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ART. I.—*History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe.* By the Rev. W. E. H. LECKEY, M. A. In two volumes. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1866.

History of Rationalism; embracing a Survey of the Present State of Protestant Theology. By the Rev. JOHN F. HURST, A. M. With Appendix of Literature. New York: Charles Scribner & Co. 1866.

Essays on the Supernatural in Christianity, with Special Reference to the Theories of Renan, Strauss, and the Tübingen School. By Rev. GEORGE P. FISHER, M. A., Professor of Church History in Yale College. New York: Charles Scribner & Co. 1866.

The Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost; or, Reason and Revelation. By HENRY EDWARD, Archbishop of Westminster. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1866.

THE simultaneous appearance of these and other important works, for and against Rationalism, from such various quarters—sceptical, Papal, and orthodox evangelical—only proves how profoundly the mind of all parties in Christendom is agitated on the subject. These several parties, of course, take very different views in regard to it. The sceptics laud Rationalism

ART. IV.—*An Examination of Mr. J. S. Mill's Philosophy: Being a Defence of Fundamental Truth.* By JAMES McCOSH, LL.D. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. 1866.

DR. McCOSH has established a high rank for himself as a judicious, sound, and able writer on metaphysics and cognate questions relative to "fundamental truth." The freedom, sometimes amounting to diffuseness, of his style increases the popularity and influence of his philosophical writings. He seldom fails to detect the real issue between truth and error, and to do good service on the side of the former. Beyond any other considerable living author he has seized upon and exposed the false and dangerous theories propounded by the different philosophers and schools which exercise the greatest power over modern thought, and are working the direst havoc among the young thinkers of Europe and America. His great mission is, indeed, the "defence of fundamental truth" against assaults of sceptics, destructives, and the unintentional betrayals of mistaken friends. And nobly does he fulfil it. He shows that judicial mind in regard to philosophical questions which preserves its balance between contending parties, and rarely fails to seize and maintain the truth, sifting it clear of intermingled fallacies and sophisms. Among all the philosophical writers of the present time, none lays so firmly the foundations which underlie all truth, natural and revealed, and without which, all belief in substance, cause, or reality of any sort, must totter and fall.

It was therefore eminently fit that Dr. McCosh should bring to the test of a rigid examination the principles so industriously and ably propagated by one of the mightiest of modern destructive writers, John Stuart Mill. Such a work greatly needed to be done, and our author was the man to do it. This volume is important, not merely in reference to the views of Mr. Mill, but of the whole school of writers, past and present, British and continental, he so ably represents. Not only so. Mr. Mill's most significant and recent exposition of his views is presented in his review of Sir William Hamilton's *Metaphysics*. Thus Dr. McCosh in reviewing the former, continually deals

with the doctrines of the latter, the strongest representative of the contrary side, not to say extreme, in philosophy, which the century has produced in Britain. A searching examination of Mill's philosophical discussions becomes therefore really a survey of the two great currents of philosophical opinion in that country and our own at the present time. We invite the attention of our readers to a few of the salient points of our author's latest work.

1. The grand feature of Mill's system appears in his doctrine of sensations. To these he reduces all the operations of mind, and of course all that we know of mind or matter, or being. He says, "a feeling and a state of consciousness are, in the language of philosophy, equivalent expressions; everything is a feeling of which the mind is conscious; everything which it *feels*, or, in other words, which form a part of its own sentient existence." "Feeling, in the proper sense of the term, is a genus of which Sensation, Emotion, and Thought, are the subordinate species." The mind he analyzes into a mere "thread of consciousness," a "series of feelings which is conscious of itself as past and future." He says, "the belief I entertain that my mind exists, when it is not feeling, nor thinking, nor conscious of its own existence, resolves itself into a belief of a Permanent Possibility of these states." But these states or exercises have already, as we have seen, been resolved into feelings or sensations. In endless forms he teaches us that "matter may be defined a permanent possibility of sensations." Matter, mind, and all exercises of mind, in short, the universe, the *omne scibile*, are therefore resolved into sensations and possibilities of sensation. This is the only residuum of reality left to us by the alembic of Mr. Mill's philosophy. It involves the identity of Mind and Matter, and becomes indifferently Sensationalism, Materialism, Idealism, Nihilism, according to the standpoint from which it is viewed.

Thus, if we view sensation as an exercise or modification of mind, then all things are mere mental modifications or possibilities thereof. This is Idealism, or mere Egoism, or Infinite Subjectivity. But if sensation be an affection of matter, then all things are reducible to affections of matter or possibilities thereof, and Materialism ensues. And whether sensation be an

affection of mind or matter, in either case, it is the affection of a mere "possibility of sensation." To such heights of airy nothing does this pretentious philosophy soar. To such abysmal depths of utter Nihilism does it plunge. We look for substance and are mocked with shadows. This "new analytic" of ontology yields, for its grand climacteric, sensations as the sum and essence of all being.

But how does this prince of destructives account for other conscious exercises of consciousness besides mere sensation? What of Perception, Memory, Abstraction, Judgment, Reasoning, Imagination, Supersensual Intuition? Mr. Mill would analyze all these as well as the objects known by them into sensations, from which, by the aid of the principles of association, he would derive them. But how does he transform a sensation into what is wholly of another kind, into a remembrance, a judgment, a reasoning? How, in short, does he make it what it is not? *Ex nihilo nil fit*. Out of sensations, by no mode of derivation or combination, can aught but sensation be made. The attempt of the sensational, or as they prefer to call themselves, the psychological school, to construct all intellectual acts or cognitions, yea all being itself, out of sensations, is of a piece with the famous recipe for making stone-broth, viz., by putting with the stone the needed condiments of meats and vegetables. Dr. McCosh very aptly says:

"The main elements which he employs are sensations and associations of sensation. But he works up sensations of mind and body, of space and time, of personality and personal identity, of infinity and obligation to do good, which are not contained in the nature of sensations, and which could be imparted to them only by a new power superinduced, which power would require to have a place allotted to it in his system, and its laws enunciated, and its significance estimated. Again, it will be shown that Mr. Mill has made an unwarrantable use and application of the laws of association. These are the laws of the succession of our ideas, and nothing more. Give us two ideas, and place these two ideas together in the mind, and association will tend to bring them up once more in union. But it is not the office of association to give us the ideas, which must first be furnished to it. We shall see that Mr. Mill is for ever giving

to association a power which does not belong to it, of generating new ideas by an operation in which we see sensations go in, and a lofty idea coming out, solely by the idea being surreptitiously introduced, without any person being expected to notice it. The process carried on by this whole school of analysts is like that of the alchemists, who, when they put earth into the retort, never could get anything but earth, and could get gold only by introducing some substance containing gold. The philosopher's stone of this modern psychology is of the same character as that employed in mediæval physics. If we put in only sensations, as some do, we have never anything but sensations; and a 'dirt philosophy,' as it has been called, is the product. If we get gold, (as certainly Mr. Mill does at times), it is because it has been quietly introduced by the person who triumphantly exhibits it." P. 53.

Mr. Mill, however, attempts to summon to his relief the great Kantian doctrine of the relativity of knowledge, which so subserves the cause of destructives, nihilists, and sceptics, whether materialistic or idealistic. The adoption of this and some affiliated principles from the subjective theories of Kant, by Hamilton and his followers, comes near neutralizing all the force of his incomparable defences of the realism of Reid—*i. e.*, of a real external world, a valid perception of external objects, a real dualism of mind and matter, soul and body. Hamilton's most eminent disciple, Mansel, has pushed this principle to results, in his *Limits of Religious Thought*, which are most portentous and annihilating, and undermine, in the very effort to confirm, the foundations of all faith or belief. The doctrine that all knowledge is relative to our knowing faculties is, within proper limits, obviously true and safe. It is true that we know nothing which is not so related to our knowing faculties as to be capable of cognition by them. It is also true that many properties of knowable objects, are not so related to our finite faculties, in their present state, as to be capable of being known by them. So far it is admitted that all knowledge is relative, but relative in such a sense as to be a true and trustworthy knowledge. But these writers, Kant, Hamilton, and at the opposite pole, Mill and the sceptical sensationists, hold it to be relative in such a sense as to destroy

the purity and genuineness of our knowledge. They say, we do not know how much of what we discern in any object of cognition is contributed by the object cognized, and how much by the mind cognizing—*i. e.*, we know nothing at all about it. The case is thus briefly put by our author.

“Sir William (Hamilton) gives a third reason (of the relativity of knowledge), and here the error appears. ‘3d. Because the modes thus relative to our faculties, are presented to and known by the mind only, under modifications determined by these faculties themselves.’ This doctrine is thoroughly Kantian in itself and in its logical consequences. It makes the mind look at things, but through a glass so cut and coloured that it gives a special shape and hue to every object. “Suppose (says Hamilton) that the total object of consciousness in perception is=12; and suppose that the external reality contributes 6, the material sense 3, and the mind 3—this may enable you to form some rude conjecture of the nature of the object of perception.” (*Metaph.* ii. p. 129.) This doctrine very much neutralizes that of natural realism, which Hamilton seems, after the manner of Reid, to be so strenuously defending. To suppose that in perception or cognition proper, we mix elements derived from our subjective stores, is to unsettle our whole convictions as to the reality of things; for if the mind adds three things, why not thirty things, why not three hundred, till we are landed in absolute idealism, or in the dreary flat into which those who could float in that empty space are sure in the end to fall, that is, absolute scepticism.

“By assuming this middle place between Reid and Kant, this last of the great Scottish metaphysicians has been exposed to the fire of the opposing camps of idealism and realism, and it will be impossible for the school to continue to hold the position of their master.” Pp. 234—5.

The adamant logic with which Hamilton has maintained a valid perception by the human mind of a real external world, will stand before such contradictories of it, if admitted to be legitimate, about as long as wooden ships before iron rams. One of these two contradictions in his system must displace the other. Of course, it is only fair in such destructive writers as Mill and Spencer, to use the weapons he forges for them in assail-

ing the really great and valuable defences he has elaborated in defence of fundamental truth.

One way in which these writers try to construct the whole universe of knowable things out of sensations and possibilities thereof, by association, is through the alleged relative character, or the relations, of these sensations. But the simple answer to all this is, that sensations can only yield sensations. If there be a knowledge of relations which is something more than these, such as causality, substance, likeness, difference, infinitude, then these involve new objects, elements, sources of knowledge beyond mere sensation. What this school makes the product of mere sensation is furtively interpolated from a higher source. It is the philosopher's stone turning sand into gold, when the gold is previously and otherwise furnished to it. Sensations will give us body, spirit, cause, substance, if these are only supplied from the higher faculties of the soul. As Dr. McCosh abundantly and ably shows all knowledge of relations supposes a previous knowledge of the things related.

This spurious doctrine of the relativity of knowledge is carried to its legitimate consequences by Grote in his exposition of Plato's philosophy, (art. *Theætetus*.) As quoted by our author, p. 245, he uses the following language, which clearly obliterates all intrinsic distinction between truth and error, making that alone true or false, which is so in the view of each individual.

“Object is implicated with, limited or measured by, Subject, a doctrine proclaiming the relativity of all objects, perceived, conceived, known or felt, and the omnipresent involution of the perceiving, conceiving, knowing, or feeling, subject: the object varying with the subject. ‘As things appear to me, so they are to me; as they appear to you, so they are to you.’ This theory is just and important, if rightly understood and explained.” “So far as the doctrine asserts essential fusion and implication between subject and object, with actual multiplicity of distinct subjects—denying the reality either of absolute and separate subject, or of absolute and separate object—I think it true and instructive.” “What is truth to one man, is not truth, and is often falsehood, to another; that which governs the mind as infallible authority in one part of the globe, is

treated with indifference or contempt elsewhere. Each man's belief, though in part determined by the same causes as the belief of others, is in part also determined by causes peculiar to himself. When a man speaks of truth, he means what he himself (along with others, or singly, as the case may be) believes to be truth; unless he expressly superadds the indication of some other persons believing in it."

This destroys all objective truth and standards of truth—all foundations. If the foundations be destroyed, what shall the righteous do?

Dr. McCosh thus very felicitously exhibits Mill as being in different aspects, at once a resurgent Hume and Fichte.

"It is not needful to maintain that Mr. Mill is in every respect like either the great Scottish sceptic or the great German idealist, any more than to assert that these two are like each other. Mr. Mill is not so original a thinker as Hume, nor does he, like him, profess scepticism. He does not possess the speculative genius of Fichte, and he defends his system in a much more sober manner. But it can be shown that his philosophy comes very nearly to the positions taken up by Hume, when Hume is properly understood; and in maintaining that mind is a series of feelings aware of itself, and that matter is a possibility of sensations, he has reached conclusions quite as visionary as those of Fichte. As Hume brought out fully the results lying in the philosophy of Berkeley—as one of the offshoots of the philosophy of Locke, and as Fichte carried to their logical consequences certain of the fundamental principles of Kant, so Mr. Mill, and we may add, Mr. Herbert Spencer, are pursuing to their proper issues the doctrine floating in nearly all our later metaphysics, that we can know nothing of the nature of things." Pp. 231—2.

Dr. McCosh offers many judicious and valuable criticisms on Mill's logic, which show a just appreciation of its defects and its excellencies. Its faults arise chiefly from those great metaphysical, psychological, and ontological errors which characterize his entire system. Formal logic he misconceives and under-rates. As he makes experience the source of all our knowledge, and this experience consists solely in sensations, of course he denies all those self-evident axioms, those intuitive, a priori,

and necessary truths, which form the original premises for all reasoning, and are quite as essential to it as extension to figure, or light to colour. As he derives even axioms and first truths from inductive generalization, so it is in his treatment of induction, that the main power and value of his logic consist. And in pointing out the tests of the validity of universal inductive conclusions from particular instances, his logic is altogether peerless and invaluable. Our author also in this connection presents what we deem, on the whole, a just view of Hamilton's great advances at the opposite pole of logical science, *i. e.*, in formal logic. He awards deserved commendation to some of these innovations, while he repudiates others among the more extreme of them, as at least useless or worse than useless. Among these may be classed the quantification of negative predicates as particulars.

The radical principles of Mr. Mill's philosophy already brought to view of course make him a utilitarian in ethics, and a fatalist, if not rather an atheist, in divinity. Few writers could bring greater ingenuity to the support of these debasing schemes; still, when he comes to account for the idea and feeling of obligation expressed by the word "ought," as arising out of the mere conception of virtue as a means of happiness, it is the old paralogism over, of transmuting stones into gold, provided the gold be furnished beforehand. All attempts to define virtue as a compound or derivative from something more original or simple, or better than itself, presupposes virtue itself in the definition, or in the original elements out of which it is alleged to be compounded. It is in full consonance with his whole system, that Mill should tell us, "we venture to think that a religion may exist without a belief in a God, and that a religion without a God may be, even to Christians, an instructive and profitable object of contemplation." This needs no comment.

There are some points which we think admit of a more exact and clear analysis than that presented by our author in this and other works in which he has done such signal service to the cause of truth. We refer especially to some of his remarks in regard to *à priori* and necessary truth, and the relations of our knowledge of it to proofs from inductive generalization.

These, however, are too slight to be dwelt upon in our limited space, and constitute no serious drawback from the great value of the book. We close with the following summation by our author of this new philosophy.

“What have we left us according to this new philosophy? We have sensations; we have a series of feelings aware of itself, and permanent, or rather prolonged; and we have an association of sensations, and perceived resemblances, and possibilities of sensations. The sensations, and associations of sensation, generate ideas and beliefs, which do not, however, either in themselves or their mode of formation, guarantee any reality. We have an idea of an external material world; but Mr. Mill does not affirm that there is such a world, for there are laws of the series of feelings which would produce the idea, whether the thing existed or not; and our belief in it may be overcome—just as our natural belief in the sun rising is made to give way before the scientific conviction that it is the earth that moves. He thinks he is able by a process of inference to reach the existence of other beings besides ourselves. But the logic of the process is very doubtful. I believe that neither Mr. Mill nor any other has been able to show how, from sensations, individual or associated, we could ever legitimately infer the existence of anything beyond. What he claims to have found is after all only other ‘series of feelings.’” Pp. 272—3.

The wide acceptance of this and other forms of philosophic scepticism is among the ominous symptoms of the day, and summons to a vigorous and united array against it, all who would contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.