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I. THEOLOGY OF THE FUTURE.

Our age, on its religious side, has been characterized as an age of doubt. We are constrained to admit that there is a propriety in this characterization. Doubt with regard to religious matters is more widespread at present than it was in days gone by. This is not saying that the Christian religion has not a stronger hold upon men to-day than ever before, for it has. The mustard seed sown in the ground and springing up into an herb is growing yet, though already the greatest of all herbs. The leaven hid away in the meal is still permeating the mass, and will continue till the whole is leavened. The doubt of our age does not furnish sufficient ground to justify the believer in entertaining pessimistic views of the future. But there is none the less a widespread spirit of questioning and uncertainty concerning things religious. It is not confined to the student's cloister, but is found among the masses. It appears in a good deal of the popular literature of the day, and tends to create for itself a congenial soil, if that be not already found. But as has been remarked by those observant of the trend of theological thought in our day, while doubt is more general than it was in a former age, it is not of the same intensity. It is not so much a positive denial as it is an enquiry. A century ago unbelief was very sure of itself. It sneered at faith, and assumed a happy, even a lightsome attitude. But such self-complacency has largely disappeared from the theological world, and in its place there is more of earnest investigation.

IV. TWO CURRENT FALSE PHILOSOPHIES.

MATERIALISM.

Philosophy, the investigation of principles or ultimates, has two departments: Epistemology and Ontology. The former inquires into the origin, nature and limits of man's power to know. As to the origin of human knowledge, we have the rival schools of Empiricism and Intuitionism; on the basis of the nature and limits of man's cognition, there are Skepticism, Dogmatism and Criticism.

Ontology, which in a sense is Philosophy proper, asks the question, What is; what really is, as distinct from what apparently is. Nihilism, or Phenomenalism, answers: Nothing is, beyond or beside Phenomena; and Substantialism replies: There is a reality beyond the appearance; Substance is. The Substantialists are Monists or Dualists. Monism divides into: 1. Idealism, or better called Mentalism, which says: Mind alone is, there is no Matter, except as phenomena; 2. Materialism, which asserts that Matter is and that Mind is but a mode of Matter; and 3. Absolutism, which affirms that Mind and Matter are both mere modes of the one basic Substance.

Dualism is that doctrine of Ontology, which holds that the universe contains two distinct kinds of Substance; mind, on the one hand, and matter on the other; each exclusive of the other, as being essentially different. This is the view of all intelligent persons who are not philosophers and probably of a majority of those who are.

Materialism is that form of metaphysics which teaches that everything in the universe is some kind of matter; that mind and matter are substantially the same; that mind is but a mode of matter. The mentalist, or idealist, denies the reality of matter, affirming that it is a mere appearance to the mind, or a thought of the mind, an illusion to the philosopher and a delusion to the vulgar. The materialist does not deny the reality of mind, nor that it differs from ordinary matter; he merely avers that the dif-

ference is not essential and that mind is a kind, the highest kind, of matter.

There are, however, two radical schools of materialism. 1. Its lower or gross form boldly asserts that mind is nothing but nervous matter, usually confined to the brain; and that thought is the secreted product of the brain, just as saliva is of the glands of the mouth and bile of the liver. Buchner represents this view. 2. Higher, refined materialism repudiates these extreme tenets; avers that mind is not a substance at all, but merely a force residing in matter; mind belongs to the family of correlated forces, which includes the physical, chemical, vital, mental, moral and spiritual. Prof. Huxley, though confessedly a Nihilist, advocated this latter doctrine of materialism.

A. Is materialism true? I. We first note some special objections to the gross form, which identifies the mind and the brain. 1. What is the principle of differentiation, which leads us to believe that one thing differs from another essentially, in kind, as well as in degree? It is confessedly this, that all those things which possess the same essential qualities are of the same kind, or class; and that those which do not possess all the essential qualities of the class do not belong to it. What are the essential qualities of matter? They are all deduced from the fact that matter occupies space. Matter thus is extended, divisible, has figure, etc. Is the mind extended? Has it length, or breadth, or thickness? Can we divide the mind into halves and quarters? Has the mind shape? is it spherical, cubical or pyramidal? To ask these questions is to answer them, as every one without a theory will confess.

2. But, replies the gross materialist, my answer is easy: The brain has extension and figure and is divisible; and the brain is the mind; the brain produces thought. Let us see if this is credible. The brain is the mind; the brain loves, hates, wills, remembers, reasons. Milton's brain, apart from any immaterial mind, produced the *Paradise Lost*; Shakspeare's brain composed his dramas. The brain sees, hears, smells, tastes, touches, knows its fellow

material objects. It knows its own hands and feet and body. It knows the hairy, skin-covered, bony casket in which itself lives. Now does it know itself? Has it any knowledge of its own existence and characteristics? Would one, that had never been told, and that had never opened the skull of an animal, know or even suspect that he had a brain? Is it credible that a thing which knows other objects does not know itself? We can understand that a finite intelligence may not know many other objects, possibly may know no other objects; but we cannot see how an intelligent being can be absolutely ignorant of itself; the brain is ignorant of itself, therefore the brain cannot be an intelligence.

3. Material causes can produce only material effects; because no effect can be greater than its cause. Mind, as the greater, may produce matter, as the less; but matter, the less, cannot produce mind, the greater. The brain then, as a material cause, must produce effects which are equally material; thought, feeling, purpose, the alleged effects of brain, must then be material. The essential qualities of matter are extension, divisibility, figure, etc., have thoughts, feelings, and purposes these qualities of matter? All matter is cognizable by some one or more of the senses; can we see, hear, smell, taste, or touch thoughts, feelings or purposes? You can take the salivary glands, the stomach and the liver, and see, smell, touch, taste, and even hear the saliva, the gastric juice and the bile which they produce; but no chemist ever took a brain and got from it a thought, cognizable by the senses.

II. Special objections to the higher form of materialism.

1. The refined materialist will doubtless acknowledge the force of these objections to the cruder doctrine, but will assert that they do not apply to that form of materialism which makes mind not a kind of matter but a force of matter. This finer view is, at least, as old as Zeno, the founder of Stoicism. As held and taught in our day, it asserts that mind is not a substance at all, not a distinct being, but is like heat, light, electricity, a form of force. In accordance

with the accepted doctrine of the correlation of forces, it is said that, as light, heat and electricity are not different kinds, but simply different forms, of force, so mind is not a distinct species, but simply one of the forms which force assumes. The philosophy is clear : There is but one substance, matter, and but one force. As matter presents itself under various forms, notably the radical ones of gas, fluid and solid, so force is Protean in its manifestations, but is essentially the same in its nature. Mind then is force, and is the same as heat, light and electricity. Force sometimes appears as heat, and then becomes electricity, and then light ; the very identically same force becomes successively each of these three. This is not here denied, but is by the writer believed on the authority of scientific men. Now the dynamical materialist avers, that this one force, sometimes heat, sometimes light, and sometimes electricity, is also sometimes mind, or thought, or feeling or purpose.

A companion doctrine to the correlation of forces is the conservation, or persistence of force or energy. As no element of matter is finitely destructible, much less naturally perishable, so force is absolutely persistent ; when it disappears in one form, it has merely passed into another form, or other forms, unchanged in nature and unimpaired in degree. This is not a mere supposition ; the scientist can follow force through all its metamorphoses, and measuring it demonstrates the above truth. If mind is a form of force, it can be experimentally shown, that force has disappeared in some other form to reappear as mind ; and when mind ceases to manifest itself at death, it can be shown that the force which has thus disappeared as mind still persists and its presence can be scientifically demonstrated. Will some scientific patron of this view undertake both or either of these experiments ?

2. There is, however, a simpler and more effective way of dealing with this school of materialism, all the more dangerous because it is more refined than the other. There are many wonderful metamorphoses in nature, some of which require the strongest evidence, if not our own obser-

vation, to be believed. Still these changes have their limits, beyond which it is not credible that they can go. Let us see exactly what is asserted by the materialist: it is, that the thought of the human mind is identically the same thing as heat, light, electricity; that the heat in a coal of fire and the thought in your mind are exactly the same kind of thing; that your love for your mother and the light of your lamp are one and the same kind of force; that Washington's resolve to devote his life to his country is identical with a flash of lightning. It is not merely asserted that these things are analogous, or alike, but that they are the same; at one time, force shows itself as heat in a furnace, at another that identical force is the sorrow of a mother at the grave of her only child. No one but a philosopher can believe that; and his theory is the green glass through which he looks.

III. There is another objection, which is of decisive character and which relates to both schools of materialism. No two persons can appropriate and use at the same time the same material object, or the same material force. This is as impracticable and impossible as that two material objects can occupy the same space at the same time. The food that I eat, the water that I drink, the air that I breathe, no one else can at the same moment eat and drink and breathe. The heat that warms my body, the light that enters my eye, the electricity that shocks my frame, cannot warm, illumine, or shock any one else at the same instant. Everything that is material, whether objects or forces, is capable of absolutely exclusive appropriation. It is otherwise with the immaterial. The same thought, the same desire, the same purpose may and often does animate a thousand, a million minds at the same instant. A speaker is addressing a crowded auditorium, and every soul receives the same truth and is excited to the same feeling at absolutely the same moment. A million persons each day read the same dispatches in our daily papers, and form the same opinion on the facts stated. There is no patent, there can be none on truth. No man can exclusively appropriate it.

No one has a monopoly of a thought, an affection, a resolve for even a single second. Matter and its forces have limited, spatial relations, by reason of which they cannot exist in two even contiguous places at the same time. It is not so with truth, with thought, with emotion, with volition; any one of these can coexist in a limitless number of minds contemporaneously. Even light, or sound, so subtle, so attenuated that they may fall simultaneously on thousands of eyes or ears, yet do so by virtue of their radiating divisibility; so that no two eyes receive the same light, no two ears receive the same sound. Each eye and each ear receives a part of the light and sound. Not so with the truth seen on the printed page or heard from the open lips; this truth is not divided into infinitesimal particles, of which each mind receives its quota, but the truth remains whole and is received by each mind in its entirety. A drop of material poison may kill an animal; the same drop divided among a thousand is not perceptibly hurtful. But an error that is fatal to one mind has power to ruin millions, and yet its strength remains unimpaired.

For any one and for all these reasons, we are justified in declaring that materialism, whether of substance or of force, is untrue, and that mind differs from matter both essentially and dynamically.

B. So much for the direct argument against materialism. We now consider its consequences, in its application to other important lines of thought. In these we may find additional reasons for discarding it.

I. Its relation to Theology. Many minds fail to see the logical consequences of their philosophy; for this reason, there have been and are materialists that are Christian theists. Tertullian held that God had a material form, so did Priestly, and this is the belief of the Mormon Church. It is none the less true, however, that the materialism of substance properly leads to Atheism, as a material God is a manifest impossibility, both inconceivable and incredible. We accordingly find that the gross materialists, as a class, deny the existence of the Deity. The materialism of force

as logically leads to Pantheism; the one all-prevading, universal, immament force is God.

II. Materialism has an important connection with ethics, for two reasons. 1. It is inconsistent with the immortality of the soul. "Nihil interit," nothing perishes, is not true of organized, or even compound matter. Elementary matter is finitely indestructible. If the materialist held that the mind is a primary substance, or a material atom, he might consistently teach its imperishability. When, however, he asserts that it is a compound, organic substance, the brain, he excludes the natural possibility of its permanence. We can actually see the brain dissolve, become reduced to its elements; and these elements we can see entering into new combinations. The brain has manifestly perished; if the brain be the soul, then the soul has perished. If it exist again, it must be by virtue of some power capable of restoring it. This we do not deny to be possible; we simply assert that there is no room for such a thought in scientific materialism in the grosser form.

The case is no better with the materialism of force. This doctrine provides indeed a kind of immortality for the soul. If the soul be but a form of the one universal force, and this force, while changing its form, never loses its being, then the soul never perishes as a force. It persists as force, but perishes as a soul; it has become gravity, light, heat, or electricity.

We must ask, how much is lost to practical morality, when man becomes convinced that death is the end? A few high spirits, like Shaftesbury and Kant, would continue to practice virtue for its own sake. But for the mass of men, what restraining influences on the one hand, and elevating, on the other, belong to the belief in a personal, conscious, moral immortality?

2. Materialism does not consist with the responsible freedom of man. If the mind of man is but a piece of organized, refined matter, then it is subject to material laws, and is no more morally accountable than the falling tree which breaks your bone. The brain, in secreting thought and

feeling and purpose, is just as responsible as the liver in secreting bile, and no more so. The brain that plans and causes the hand to execute a murder is no more accountable than the avalanche.

If the mind be a form of material force, the same condition of moral irresponsibility pertains to it. Does anyone consider heat and light, or electricity morally accountable for their acts and efforts? If not, then the mind, as but a form of the same force, cannot be regarded as a moral, responsible agent. The fact that each sinning soul holds itself guilty, visits moral condemnation on itself for its wicked acts, shows that the soul is conscious of its own freedom, is the author of its own acts, is a free, moral agent, and not a piece of matter nor a form of physical force.

As materialism exists as a basis for practical life amongst the people, and as a theoretical creed in medical, scientific and philosophic circles, it is hoped that the discussion here given may aid some to free themselves from its influence and others to extricate their friends from its toils. The purpose has been to treat the subject with simplicity and clearness. May our country and our age be saved from the baneful power of what Fichte called "The Dirt Philosophy."

AGNOSTICISM.

There are two radical philosophies of knowledge: 1. Dogmatism, which holds that man has the power of positive knowledge; that he has faculties by which he really knows things. 2. Skepticism, which denies or doubts that man has such powers of knowing. The dogmatism, or the skepticism, may be more or less universal. No dogmatism, however, has reached the extreme of asserting man's capacity to know the entire universe; confessedly all allow that there are many things, which man neither does nor can know in his present state. Any one is so far a dogmatist as he asserts man's ability to know anything; and is so far a skeptic as he denies, or abridges, or doubts man's power to know. Cicero says that Arcesilas taught that "we can know nothing, not even the fact of our inability to know."

Others have doubted the statement of Cicero; universal skepticism seems to annihilate itself.

Skepticism, as it prevails to-day, takes the name of Agnosticism, and had its origin in the critical philosophy of Kant. Kant taught that there is probably a real world, the noumenal world, but that of this we have no knowledge; man's knowing is limited to the apparent, the phenomenal, which does not reveal the real. Kant's principle applied to our knowledge of God is religious agnosticism, which we propose briefly to discuss.

Theological agnosticism teaches that there may or may not be a God, but, in either event, it is impracticable to prove that God exists, and impossible for man to know him as he exists. It chiefly takes the latter form, a denial of man's power to know God's nature, though convinced of his existence. It is so held by Kant, Hamilton and Mansel. Even Herbert Spencer admits that we are obliged to suppose a first cause, and are driven by an inexorable logic to conclude that he is infinite and independent. These all, however, agree with the Neo-Platonists, that God is to man unknowable. Those old philosophers had a strong way of expressing their agnosticism, when they asserted that God is nothing, the non-existent; meaning that to the human mind he is nothing, because utterly incomprehensible.

The ground of God's being unknowable, according to agnosticism, is not his non-existence, nor his withdrawal from observation, but is due to man's inability to know him. The sun exists and shows himself to the healthy eye, but the blind cannot see him. The agnostic asserts that man is God-blind, as some people are color-blind. The reason of man's inability is said to be partly in the nature of God as the Absolute, the Unconditioned, and partly in the impossibility of the finite comprehending the infinite. Let us examine each of these.

A. God is the Absolute, the Unconditioned; therefore man cannot know him; because man's knowledge is limited to the relative, as opposed to the absolute; and because it

is the very nature of thought to condition, or rather to note the conditions of its object. I. Man's knowledge is limited to the relative; is this true? In the three applications of the relativity of knowledge, made by Sir William Hamilton, we think it is true. Man's knowledge is limited to qualities, or attributes, as distinct from substance; to those qualities or attributes for which we have appropriate cognizing faculties; and, further, man's knowledge is limited in its purity to the more or less perfect conditions attending his faculties. We believe, however, that the qualities known are qualities of the thing, by which its nature becomes known to the human mind.

These limitations do not apply to the case before us. We do not need nor mean to assert that man has a direct knowledge of the substance of God; we are content to believe and affirm a knowledge merely of each of the divine attributes as man's acknowledged faculties can discern; and will admit whatever of imperfection that pertains to a fallen as well as a finite creature. This limits the sphere and perfection of man's knowledge but does not annul its reality.

I. But is God the Absolute? Philosophers and theologians have asserted this so continuously and universally and confidently that it seems rash to deny it, but we venture, nevertheless, to do so. God is not the Absolute, in the sense of the Unrelated; on the contrary, he is the Universally Related. Many of these relations man sees and knows, such as the generic ones of creation, providence and redemption.

If, however, by the Absolute, as applied to God, is meant the power of self-existence, and his actual sole existence prior to all other beings; it is true that God is the Absolute. He exists, however, also as the Universally Related; as such it is of chief importance that we should be able to know him; and we do know him in knowing his relations. As the Absolute of existence, we believe that He is and must be self-existent and the prius of all other beings.

II. It is alleged that we cannot know God, because to know is to think, to think is to condition, and God is the

Unconditioned. We freely assent to the first premise of this argument ; it is true that we cannot think of anything, but under its conditions, the very nature of thought is to bring its object before the mind in its general or its special conditions. We cannot think of horse, but as we think of its essential qualities, and these qualities are its conditions, or, as we think of its relations, and these relations are its conditions. The same is true of God ; we cannot know him, or think of him, apart from the conditions of his nature and his relations to his universe.

As we have seen, it is a figment of the philosophic brain, unjustified by fact or sound common sense, to assert that God is the Unconditioned. There is not, nor can there be, such a being as the Absolute, the Unconditioned. If there were such, he could not be known by man, angel, nor devil ; if there were such, he could not be God, who is the very hub of being, the very center of existence, the Father, the Ruler, the Saviour of men, the Creator, the Governor of the Universe.

B. We are told that the finite cannot know the Infinite. It is natural for an empiricist to assert this ; for the finite cannot experience the Infinite, by original, repeated, nor associated sensations.

I. A word about the Infinite, another subject around which there is a metaphysical haze, in which mathematicians as well as philosophers have become beclouded ; Kant and Sir William Hamilton suffered themselves to be sadly befogged. There is no such thing as the Infinite, absolutely considered ; everything in the universe of thought or being has limits. God is the nearest approach to the absolutely infinite ; but God has limits and must have them. He has moral limits ; he cannot do wrong, it is impossible for God to lie. He has limits of relation, as Creator, Judge, Redeemer. He has limits of nature, which separate him from his created universe. He has the limits of selfhood, of personality. His limits are all of them perfections, and are self-imposed, but are none the less real.

Besides God there are only two other infinities in the

universe, space and time. Space is negatively limited by the want of all moral and mental qualities, and has only one quality in common with matter, extension. This quality of extension is single, double, or triple ; there are accordingly an indefinite number of infinite lengths and infinite planes, while space itself is the single triple infinite extension. Time is the most limited of infinities, and is simply duration that neither begins nor ends. These three infinities are intimately connected ; as space is the infinite where and time the infinite when of God's infinite being.

II. The agnostic affirms that the finite human mind cannot know the infinite God.

1. There are degrees of knowledge, both in quantity and quality. By my eye I know the shape and color of the horse before me, but may be utterly ignorant of other facts about it. The horse may be so near to me that I see it distinctly ; or, it may be so far away that my view is dim. In all these cases, however, I have a real knowledge of the horse ; though it may be very partial and very obscure. So the question is not, Can we know all about God ; nor, Do we know anything perfectly about him ; but, Do we know anything about him that can be called real knowledge, as distinct from mere conjecture or hypothesis ? Yet more precisely, it is now, Can we, do we know anything as to God's infinitude ?

We will admit that there are elements of God's infinity, infinite attributes that belong to his essence, of which we have not the faintest conception ; just as there may be qualities of matter of which we are totally ignorant. Thus our knowledge of God's infinity is probably deficient in quantity. We will still further admit that the facts of God's infinite nature which are revealed to us, we do not know perfectly, we do not at all adequately comprehend them. We are like a little child, who very imperfectly understands its father's wisdom, or knowledge, or plans ; and so our knowledge is deficient in quality also. Nevertheless we know that love is an attribute of God's character ; we

know that his love is infinite ; and we know, partially, what is meant by infinite love.

I stand at St. Louis and see a few rods of a telegraph wire, which stretches from New York to San Francisco ; can it be truthfully denied that I have any knowledge of that wire, because my eye is unable to follow it either east or west to its terminus ? By my eyes I know the few rods that are manifest to them, and from other sources I know that the same wire stretches continuously from the Atlantic to the Pacific seaboard. If this be common sense truth, is it not equally true that we can directly perceive the finite manifestations of God's nature, and know that the attributes thus revealed to us are infinite in their excellence ? If God's attributes were not homogeneous or simple, then there would be propriety in affirming that a finite or partial knowledge of any one of them was not a real knowledge of its infinite entirety. As, however, the infinite depths of his nature, which lie beyond our vision, are exactly like the shallows we can fathom, we are justified in believing and affirming that we have a real, though limited knowledge of his infinite excellence. The finite cannot comprehend the Infinite, else it would itself be infinite ; it can, however, apprehend the Infinite. To this the Scriptures agree, when Paul writes to the Ephesians, 3 : 18-19, that Christians "may be strong * * * to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge ;" the knowledge is real, though partial and inadequate.

2. There is a technical distinction between faith and knowledge. It is a distinction often ignored by practical writers. Strictly speaking we know that which we immediately perceive, we believe that which is mediately perceived. Drawing this distinction, can we be said to know God ? Have we a direct cognition of Him ? Drs. Hodge, Dabney, Stearns, and others so believe and preach ; holding that God manifests himself directly to the human spirit, so that he may be and is intuitively cognized. This immediate vision of the Deity is not limited to the renewed soul,

but is said to be a fact in the experience of all. We are sure that this view is not in accordance with facts.

Do we know one another's minds? if so, how? Each mind has the power of expression, it utters or manifests itself, its existence and characteristics. In the direct cognition of these manifestations, we know the minds making them. We have a similar knowledge of God, who utters himself in nature, in providence, as also in the scriptures, in and by Jesus Christ, and by his spirit. From these direct revelations of himself, we are led to believe many other things as to the character of God. These inferences of the unseen from the seen are matters of faith. The infinity of God is, therefore, an object of faith, as distinct from knowledge. It is, however, an intelligent faith, because it is based upon a knowledge of God as revealed. For the same reason, it is assured by faith, so that we can properly say with Paul, 2 Tim. 1:12, "I know him whom I have believed."

C. Agnosticism says God is unknowable, therefore he is ignorable. If God were utterly unknown and unknowable, it would not be possible to believe in his existence or to come into any personal relations with him. But God is known to exist and is known in important excellences of his nature and relations to man. This imperfect, though real knowledge obligates man, for his own sake and for God's, to fulfill the duties growing out of the relations he knows that God bears to him, and to seek still further to know him, whom to know aright is everlasting life. Invincible ignorance as to the unknowable in the relations of a subordinate to his superior does not exclude nor even weaken obligations which arise out of facts and relations which are knowable. The young child cannot understand either the physiology or the psychology of its father's nature and is under no obligations, so far and so long as these are unintelligible, in any matter which depends upon this knowledge. But this does not free that child from those duties which arise out of those facts in its father's nature and relations which it can and does know. Moreover, vincible ignorance does not justify but condemns itself. We are not

bound to know what by no effort we can know; but we are bound to know what we can and especially that which concerns the most important relations that we sustain.

Ignorance of God is the most lamentable of all kinds of ignorance, as he is the being most worthy of all knowledge. So far as it is unnecessary, we are grossly culpable that we allow it to be and to continue. So far as it is necessary, we must be humbly submissive to the conditions of our finiteness so far as this ignorance is to be perpetual; and so far as it is limited to our present imperfect state, in which we know in part and see through a glass darkly, we are to be patiently hopeful of the change when we shall be like him and shall see him as he is.

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