intelligence, from its very nature as intelligence, the author has taken a stride as vast as it is bold, in advance of previous speculators. Of this he is fully conscious. So far from shrinking from such a work, he glories in it, and magnifies his office. He labours under no burdensome feeling of responsibility, if he be wrong. He rather triumphs in the undoubting assurance that he cannot be wrong, and has achieved the grand problem of philosophy. To doubt that he has brought to light the primal truth, and cast his sounding line to the very bottom of the *scientia scientiarum*, would be as absurd to him, as that two and two are six. To the consequences he is sublimely indifferent. He goes remorselessly where his logic carries him. It is no concern of his, if he destroys all the foundations of human faith, hope and action. But it is time he should speak for himself.

“What philosophy is called upon to exhibit is not what any individual may wish or choose to think, but what thinking itself thinks, whenever it is permitted to go forth free, unimpeded, guided by no law except the determination to go whithersoever its own current may carry it, and *to see the end*, turning up with unswerving ploughshare, whatever it may encounter in its onward course, trying all things by the test of a remorseless logic, and scanning with indifference the havoc it may work among the edifices of established opinion, or the treasures it may bring to light among the solitary haunts of disregarded truth.” Few philosophers have conformed more “remorselessly” to their own ideal. It is only casually that he betrays any shrinking from the most destructive results of his system. And he treats not only the natural intuitive beliefs of men, but the whole science of Psychology which defines and validates them, with the flippant contempt due to childish delusions or

philosophic quackery. This exuberant scorn, over and over again vented in the most opprobrious epithets, for the methods of a science, which, especially in modern times, has tasked the mightiest intellects of our race, simply because its conclusions annihilate his own scheme, is among the most discreditable features of the work. He speaks of the science of the human mind as having "for its object, nobody knows what, some hopeless inquiry about 'faculties,' and all that sort of rubbish," p. 37. He speaks of the doctrine that "mere material things have, or may have a true and independent being, as a part of the *debris* of a defunct and exploded psychology!" p. 473. Professor Ferrier claims to demolish the whole fabric by reasoning out to its logical results a single assumption, on which his whole work is founded, and without which, he himself being judge, it is *brutum fulmen*. This is assuming to do a great deal. To think of overturning all the principles reached by the great masters of our race, as the result of life-long inquiry into what our knowing and faculties of knowing actually are, by a single argument reasoned out from a single principle, aiming to show *a priori* what our knowing *must* be, and that it must be the opposite of what human consciousness tested by ages of philosophic inquiry declares it to be,—this indeed, is no humble project. Professor Ferrier is the last to think it so.* He exults in the grandeur of his work, and the vastness of the ruins it has left. He says: "If any flaw can be detected in this reasoning, its author will be the first to admit that these Institutes are, from beginning to end, a mere rope of sand; but if no flaw can be detected in it, he begs to crave for them the acknowledgment that they are a chain of adamant." p. 422. The branch of this alternative, which relates to himself, he is clearly bound by. But we by no means admit his right to impose the opposite upon others. If a man claims to have proved metaphysically that fire will not consume wood, and calls upon us

* Says the author: "The best way of attaining to correct opinions on most metaphysical subjects, is by finding out what has been said on any given point by the psychologists, and then by saying the very opposite. In such cases we are sure to be right in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred. Indeed, no better receipt than this can be prescribed for those who are desirous of compassing the truth." Is not this the language of the sciolist rather than the genuine philosopher?

either to find a flaw in his reasoning, or to set our houses on fire, we respectfully decline the proposal. We deny his jurisdiction. No man has a right to impose such an alternative, and we have no right to accept it. There is still another, which we are not only at liberty, but are bound to take in preference. It is to presume that there is and must be some flaw in his reasoning, and that, if we knew all the facts in the case, this flaw would be palpable, whether we can now detect it or not. The same is true of all "reasoned" attacks upon first truths, of which we are as intimately conscious as of our own existence. There have been a thousand "reasoned" attempts to disprove free agency and responsibility, the providence of God, the existence of any law of right or moral obligation more than a regard to our own happiness, the flaws in which were far less palpable, at first sight, than in Professor Ferrier's great demonstration. What then? Are men to distrust their own consciousness, and dehumanize themselves, in obedience to some pretended chain of metaphysical demonstration, which, among a hundred of adamant, conceals one wooden link, as they know full well, whether they can point it out or not? No; these original beliefs will hold their ground against all attempts to displace them by speculation. Even the speculatists who discard them, betray, in manifold ways, an underlying faith in them, which triumphs over their speculations. Are we then to give up our faith in the separate and independent existence of ourselves, and the objects which we know without us, to merge ourselves in nature, and nature in ourselves, because we cannot show up the flaw in his demonstrations? But it is time to show, from the author's own statements, just what he undertakes to prove, and the means by which he prosecutes this attempt.

The following passages indicate with sufficient clearness the conclusions which he attempts and professes to establish. "A rigorous inquisition into the structure of the known and knowable, shows that *oneself* must always be a part of everything that is known or knowable. * * Thus many things—indeed, everything—which we heretofore regarded as objects of cognition, turn out, on examination, to be only *part-objects* of cognition," p. 505.

“And, finally, it must be borne in mind that although all cognition has been characterized by this system as a fusion or synthesis of two contradictories, (the ego and non-ego) *i. e.* of two elements, which out of relation to each other, are necessarily unknowable—this does not mean that the synthesis is brought about by the union of two elements, which *existed* in a state of separation *previous* to the formation of the synthesis. The synthesis is the primary or original; the analysis is the secondary or posterior.” Thus the mutual in-being of mind, and what it knows as requisite to the existence or conception of either, is the original and necessary condition of their existence. It is no artificial union of two elements previously separate. The analysis by which we conceive them as two factors of cognition or existence, is indeed a mere artificial product of our thinking. His tenth proposition in *Ontology* is: “Absolute Existence is the synthesis of subject and object—the union of the universal and particular—the concretion of the ego and non-ego: in other words, the only true, real, and independent existences are minds, together with that which they apprehend. * * This proposition solves the problem of ontology. * * If we are cognizant of Absolute Existence, it must be object *plus* subject, because this, and this alone is what any intelligence can know. If we are ignorant of Absolute Existence, it must be still object *plus* subject, because we can be ignorant only of what can be known—and object *plus* subject is what alone can be known, (*i. e.* by any possible intelligence.) Thus the concluding truth of the ontology is demonstratively established, and comes out all the same, whether we claim a knowledge, or avow an ignorance, of that which truly exists. Thus the ultimate end of the system is compassed—compassed by legitimate means, and its crowning pledge triumphantly redeemed.”

“The solution of the ontological problem affords, moreover, an answer to the ultimate question of philosophy—What is truth? Whatever absolutely is, is true. The question therefore, is, but what absolutely is? And the answer, as now declared, is, that object *plus* subject, is what absolutely is—that this, and this alone, really exists. This synthesis, accordingly is THE

TRUTH; the ground, below which there is neither anything nor nothing." Pp. 511-13.

"These points having been demonstratively established, it is conceived that people should have now no difficulty in understanding how oneself or the ego must form a part of everything which really and truly *exists*. * * Expressed more popularly, the conclusion is that every true and absolute existence is a consciousness, together with its contents, whatever those contents may be." Pp. 514-15. To prevent mistake, we observe that the author uses the word Absolute with reference to existence, as equivalent to true or real. Thus, he says, "the absolutely existent which each of us is individually cognizant of, is himself apprehending things *by the senses*." P. 517. Prop. 6, of the chapter on Ontology is thus enunciated. "Absolute existence is not matter *per se*; in other words, *mere* material things have no true and independent Being." P. 472.

The whole work, with its thirty-nine formal propositions, and corresponding demonstrations, explanations, and counter-propositions, drawn out for the purpose of showing precisely what the author denies, as well as what he maintains, culminates in the following grand finale, which needs little exegesis, beyond what we shall give in his own words. It is the last formal proposition of the book.

"All absolute existences are contingent, *except one*; in other words, there is One, but only one, Absolute Existence, which is strictly *necessary*; and that existence is a supreme, and infinite, and everlasting Mind, in synthesis with all things," p. 522. "Here metaphysics stop; here ontology is merged in theology. Philosophy has accomplished her final work; she has reached by strict demonstration the central law of all reason, (the necessity, namely, of thinking an infinite and eternal Ego in synthesis with all things;) and that law she lays down as the basis of all religion," p. 525. The nature of this synthesis of the Infinite and Eternal Ego with all things, is not merely that he is their Creator, Upholder, and Disposer, but that he is *a part of* them, as the author everywhere sets forth, when explaining the synthesis of any ego with what it apprehends. And since he as often affirms that the ego is the only permanent and invariable element in cognition, and so in exist-

ence, and all else is fleeting and accidental, it follows that God is the only permanent element in whatever exists, and that man, nature, and the universe, have no existence which is not his existence. All is God or phenomena of God. If there be any ranker pantheism than this, we have not found it. And we do not see why this scheme does not involve the transcendental pantheistic notion, that the ego in each man is the Absolute or Universal Ego coming into consciousness. If it can be shown in any respect to differ from this, we do not see that the difference is of any moment. And, beyond all question, if this scheme be true, Professor Ferrier may well be bold, not only to suggest, as he does, but to aver, that "nothing but error comes to us from nature; that the ordinary operation of our faculties involves us in interminable contradictions." Assuredly, if anything like this be true, nature, including our natural faculties, and psychology, which ascertains them and their workings, is a "liar from the beginning."

Having shown what our author professes to prove, we shall take the liberty, before we adopt his startling conclusions, to inquire by what evidence he proves it. In doing this, he offers some forty demonstrations in three chapters, on the theory, 1, of Knowledge, 2, of Ignorance, 3, of Being, which he respectively denominates Epistemology, Agnology, Ontology. A single glance reveals the fact, that the whole stands or falls with the first proposition or two on the subject of knowledge, or on the necessary constituents of every knowable thing. He says of his Institutes: "They are reasoned, and they are true. They are reasoned, inasmuch as their conclusions follow necessarily and inevitably from their initial principle; and they are true, inasmuch as their initial principle is a necessary truth or law of reason," p. 527. What then is this initial principle, this alleged necessary truth or law of reason? He starts with the following proposition, which he pronounces the "primary law or condition of all knowledge." "Along with whatever any intelligence knows, it must, as the ground or condition of its knowledge, have some cognizance of *itself*." This is given rather as a primary postulate, on which the subsequent catena of demonstrations is founded. This is the *ens unum in omnibus notitiis*, the one feature in all intelligence, from which

its radical traits must be deduced. How far this is so, and with what qualifications it is to be admitted, will be considered, when we ascertain the sense in which the author holds it, from the portentous conclusions he derives from it. This appears in the second proposition, which he thus states: "The object of knowledge, whatever it may be, is always something more than what is naturally or usually regarded as the object. It always is, and must be, the object, with the addition of one's self—object *plus* subject—thing or thought, *mecum*. Self is an integral and essential part of every object of cognition." As this proposition is the hinge of the whole, we add the author's

DEMONSTRATION.

"It has already been established as the condition of all knowledge, that a thing can be known only provided the intelligence which apprehends it knows itself at the same time. But if a thing can be known only provided oneself be known along with it; it follows that the thing (or thought) and oneself *together* must, in every case, be the object, the true and complete object of knowledge; in other words, it follows that that which we know always is and must be object *plus* subject, object *cum alio*, thing or thought with an addition to it, which addition is the *me*. Self, therefore, is an essential and integral part of every object of cognition. Or, again, suppose a case in which a thing or a thought is apprehended, without the *me* being apprehended along with it. This would contradict proposition I., which has fixed the knowledge of self as the condition of all knowledge. But Proposition I. is established, and therefore the *me* must in all cases form a part of that which we know, and the 'only object which any intelligence ever has, or ever can have any cognizance of, is itself in union with whatever it apprehends.'" Pp. 97-8.

What the author intends by this demonstration, appears not only on its face, but from his explanations, and the doctrines which he puts in contrast with it. Thus he says, "The ordinary distinction of subject and object in which they are contrasted as the knowing and the known, and in which the subject is virtually denied to be any part of the object of our knowledge, is erroneous and contradictory, and has had a most mischievous effect on the growth and fortunes of philosophy,"

p. 99. "We are cognizant of ourselves and of a number of surrounding objects. We look upon ourselves as numerically different from each of these, just as each of them is numerically different from its neighbours. That is our ordinary way of counting. The speculative computation is quite different. Each of the things is always that thing *plus me*," p. 100. "Indeed to lay down the dualism of subject and object as complete and absolute, (that is as an out-and-out duality which is not also a unity,) which psychology not unfrequently does, is to extinguish every glimmering of the scientific reason," p. 116.

But while the subject and object are thus inseparably united, they are not undistinguishable, says this philosopher. A stick cannot have one end without another end joined to it. Yet they may be distinguished. A circumference of a circle cannot be detached, though it may be distinguished from its centre. The ego or mind cannot be disjoined from the objects of knowledge, though it may be distinguished. This view presents the scheme in its strongest, most plausible, and confounding aspect. But it is easily disposed of. Our appeal must be to every man's consciousness. A circle without centre and circumference, a stick without two ends, is indeed incogitable. Is a stone or a tree incogitable, except on the condition that it be at the time perceived by ourselves, or indeed any intelligence? Is it not the self-same, substantive, real thing, whether known or unknown by us? Does its existence depend for one moment on our perception of it? Is it not *because* it has, and *as* it has, this independent separate existence, that it is known or knowable by us as a distinct existence? And is it or can it be known as anything else, anything of which the percipient mind is a part?

This brings us at once to the real issue. What is the simple fact on which this formidable series of demonstrations is built? It is not merely that wherever there is knowledge, there must be a subject that knows, and an object that is known. Professor Ferrier would hardly strain our credulity to the point of believing that the necessary co-presence of two objects in order to some given result, makes them parts or complements of each other, either in cognition or existence. The junction of food and the vital principle is necessary to growth. The presence of air

and lungs is requisite to respiration. Is, therefore, food the vital principle, or air the lungs, or are they parts of each other, or is either inconceivable, impossible, or a non-existent without the other? Something more than this then must be alleged, or seem to be alleged. What is it? Why surely, that in knowing any object we must know ourselves. But to what extent is this true, and what conclusions does it warrant? It is true indeed that in knowing any object, we know that we know it. This is only saying that knowledge is a state of consciousness, that to know is indeed to know. But it is equally true that this reference to ourselves is ordinarily so latent and unobtrusive as to elude our notice. But be it more or less, what does it amount to? Put it in the form which Professor Ferrier has chosen in the following example. Let a man "suppose himself to be looking at something—a tree, for example; he will find that the true and total object of his mind is himself seeing the tree." Grant that all this occurs in the cognitive process. Even according to this representation, is not "seeing the tree" a condition pre-requisite, in the order of nature, if not of time, to his being cognizant of himself as seeing it? And does he not know that he sees it as an object distinct and separate from himself, whenever he knows himself as seeing it at all? If consciousness testifies to anything, it is that, so far as we know ourselves when we know the object tree, we know ourselves and the tree as not only mutually distinct, but separate and independent existences. The object of cognition *tree*, is no part of the object of cognition *myself*. They are in no wise parts of each other. That this is the deliverance of the consciousness of our race, and not only so, but of the philosophers who have devoted themselves to the rigid examination of their own consciousness and that of the race, Professor Ferrier does not affect to deny, though he strives to account for the fact without damage to his system. The whole foundation on which he builds his system, is the allegation that when we know other things, we know ourselves. Therefore self is a part of everything we know. As well might we say, that perceiving a horse, an ox, and an oak simultaneously, makes these objects of cognition parts of each other; and thence infer from an alleged synthesis in cognition, a synthesis of existence. On such a slender basis do this

“initial principle, and necessary law or truth of reason” on which is reared this stupendous structure of Idealism, rest. But we submit as an absolutely conclusive answer to the whole, the following statement of the question and issue by Sir William Hamilton, whose reasonings against the fundamental position of our author, we think it would have been respectful at least to notice; and all the more so, as they are the ablest which philosophical literature affords in so short a compass, and Professor Ferrier is understood to have been an aspirant to the chair made vacant by his death.

“In perception, consciousness gives as an ultimate fact, a *belief of the knowledge of something different from self*. As ultimate, this belief cannot be reduced to a higher principle; neither can it be truly analyzed into a double element. We only believe that this something *exists*, because we believe that *we know*, (are conscious of) this something as existing; the belief of the existence is necessarily involved in the *belief of the knowledge of the existence*. Both are original, or neither. Does consciousness deceive us in the latter, it necessarily deludes us in the former; and if the former, *though* a fact of consciousness be false, the latter, *because* a fact of consciousness, is not true. The beliefs contained in the two propositions; 1. *I believe that a material world exists*; 2. *I believe that I immediately know a material world existing*, (in other words,) *I believe that the external reality itself is the object of which I am conscious in perception*, though distinguished by philosophers, are thus virtually identical.”* Again, “in our perceptive consciousness, there is revealed as an ultimate fact, a *self*, and a *not-self*—each given as independent—each known only in antithesis to the other. No belief is more *intuitive, universal, immediate, or irresistible*, than that this antithesis is real and known to be; no belief, therefore, is more true.

“If the antithesis be illusive, *self* and *not-self*, *subject* and *object*, *I* and *thou*, are distinctions without a difference; and consciousness, so far from being the ‘internal voice of our Creator,’ is shown to be, like Satan, ‘a liar from the beginning.’”†

But Professor Ferrier in contradiction to this universal testi-

* Discussions in Philosophy and Literature, p. 93.

† *Id.* p. 100.

mony of consciousness, undertakes to reason us into the belief that there can be no *not-self*, of which self is not an essential and integral part. This is the consequence of a necessary law of reason, he contends, to deny which involves a contradiction. But if we cannot trust our consciousness here, when can we trust it? *Falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus.* If we cannot trust our immediate self-evidencing intuitions, how can we trust our lengthened processes of deduction and inference?

That the author should proceed from the premises he has thus attempted to establish, to argue, that matter *per se*, and the whole material universe are unknowable, and therefore non-existent, aside from the mind beholding it, is matter of course. Of course also, in common with all destructive thinkers, he pours contempt on the distinction between the primary and secondary qualities of matter, so fundamental in sound psychology and philosophy. This appears to be doomed to the perpetual assaults of sceptics, and especially idealists. Professor Ferrier dashes it aside by a stroke of the pen, as a "mere bubble on the sea of speculation, which ought now to be quietly suffered to break and die." He offers no refutation of it, however, except his standing demonstration that self must be a part of all it knows. The importance of this distinction in the controversy between idealists and their opponents is apparent. By the primary qualities of matter, we mean those which are perceived immediately through the senses, as belonging to it objectively, and which furthermore, our reason teaches us must inhere in it, from its very nature as substance occupying space. Such are extension, figure, mobility, solidity, &c. These qualities belong to all matter. They are discerned by sensitive perception in all matter. They are apprehended in our consciousness as being objective properties in all matter, and, in no manner, as subjective sensations in ourselves. Now, since matter is known to us only by its properties, it is clear that it can be known only as objective and outside of ourselves, through those properties that are so known, *i. e.* through the primary qualities.

The secondary qualities, on the other hand, are occult in the bodies to which they belong, and known only by inference from

the subjective sensations they produce in us, such *e. g.* are its odorous, sapid, calorific qualities. Heat and sweetness are subjective sensations within us, and, in the first instance, known only as such. But since they are known to arise on the presence, and to disappear in the absence, of certain bodies, they are inferred to arise from some properties in those bodies, in themselves occult, and known to us only through these subjective feelings which arise on occasion of their presence. Now, it is plain, that if all our immediate cognizance of matter consists in knowing sensations within us, to the exclusion of any direct and immediate knowledge of the properties of matter as objective and without us, we can have no knowledge of the separate and real existence of matter at all. We could never know its existence at all by its mere secondary qualities. It is because we have first known it as existing outside of ourselves, and all modifications of ourselves, that we are able to ascribe to it its secondary qualities. These would not be known at all, were it not that bodies in certain forms, previously known through their primary qualities, whenever present excite those sensations, which, because they then arise, we ascribe to some unknown property in these bodies as their source. But were it not for this antecedent knowledge of body by its primary properties, we should never look beyond ourselves for any external cause of these sensations. We should be utterly ignorant of the secondary qualities of body, and so of body itself, at all events as anything distinct from ourselves.

As those who consistently believe in a real (*i. e.* non-ideal) external world, therefore maintain this distinction as of capital importance, so all idealists task themselves for its overthrow. For if the primary properties of matter are, like the secondary, known only as sensations or subjective states within us, or as occult causes of such states, no valid ground remains for the belief of a real external world. We cannot refer these sensations, on this hypothesis, to any external object, because we know of no such object to which we can refer them. To annihilate this distinction then, is to identify matter with mind, to make all, either matter, or mind, or a *tertium quid*, which is neither matter nor mind. We are not surprised, therefore, that the great Organon of the Positive Philosophy assails this

distinction.* Compte is not a whit behind Professor Ferrier, in denouncing psychology as "illusory." Extremes meet: Materialists and Idealists are one in obliterating the line of demarkation between mind and matter. If these methods are so far alike, there is little to choose in their respective results. It is of little consequence whether they idealize nature or materialize the soul.

It is to be regretted that Brown, in what appears to us an ungenerous eagerness to disparage Reid's claims to originality, has laboured with partial success to envelope this distinction, together with the whole doctrine of Sensitive Perception, in confusion. Apparently bent on showing that Reid had discovered nothing valuable, he toils to show that we have no direct and immediate knowledge of matter or its primary properties, as without ourselves, and separate from our own sensations. Yet he asserts an intuitive and well-grounded belief of an external world outside of ourselves. It is true indeed that this belief is intuitive and well-grounded. But it could not be so if it were not founded on knowledge. It is because we *cognise* matter and its properties as without us, that we believe them to be so. Otherwise such belief would be impossible and inconceivable. The notion of natural beliefs contrary to natural knowledge, or not founded thereon, erects a dualism of intelligence, and guards the integrity of truth, by impeaching the veracity of consciousness, the only witness to the truth in the premises. Such a system opens the road to modern scepticism, idealistic, and materialistic.†

Nor do we think that Reid forfeits his title as the discoverer of a solid theory of External Perception, because in some of his arguments and illustrations, which Brown selects for his criticism, he is crude or inconsistent. As well might we say that Fulton or Fitch had no merit as inventors, because in their hands the steamboat was clumsy and rude, in comparison with our present floating palaces. He was the founder of a school in philosophy and psychology, sound, vigorous, and fruitful,

* Mills's *Logic*; Harper's edition, p. 41.

† See Brown's *Lectures on Reid's Theory of Perception and the Primary and Secondary Qualities of Matter*; also, Hamilton's *Review of the Subject in the Article already referred to*.

while opposing schools have run into endless extravaganzas, and subverted the very foundations of knowledge and belief. It is quite in keeping, that Professor Ferrier should turn off him and his system with a few flippant and cavalier thrusts. Sir William Hamilton, as we have already noted, is ignored altogether by this contemptuous philosopher. He developed Reid's system, and cleared it of most of its crudities and imperfections. He reduced to its last analysis the testimony of our consciousness to a real external world, and by bringing the idealist to the clear, naked issue of crediting or impeaching this witness, swept away his gossamer refinings, like mist before the sun-beam. Yet we are not sure that he has not himself gone into excessive refining on parts of this subject. That he has elucidated the distinction between the primary and secondary qualities of matter with unexampled power; that he has vindicated the veracity of consciousness, and proved that, as surely as it affirms an ego, it also affirms a non-ego, of which the ego is no part, in a style more masterly and irrefragable than his predecessors, it is no exaggeration to say. It is a praise which cannot justly be denied him. But when he carries his analysis so far as to assert, not only that our first, but our only immediate knowledge of matter as a non-ego is in our own bodily organism, and that our knowledge of all other matter is mediate and inferential,* we think he runs to extremes. He so far contributes to the support of scepticism, and the undoing of his own work. This looks like reducing the *not-self* to a *minimum scibile*—a mere vanishing point. We see no need of these endless and destructive refinings, which destroy our direct, immediate knowledge of extension, figure, and resistance in the table on which we write, and the floor we tread. If we have no direct knowledge of anything material outside of our own bodies, how can we by inference attach any properties to them, while we do not as yet know that they exist? This process of elimination pares down to the quick. Pressed a little further, it leaves for the residuum of what is knowable without us, the shadow of an image. The more philosophers, even the mightiest and soundest, analyze away, under colour of elucidating, the great landmarks, as shown in revelation or the *communis sensus* of our race, the

* Hamilton's Reid, p. 881.

less we trust them. Professing themselves to be wise, they become fools. They enter depths, for which human reason has no sounding-line. ~~The~~ more we study Reid's critics in reference to the whole subject of Sensitive Perception, the more we appreciate the solidity of the basis on which he rested it, however crude his development of his theory may be in some particulars. We abide by the normal judgment of our own minds, and all human minds, that we know, and know immediately, not mere ideas of things without us, not mere sensations produced by them, but the things themselves as present to the mind in their apprehended properties. This does not imply that we therefore thus know everything about them. Here, as elsewhere, man's knowledge is not so complete or perfect as to exclude all ignorance, or room for progress. But be his ignorance what it may, it does not thence follow that he knows nothing. He knows something in order to be capable of learning more. He may have much to learn in regard to the secondary qualities of body, or the various modifications which the primary may take on. But he *knows* that bodies exist without himself, that they are extended, figured, solid, mobile. What amount of space any given body fills; what any given optical phenomenon may proceed from, whether from a body of the same form and colour, or its image, or from what peculiar combination of the rays of light; whether a given noise proceeds from the discharge of a cannon or the bursting of a locomotive, and innumerable other questions, mechanical, chemical, physiological, may be originally doubtful, and determinable only after long inquiry. In regard to such subjects many mistakes may occur, which will require to be corrected. And herein the different faculties correct and supplement each other. But that in all cases of touch there is body with its primary qualities; that in vision the rays of light as reflected and refracted by some body or bodies, are really seen, and much more of the like, no man can bring himself to doubt. Moreover, the senses in correcting, do not invalidate each other. Neither does reason, in correcting, invalidate them. The different faculties in perfecting each other's intelligence at the same time, corroborate their normal accuracy within their appropriate sphere. Given substance in space, or matter, and reason affirms that its primary properties

must be, what, through our senses, we perceive them *actually to be*. Given the fact that the earth recedes from the sun, although to our vision the sun seems to move, yet a thorough analysis of this fact does not subvert, it establishes the accuracy of our vision. For all of motion that vision discerns is the increasing distance between the same objects. Which moves, and which is stationary is a matter of inference to be determined by other *data*, which, in this case, it required the discoveries of astronomy to furnish; just as when we sit in a rail-car by the side of another, on an adjacent track, motion is often seen, while we feel uncertain for the time, which car moves. This fact of the sun's rising we rarely fail to find impressed into service, as often as we read a sceptical book, which essays to nullify, either the obvious affirmations of Scripture, or of human consciousness. On the score of good taste, at least, it seems entitled to a discharge from further duty in this behalf.

The real identity of Professor Ferrier's scheme with the Pantheistic philosophy is apparent, not only from his general method and results, as already indicated, but from various incidental and collateral developments. Although he claims the merit of originality, this is true, not of any great elements of his theory, but rather of the clearness and systematic order with which he unfolds them. Thus he pronounces (p. 324) "objects, whatever they may be, the phenomenal in cognition; matter in all its varieties the phenomenal in cognition; * * * the ego, or mind, or subject, the phenomenal in cognition." His fourteenth proposition is, "There is no mere phenomenal in cognition; in other words, the phenomenal by itself is absolutely unknowable and inconceivable," p. 321. Mind and matter then, object and subject, are *per se* mere phenomena, and as such unknowable. Phenomena of what? Of absolute existence, which is the synthesis of the two. What then, is this absolute ground of which these are phenomena? What else, surely, than that in which his system avowedly terminates, "a supreme, and infinite, and everlasting mind in synthesis with all things?" And what is this but resolving all things into God and phenomena of God? And what else does Pantheism attempt?

Moreover, if it be inquired how this infinite ego becomes the non-ego, Pantheism answers, in coming into consciousness, which necessarily involves distinction, therefore limitation, developing itself, the finite phenomena of man and nature. How does Professor Ferrier stand here? "It (the ego) must know something particular, whenever it has any sort of cognisance," p. 246. On the other hand, "the ego cannot be known as a *particular* thing at all, but only as the One Known in the All Known," p. 328. "It is redeemed into the region of the cogitable, by the power of self-determination," p. 252. This is plain enough. Whatever else is meant by it, it implies that the infinite can know itself only in and through the finite. It accordingly must pass into the finite, in passing into consciousness. This is but a Scotch echo from the continent. We do not think the merits of Pantheism, with its ethical and theological consequences, require formal discussion now and here.

Our readers can judge, how we rate Professor Ferrier's lofty pretensions to have laid the foundations of a firm and impregnable theism. No doubt the pantheist is a great theist, even an all-theist. He who should argue that man is rational, because animals are rational, would doubtless do a great work. He would brutify man quite as much as humanize brutes, by putting them on a level. He alone is a theist who believes in a personal God, Almighty, Eternal, All-wise, All-holy, the Maker and Upholder of all things, whose being is distinct from and independent of all his creatures. To talk of maintaining the existence of God, by identifying the universe with him, is like maintaining the preciousness of diamonds, by arguing that they are only common pebbles. We are tired of this pretentious and magniloquent trifling with the most sacred themes. We advert to it as an illustration of the most dangerous and insidious feature of this fearful system. While denying a personal God, whose existence is separate from his creatures, it yet holds that all things are divine. It finds God everywhere. Thus it can impose upon the simple and unwary, by simulating, adopting, and even intensifying, all the deepest expressions of Christian truth and piety. We do not accept such aid, or such apologists:

We think, moreover, that much of what is plausible in the author's reasonings, is due to certain assumptions which are adroitly inwoven with them. Absolute existence with him, means simply real existence. To hold to the real existence of matter aside from the percipient mind, is according to him to hold to its absolute existence. This he calls materialism. So it would be, if absolute meant here what it usually does—*i. e.* unconditioned and underived existence. But as it simply means in his use of its real existence, it implies neither materialism, nor any approximation to it. If it did, the whole Christian world, who believe in the real existence of body as such, and of spirit as such, would be materialists. He says in a note on p. 156, "Here and generally throughout this work, the word 'cognition' signifies the *known*, the *cognitum*. This remark is necessary, lest the reader should suppose that it signifies the *act* rather than the *object* of knowledge." Yet, although "generally," he does not always thus use it. And he could not so use it at all, except on the assumption of the truth of his system, which makes us capable of knowing only the phenomena of our minds. So he speaks of our knowing our own perceptions and nothing beyond them. Perceptions of what? Of something without or within us? This is the very gist of the whole inquiry, which calls for proof instead of assumption. Such reasoning is not strengthened, however disguised, by the length of the circle that contains it. We will not, however, multiply instances. We have discussed the extraordinary positions of this book at this length, only because the fascinating style, the vigorous thought, the chair which its author occupies, as well as that for which he was a candidate in the Scottish Universities, all conspire to give it significance and influence; of which we have no light indication in the fact that, some time ago, it reached its second edition.