

THE
BIBLIOTHECA SACRA.

ARTICLE I.

THE ORIGIN OF THE CONCEPT OF GOD.

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THE knowledge which the adult mind has, or thinks it has, of God is given in the form of a concept. The truth of this statement will doubtless be admitted by all — by those who accept the theory of an innate idea, as well as by those who refer all the elements of the concept, and also the act of combining these elements, to man's powers of observation and reasoning. Whether the concept contain some germ of knowledge or belief which, given with the original gift of the mind itself, unfolds as the mind unfolds, and gathers to itself, as it were, by accretion the other "marks" of the concept, may be, indeed, open to inquiry. We may also fairly question whether there be not some instinctive and constitutional cravings, which drive the mind to its act of conception. But a cognition so complex and shifting as that which answers to the word "God" in the ordinary experiences of the adult mind can never be looked upon otherwise than as the result of foregoing observation and reasoning. It is, therefore, a concept. A concept, however, is ordinarily considered as the sole product of the logical faculty. It is a product composed of more or fewer factors, gathered from several objects by abstraction, comparison, and reflection, and impressed by the intellect with the stamp of mental

unity. Logic is the science that deals with conception ; the logicians own by native right all the concepts. But we cannot bring ourselves to believe that with the formation and criticism of this particular and somewhat peculiar concept the logical faculty alone is concerned.

Indeed, it is clear that none of the so-called concepts are formed or reproduced without contributions from many other parts of man's total nature than that which we in dialectics have exalted to the supremacy. In the process of knowledge as it takes place in real life, the centres of sensual impressions, the feelings, the moral faculties, and particularly the will, are no less active than the intellect. The product corresponds to the process. When the word which stands for and calls up the product of this process is pronounced, and by the soul attended to, the nerve-ganglia of vision and of the other senses, the instinctive or acquired emotions, volitions put forth to summon or to repress certain elements of the desired total, take part in the response which is given by the soul. Nor do we represent the true state of the soul fairly when we speak as though these activities of sense, feeling, and will must be transformed into terms of the intellect, and so submit to be *understood*, in order that the concept may do its proper work. The fact is, that much of the whole product is spoiled by the very effort to render it a purely intelligible and logical product. In the real life of the living man, those activities which are not intellectual and cannot be presented to the soul in terms of the intellect are as real and as potent elements as any. For instance, how little can analysis and verbiage do to set forth what goes on within some men's souls when they hear spoken the word "mother."

Let a man of symmetrical culture be asked to pronounce the Divine name, and, summoning all his powers, to observe as fully as possible what state of mind and heart is induced in response to the name. The effort to observe will mar the product which he wishes to make the object of his observation. The subsequent effort to describe his state of consciousness will be quite unsatisfactory,—indeed, will be

without power to represent adequately any of his experiences, — unless the descriptive words stir up in him to whom they are directed a corresponding condition not only of intellect, but of feeling and volition as well. But what will be the result of his observation of this his own highest concept? He will be likely to detect a certain instinctive use of the physical organs, such as accompanies, usually, if not universally, the effort to become clearly conscious of the indefinitely grand and sublime. There will be observed that full inspiration which is so vastly expressive, and which seems to give token that the brain, called upon for an unusual effort, demands an unusual supply of well aerated blood. There will, perhaps, be also observed that effort at an indefinite widening of the circle of vision which comes, customarily, when the mind strives after a sensuous representation of indefinite space; with a bowing of the head in the reverence of awe, or an uplifting of it in the reverence of confidence. Nor must it be thought that these physical concomitants are impotent factors in the whole to be realized, or unworthy of notice by one who wishes to understand his own conceptions. How natural and expressive these gestures and other physical phenomena are, how almost indispensable in attaining the highest possible result in consciousness, is made clearly apparent by the conduct of men in those semi-conscious states when the senses are partially dormant and the will has withdrawn its accustomed control. Of the hypnotized subject Dr. Garth Wilkinson says: “Raise his head while in prayer, and his lips pour forth exulting glorifications, as he sees heaven opened and the majesty of God raising him to his place. Then, in a moment, depress the head, and he is dust and ashes, an unworthy sinner, with the pit of hell yawning at his feet.”

There will also be observed certain constituent elements of the concept which are furnished by the intellect, — the “marks,” in logical parlance, of the concept, — some of which are themselves concepts, and others intuitions. Among such marks may be named those of power, unity, purity,

justice, love, causation, final purpose. The effort to bring some of these into consciousness with their fullest vigor of presentation will, it is likely, be made not without certain physical concomitants. Just as the notion of power is apt to be accompanied with the *nisus*; this *nisus* indicating that the force which originates with the will, and which gives us our point of starting in our proof for the reality of all force, is about to discharge itself in the movement of the bodily organs. There will be observed, also, arising into the conscious soul, certain emotions of awe, trust, fear, or answering love. And the whole will be moulded, in a measure, by the ever active volition of the observer, who, while he controls thought and feeling in order that he may observe them, also decides to a considerable extent what ones of the whole throng of impressions crowding their way into the sphere of consciousness shall submit to examination at all, what ones shall fall back into the darkness whence they came.

This view of the concept of God as a complex whole, to which the emotional as well as the intellectual makes its contributions, corresponds, I believe, to the truth of experience. The significance and potency of those elements of the whole which in order to be represented to the intellect must necessarily be totally changed are no less than of those elements which are primarily intellectual. As to this greatest of all concepts, the heart is in it, as well as the head. In it the heart is as trustworthy as the head. The heart has as good right to be heard as the head, and as good right to demand that the deliverances of the head shall be made to the heart in terms of emotion as the head has to claim that the deliverances of the heart shall be made to the head in terms of logic. Any perversion of feeling, conscience, or will is sure to detract important elements from the total product. This view of the nature of the concept corresponds, also, I believe, to the true view of its origin.

But our method of investigation must be more clearly defined. There are, we will say, three different methods of inquiring into the origin of our present knowledge of God.

One of these may be called the historic. It is the method of antiquarian research into man's early religious condition, and the method, as well, of him who studies in history the changes that the centuries bring to men's theological views. The second of these is the experimental or inductive. This method may engage itself with that more narrow observation of the phenomena of religious life which is open to every man; or it may go out into the world at large, and compare the present views of nations differing in situation, education, and inherited characteristics. Both of these two methods are pursued by the student of comparative theology. The third method we will call analytic, not because the other methods do not demand power of keen analysis, but because the third method demands little else. This method, with much distrust as to ability to cope with a theme so vast, but with confidence that our suggestions of truth will be found in the main true, we will follow. The investigation according to this method requires some analysis of the concept of God and of the complex faculties of man, with a view to show how the different elements of the former necessarily take their rise from, and correspond to, the latter. In this way man's whole nature is made responsible for, and is discovered to be consonant with, the revelation of God which is made within man. And when it is seen that the symmetrically cultured man is the proper organ for the reception of the truth concerning God, then it is also seen that any refusal to accept deliverances of this truth, or any marring of its fulness, testifies to weakness or disease in some part of the whole manhood, that is, in some part of the organ through which the truth is delivered.

Nothing is, however, more necessary, in the endeavor to understand how the concept under consideration originates, than to hold correct views of the entire relation of man to truth. The view which, if not held as a theory, is quite too frequently carried out in the practical search after knowledge seems to be this one—that truth is a product of mind wrought out by the skilful use of the ratiocinative faculties.

It follows, then, that the correct working of these faculties is almost the only important or necessary guarantee of truth. But it is not any lone faculty or set of faculties which is concerned in man's reception of truth. The truth becomes ours only as a gift from without. All truth is of the nature of a revelation, and demands that the organ through which the revelation is made should be properly adjusted. *The organ for the reception of truth is symmetrically cultured manhood, rightly correlated action, and balanced capabilities of man's different powers.* The attitude of him who would attain to truth is one of docility, of receptiveness, of control exercised upon all the powers of the soul, so that none of them by abnormal development or activity interfere with the action of all the rest. The great causes of error in thought, and so of falsehood in the concept, are sin and weakness. These impair the organon of truth by destroying the symmetrical development and action of the soul's different powers. Truth cannot be beaten out of things around us by the hammer of logic, or spun out of a machine for making syllogisms. Intellect may be the gun by which the huntsman secures his game; but he needs willing feet, clear eye, steady hand, benevolent heart, or he will not use his gun to its best purpose.

How intimately and inseparably connected with each other are all the various faculties of man in his apprehension of truth is a familiar thought to every student of psychology. In every state of consciousness the whole soul is found involved. Each state in each man bears the impress of all the man's previous history, and, indeed, to a large extent, also, of the history of the race. The feelings, in the coolest investigation of the most practised observer of nature, are always coloring the intellect; the voice of conscience is never quite hushed; the will is always putting forth its volitions and directing the attention according to motives which arise from every part of our complex being.

Just now physiology is directing more than ever our thoughts to phenomena which, instead of being feared, ought

to be cordially accepted, and made the basis of certain modifications in psychology and theology alike. We are asked to believe that the intellect and its organ are capable of automatic action, the value of the results of which depends largely upon the previous culture of all the powers. We are also asked to believe that the power to direct the attention to this or that part of these automatic activities is almost the only power that is, strictly speaking, ours. That all else is done not by us so much as for us, is the claim. But it is really no new thing when we are told that the centre of the circumference — “the heart of the heart,” as says Müller — is the will. And the value of its due action is by no means diminished when we know that it, and through it all the moral and other emotions, play such an important part in the moulding of the intellectual machinery, whose healthy automatic action transmits the truth from without, but whose disturbed automatic action is the source of falsehood.

It is, in substance, recognized by some of the scientists, that, within their sphere of research, a more thoroughly cultured manhood is indispensable even for the apprehension and correct appreciation of those truths which some others suppose to be entirely independent of aesthetic, moral, and religious conditions in the investigator. The time is coming when not only a vivid imagination, but a clean conscience and a devout spirit, will be considered requisite to the best prosecution of scientific truth.

In connection with this line of thought, it is also significant to notice how quickly and surely they who stunt or maltreat any part of our complex manhood make themselves incapable to deal with truths for whose treatment the very parts injured are most clearly indispensable. A fit of intellectual insanity, bred of preceding moral insanity, seems to seize upon them when they turn their minds upon certain subjects. The positivist denies the validity, or even the existence, of those parts of the human soul out of which metaphysics grows, and which need special culture in order to a successful pursuit of metaphysics. Who is a more untrustworthy meta-

physician than the thorough positivist? Who more incapable than he of arriving at a correct opinion upon any metaphysical problem? Who is more palpably and foolishly false than the man who attempts to adjust the balance between science and religion, while himself without any cultured thought and feeling with respect to either one of the two? The open soul, given with the symmetrical culture and action of all its powers to the docile reception of truth, is the organ of truth. "Fixed points in knowledge," according to the profound philosophic teaching of Trendelenburg, "are won only by the mutual interpenetration of thought and being."

If the statements just made are true with regard to human knowledge in general, they are pre-eminently true with regard to such knowledge as is presented to the soul in the form of the concept of God. The pure in heart shall see God; they that obey shall know of the doctrine; the things of the spirit are spiritually judged of. These statements are as profound in their philosophic import as they are quickening in their practical tendencies. *This concept comes as God's revelation of himself within all the complex activities of the human soul.* It is adapted to man as man in the totality of his being and energies. And the whole being of man must be co-operative in the reception of this self-revelation of God, as well as met and filled by the form which the revelation takes, in order that the highest truth concerning God may become known. If the loftiest energy of the intellect demands the Absolute, no less truly do the deepest cravings of the heart demand the good and loving Father. The scientific and the so-called popular demand must alike be found satisfied in the true concept of God. The true knowledge of God is attained through the receptive activity, each in its place, of all the powers of the complete man. The concept of God which most nearly corresponds to the reality arises from this symmetrical use of all that is within us as an organon for the deliverance of a heavenly message. As the student of nature places himself before nature, and, being cultured in the powers that especially pertain to his research,

expects to receive from her hand the truth, so ought the student of theology, with the culture of all his powers, to place himself before God.

In proof and elucidation of our thought, we call attention to the following realities of history and of daily experience. The difficulty of presenting any one irrefragable proof for the existence or for any of the attributes of God is experienced by both the philosopher and the teacher of practical Christianity. At the end of any of the various lines of proof there is found always a choice. The voice which issues from the profoundest of our speculations is still the call of the servant of Jehovah: "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." Is there a First Cause, or an unending series of secondary causes? Is the First Cause a person, or the unknown ground of all known phenomena? Is the person who is First Cause perfectly good, infinite in justice and love, or a sort of demiurge, working under restrictions that he cannot control — a compound in himself of the same contradictory elements which are seething together in his works? These and similar questions different intellects, which otherwise seem equally trustworthy, will answer differently. Is the truth, therefore, in doubt? and do we stand, with regard to this question of questions, in jeopardy every hour? Is it not, rather, clear that no other disproof of God's existence could be at all comparable to that which would be given if the intellect were found capable of dealing with these questions as with those that concern merely the phenomena of matter? Comprehension is the work of the intellect. Revelation is the method in which the knowledge of God comes to the human soul. He does not reveal himself to the intellect in order that he may be fully comprehended by that faculty, but within and to the entire man, that he may be loved, adored, and obeyed. In his work on Mental Physiology (p. 480), Dr. Carpenter speaks of certain departments of science "in which our conclusions rest not on any one set of experiences, but upon our *unconscious co-ordination of the whole aggregate of our experience* — not on the conclu-

siveness of any one train of reasoning, but on *the convergence of all our lines of thought toward one centre.*" These words, italicized by that author himself, well represent the form in which the knowledge of God is given to the human soul. It is the convergence of these lines of thought that run together from so many quarters which makes a web of argument far stronger to bind man than any single thread could be. This is a form of proof which, while it is when understood aright overwhelmingly convincing, gives also to all the elements of our complex manhood their proper work to do in its reception. In its reception it makes far greater difference whether the moral and religious sections of the whole channel through which the truth flows are open or not, than whether the faculty of the syllogism is comparatively large or not. Nor is there any effort to disparage intellectual processes involved, in thus insisting upon the complete and co-ordinated activity of the soul as furnishing the organon for the knowledge of God. All the strings of the harp must be in tune, or there will be discord, not harmony, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it.

It is the refusal to bring all the witnesses into court, or perhaps sometimes the inherited or acquired inability to exercise, according to its proper functions, some part of the complex manhood, which makes men atheists. It is the imperfect construction, or action, of some part of the whole organon for the reception of truth which makes men doubt. When doubt arises, what better can we do than appeal from Tyndall in his worse mood to Tyndall in his better mood? And, letting that thinker stand as the representative of men in general, when we appeal to Tyndall in his best mood of all, what less do we do than make the declaration that there is no better solvent than the new birth for men's intellectual difficulties?

We see the philosophical explanation for that fact of experience which so often causes us to wonder; viz. that men, who with equal intellectual culture examine the same evidence as to the truths of theology, come to such diverse and con-

tradictory results. Imagination, feeling, conscience, will, all these faculties go with the men into any sphere of investigation. And what the man brings back depends very largely upon what he takes out with him. To see through the microscope is one thing ; but to interpret what one sees is another and much more difficult thing. Indeed, some sort of instinctive interpretation is involved in even the most casual seeing. When a man uses the telescope, microscope, or spectroscope, though his higher rational and moral faculties are even there co-operative, yet it is the previous culture and the present condition and use of senses, memory, and intellect, which are most concerned in securing the correct result. But it is with the former faculties rather than the latter, though with all combined into harmonious action, that the right result can be secured when the same man tries by searching to find out the Almighty. We should then neither wonder nor be frightened, when the most skilful surgeon takes his dissecting knife, and laying aside the instincts, emotions, and education which are favorable to religion, as he lays aside his coat, fails to discern God in the human body. We scarcely expect the geologist whose heart has never been broken with a blow from the hammer of divine truth to discover his Creator in the geologic strata. But another surgeon and another geologist, with no better and no worse reasoning faculties, will declare : The very stones are sermons ; every nerve, vein, joint, valve and ganglion, is vocal with the praises of an omniscient and benevolent contriver. " If," says Frederic Robertson, " the chemist, geologist, physiologist come back from their spheres and say : ' We find in the laws of affinity, in the deposits of past ages, in the structure of the human frame, no trace or token of God,' I simply reply, I never expected you would. Obedience and self-surrender is the sole organ by which we gain a knowledge of that which cannot be seen or felt."

One of the most interesting of the phenomena which are given to the inspection of the student of theology, is found in the sharp reprisals made upon those who deny or mutilate

the knowledge of God by their own retrenched and mutilated natures. Those powers of the soul which cry out most mightily after the divine cannot be denied that for which they cry, without turning again to feed upon themselves, and thus to consume much of the whole manhood. Or we will say, rather, that in some form or other they *will* be fed, if not with bread, at least with husks. There are those whose minds refuse to join into one concept the Personality which the heart craves and the Absolute toward which we are led by the instinctive working of the philosophic nature. But the intellect, after reducing the idea of the Absolute to the utmost possible tenuity by abstracting one by one all the qualities which we wish for in God, still finds that the idea it has dealt with retains substance enough to cast a shadow of doubt over the validity of its own work. Dark enough is the shadow which is cast over the instinctive cravings after a Heavenly Father's forgiveness, care and love. Strauss, after departing farther and farther from his earlier proximity to evangelical views, finds at last in the conception of an impersonal Cosmos his only satisfaction as a philosopher; but cannot, after all, quite kill out the other activities of our complex being. Therefore "pride and humility, joy and submission, intermingle" in his feeling for the impersonal Cosmos. And when Schopenhauer makes the proposition, that the Cosmos is something which had better not have existed—that "it would, indeed, be better if no life had arisen on the earth any more than on the moon,"—and scouts at Strauss' idea of a "law-governed Cosmos, full of life and reason" and worthy of religious veneration; then the latter gravely replies: "We consider it arrogant and profane on the part of a single individual to oppose himself with such audacious levity to the Cosmos, whence he springs, from which, also, he derives that spark of reason which he misuses." Surely, here again, when he was thinking he had got forever free of them, "enter the poor, old, dead horses of so-called natural theology."

Nor does the author of the phrase just quoted succeed

much better than Strauss in the effort to exclude these troublesome products of natural theology. It may be, the lack of success is partially due to the fact that *theology*, for the theologian and for the communist alike, is *natural*. Should a few more thousand years of human history succeed in proving this to the satisfaction of all disputants upon religious questions, it may turn out matter of universal wonder that any one, made in the image of him whom we all seek, could so mar that image as to find the satisfying idea of God in an impersonal Cosmos. But Matthew Arnold refuses to say whether his "Eternal that makes for righteousness" is person or thing; and in his "Reviews of Objections," as well as in his original work, furnishes, we fear, another instance of how sharp is the reprisal taken by a divided and wounded religious nature, when its normal action is not allowed to testify to the full and valid concept of God. Much that this author has written in his *Literature and Dogma* is valuable, and entitled to attention and gratitude from his numerous readers. There are, however, among many objections to Arnold's view these two; or, rather, two forms of one objection: first, if he proves anything, he proves too much for his own view; second, if he assumes anything, he assumes too little. For, this thinker, who is too cautious in forming his conception of God to venture upon the assertion that he is, or is not, a person, nevertheless is perfectly certain that there is "an Eternal Power which makes for righteousness." But in these words we have given the marks of a tolerably full concept, for the objective validity of which Mr. Arnold must either furnish proof or ask the concession of his readers. Should he furnish indisputable proof of the existence of such a power, none will be more thankful to him than those who believe in a personal God. No item in the whole bundle of proof for the existence of such a God is more important than that one which concerns the reality, potency, and obligation of righteousness. Should he, on the other hand, ask us to concede the existence of that which answers to his concept, none will

be readier to make the concession than those who believe in a personal God. For they themselves, in establishing the validity of their conception of God as opposed to his, need numerous similar conceptions along other lines of thought, not entered upon at all by Mr. Arnold. There are, however, those who do not believe in a personal God, and they will demand of the advocate of righteousness the sternest demonstration for the validity of all his conceptions. They will, we fear, in the duel of intellectual weapons, make Mr. Arnold's position as warm and uncomfortable as he himself has made that of the bishops of Winchester and Gloucester. How, then, shall he defend himself without calling for help upon other faculties and facts than those which have occupied him thus far? And if he do this, how shall he refuse to advance far beyond the uncomfortable and untenable midway position which he is now holding?

The truth is, that Mr. Arnold has been insisting upon one line of thought which, among all, has few superiors in its cogency of persuasion — not to say proof — to the belief in a personal God. If he has assumed the validity of his own fundamental thought, he has assumed too little. The complex phenomena of objective being and subjective impression have much more testimony to hand in, before their case is fully decided in the great court of history. Nor can we help the conviction that there is lurking in this phrase which he is so fond of repeating much more of meaning than its author is willing to admit. He is willing to admit, and holds for an indisputable truth, that there is an "Eternal Power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness." This is, as we have said, a tolerably full concept. It is also a concept which by the very terms of its definition involves the assertion of an objective reality corresponding to the concept. The reality asserted is "not ourselves." Here is a tremendous leap from the thought of the thinker to the world outside — a leap, to make which has always puzzled the theologians, and in making which much argument for the existence of a personal God has been lost into the yawning

gulf of scepticism. Having got once fairly outside of ourselves so that we can assert without fear of contradiction the objective validity of what we think and observe concerning God, and having Mr. Arnold to thank for our safe transition, we look about us to see what has been brought over with us in this leap, so destructive always to perfection of logic, and yet so constantly and inevitably made by every man. This "not ourselves" is a power; which we are glad to learn, because we, too, firmly believe that force — one force — lies back of, and accounts for, the phenomena of conscience and moral conduct. Unity and power, if not omnipotence, have always belonged to our concept of God. Nor can we see why, so far as the testimony from the one line of thought Mr. Arnold follows is concerned, we may not claim that this power which makes for righteousness is one with the power which makes for harmony of motion among the stars, diversity of life upon the earth, the kingdom of God and the patent influence of Christ among men in history. It is also gratifying to learn that the "power not ourselves," whose existence this writer concedes, "makes for" any noble goal or idea, and especially for an idea and a goal so superbly grand as is indicated by the word "righteousness." But we cannot see, by our utmost effort of thought and imagination, how any thing or person can "make for" such a goal, or, indeed, any goal, without a self-conscious purpose. This inability may be our great weakness. But we believe it is our greatest strength to recognize in all phenomena that unity of tendency, that binding of the many under one law, that marching of an army of units, otherwise heterogeneous enough, under one great idea, to one great camp of rest, through one well planned campaign. "Makes for righteousness"; the words are for us empty air unless they speak of intelligence, order, final purpose. No effort of will can emancipate us from this instinctive interpretation of these words. And in this we believe all men coincide with us. Their language clearly shows that they coincide. If this power "makes for righteousness," in any sense which we

can give the words, this power loves the righteousness for which it makes and exerts itself. Here again, as in the case with the German philosopher so with the English critic, "enter the poor, old, dead horses of so-called natural theology."

But let us recall our thought to the point whence this digression has carried us. The reprisals, made upon those who deny to any part of man's complex organon for the reception of truth its proper function in forming the true concept of God, are sharp and inevitable. In some form or other the same thing which so much parade of logic is intended to keep out, will creep in again. Strauss cannot be satisfied with the Christian teaching of the Fatherhood of the Absolute; yet he, too, must bring in, though in mutilated form, a similar conception, a something which calls for humility, reverence, submission, and awe. Matthew Arnold cannot abide the view of the bishops of Winchester and Gloucester, and perforce argues valiantly, though unconsciously, for the validity of substantially the same view.

There is enough more of testimony; not the least important of which might be gathered from the case of the late John Stuart Mill. His final conclusions upon religious questions are as satisfying as any we can expect from one who confessedly discusses the questions merely as a matter of intellectual interest. Yet even he must, after all, introduce as a "hope," to which we are exhorted to cling, though it may very probably be fallacious, what he denies to us as knowledge, or even belief.

What can be more pathetic, and at the same time instructive, than Dr. Congreve offering a prayer at the "Festival of Humanity," and gratefully commemorating "the services of our common mother, the earth," unless it be George Eliot kindling her religious ardor to utter the hymn, "O may I join the choir invisible!" Surely there is instinctive faith, hope, and charity in many of these who know of no personal God, enough to furnish a score of ordinary Christians. Yet how misapplied, how largely fruitless, is made this irrepresentable activity of the soul of man.

The view which I am advocating coincides, I believe, with the profound philosophy which underlies the immortal prologue of the Gospel of John. God without a self-revelation would be an unknown God. Our knowledge of him is the resultant, along all the lines of light, of the light which he has given to the soul. Out of the dark background of incomprehensible being, he comes forth, revealing himself in the divine personality of the Logos. Creation, life, and light, the ascending series of this self-revelation, culminate in the disclosure which the incarnation makes. Christ, who has been so aptly designated "God's sublimest idea of his human self," is the culmination of the Father's self-revelation, and the proof, as well, that we are capable, when we have become Christlike, of receiving the satisfying concept of God. As we find this concept forming within the soul, contributed through and nourishing all its complex activities, we find ourselves ready to endorse the words of a recent writer in the *Contemporary Review* concerning Mr. Mill: "How poor are his logical ethics, and his determination to compass the 'Highest' with the forms of the understanding, compared with what he has called (God forgive him!) the 'poor stuff' of St. John's Gospel."

But these instances of sharp and inevitable reprisal need not by any means be all taken from the mistakes of those who "try to compass the Highest with the forms of the understanding." They who give unrestrained exercise to the emotional nature in forming their concept of God are a warning as well. No violation of the reason can possibly make a permanent stand against the demands of reason that the concept of God, as formed within the human soul, shall be, not intelligible, for that it can never be, but, at the least, not irrational. More than the reasoning faculties can contribute, or even comprehend as contributed, this concept of God must contain; but any element contradictory to reason it must not contain. Different elements, the complete reconciliation of whose seeming opposition is impossible, may be held together. Whatever is really falsehood and

rubbish the continuous self-revelation of God in the individual and in history will proceed to sweep away. Views of the Divine Being and divine attributes which have their main roots in the senses and the passions—from the low conception of the Aztec priest as he holds to his bloody idol's mouth the warm heart of a human victim, or of the worshipper of that Allah who arbitrarily divides his lump of clay, and throws one part into paradise, another into hell-fire, to the high-flown mysticism of Rousseau—are no less faulty and sure to break down than the coldest inductions of the materialistic philosophy. Yet the senses and the constitutional passions, purified from selfishness in the discharge of their functions, are entitled to make their contribution toward the final result. This they will surely do.

The concept of God, then, is not one, the objective validity of which can be tested solely by the success or failure of any number of arguments, considered merely as arguments, along their different lines. It is rather a centre upon which converge many lines, not only of argument, but also of intuition, feeling, and purpose. *This concept is the resultant of God's revelation of himself to the human soul.* The whole complex system of activities is concerned, as an organon for the revelation, in that resultant. Just as the objective facts which answer to the concept are fitted to appeal to every part of man's complex being, so the impressions made in every part of his being answer more or less perfectly to this appeal. There are ideas called innate or cognate, "synthetic judgments a priori,"—to use the terminology of Kant,—cognitions which bear the marks of long processes of observation and reasoning, instinctive cravings whose influence can be traced through all the development of the individual and the race, spontaneous and voluntary activities of the higher emotional nature, tendencies that belong to the philosophic side of humanity—all blending together or struggling together, each designed and destined to have its appropriate function in forming the perfected concept of God.

If this view of the question, for the answer to which we

are seeking, has any valid claim to acceptance, it is evident, as has been said, that the enforcement and illustration of its validity call for an analysis of the concept and of the activities through which the concept is formed, in their relation to each other. To make this analysis exhaustively there is required such penetration and accuracy of insight as few will care to claim. To present certain specimens of a fragmentary sort is the utmost that I can now attempt. Let us, then, examine some of the manifold activities of the human soul, with a view to indicate what elements they contribute toward the formation and symmetrical development of this greatest of all concepts.

If the division adopted seem faulty, and the different lines of thought seem to cross and recross each other, let it be remembered that the division is only tentative and made with a view to illustration. Let it also be remembered that the co-ordinated and interlocked action of the different faculties is natural.

And further, we need have no expectation that at this late day any argument for the divine existence and attributes will have, as an argument, much cogency with those who have given themselves to disbelief and doubt. It is the very gist of the thought I am advocating that no written or spoken argument can at all adequately set forth the argument which pleads its cause in the vital centres and activities of man's being. In representing the truth before the intellect we may, indeed, do a helpful office to the intellect, and through it to the entire man; but it is not the same truth which God himself so effectually presents. On the other hand, to meet and answer every one of the arguments of theology for the being and attributes of God does not silence the pleadings that are denied conscious recognition, the voices that speak for the eternal Logos within the soul. It abuses the intellect without satisfying the man. For instance, that questioning after the sources of phenomena, which is part of the mainspring of all religion, shapes itself into a faith in an absolute First Cause. Granted that the faith is not

demonstrably correct, but stands before the intellect on a footing with the belief in an endless series of second causes, somehow or other the faith remains firm. And remaining, it must itself be accounted for. It therefore comes again and again before the intellect in such manner that the faith itself considered as a fact is an argument for its own validity.

Beginning the work of illustration with that which is so low down in the scale as to be too often overlooked, we find that the symmetrical action of the senses and of all the various nervous centres is concerned in the formation of the right concept of God. To assert this is to accept the facts, not to disparage either the science or the object of theology. Baring Gould's attempt to fix the physiological centres of religious activity may not be very satisfying, and others who differ from his view may succeed either better or worse than he. The case is all the same so far as we are concerned. Having once admitted the correlation which plainly exists between the vital activities of the brain and other nervous centres on the one hand, and the activities in thought and feeling of the conscious soul on the other hand, and having, with awe at the mystery, seen new proofs of God's wonderful working in all this correlation, we have no further painful concern as to future discoveries. Should the scientists show that so much and such brain matter is the invariable concomitant of the idea of God, or that such, and no other, molecular conditions and movements of the sensory ganglia go with a Christian's faith and love; what then? If the Father of all choose to make certain parts of the physical system of man the organon in part for his revelation of himself, it seems to us that gratitude and trust, rather than thankless distrust, are the feelings which properly correspond to his choice. The very existence of a brain and nervous system such as, found no where else in the animal creation, is found in man, and fitted to God's self-disclosure, is a proof of his existence. Nor is it strange if symmetrical action and culture of this system are important elements of the whole. "Pure thought" about this highest object of thought

is not attained by trying — vain attempt — to withdraw from all the conditions of thinking, but by using all the means, even the lowest, which we have given to us for receiving the truth. We cannot see how it disparages theology or throws doubt upon the divine existence, if it be shown that sound brain-fibre, and enough of it, are as necessary to the reception of the valid concept of God as the Hegelian dialectics. Indeed, well aerated blood is, no doubt, in many cases, quite as good a guarantee of true religious views as an overabundance of monkish musings.

We watch that correlation between growth to the bodily organs and growth to the concept of God which is shown in the life of the child. We learn substantially the same lesson when we trace in history the growth of a race from a condition of savagery to one of civilization and Christianity. We are informed of the proofs which are adduced to the view that many, if not all, of the activities of the soul — memory, imagination, reasoning, emotion — have their invariable physical concomitants. We notice the undoubted truth that our own estimates of arguments, the different degrees of prominence which we at different times assign to different elements of our theologic notions, are largely influenced by varying physiological conditions. We hear some of our leading physiologists talk as though the different systems of theology were wholly due to different states of the liver in their exponents. In sympathetic response to their claims we wonder what fit of indigestion brought Tyndall into the mood in which he publicly gave his adherence to the materialistic philosophy and dissolved us all — would that he had spoken for himself alone — after death into the “azure of the past.” Then, when we have separated, as well as may be, facts from opinions, we find enough to convince us, not that matter contains “the promise and the potency of every form and quality of life,” but that God in his self-revelation to man does not leave out of the account man’s material organism. That organism is part of the organon through which he reaches man.

Nor can we doubt the part which the senses play in furnishing materials to the intellect for forming the subordinate concepts which pertain to the one great concept, and for constructing the arguments which sustain and justify our belief in God. It is scarcely possible to tell what would be the effect upon the cogency of the argument from design, if the one sense of sight were taken away. Through the open and healthy senses there pour into the soul sights and sounds which constantly tend to nourish the idea of beauty as well as design, to stimulate the feeling of obligation, to train in choice the will, and so introduce and feed right knowledge of God. The senses and intellect lead Strauss to the belief in an impersonal "Cosmos, full of life and reason." Supplemented by the other parts of complex manhood, they lead others to the belief in a living, intelligent, and benevolent person, who is God. The search after cause and final purpose is conducted and stimulated largely by the activity of the senses. The knowledge that we are free, and so the belief in a free, personal First Cause like ourselves, is given to us very largely in connection with sensual impressions and in the voluntary use of the bodily organism. So comes and grows also the notion of force; a notion which is inextricably interwoven with volition, and which, carried out into the macrocosm from the microcosm of daily experience, and supplemented by other activities of man's complex being, guarantees, as the ground of all phenomena, one forceful, free, as well as intelligent and good being, who is God. In all the highest ideas of divinity we can trace the operation of the nervous centres, which are not to be considered as leaving a black residuum of falsehood, but as contributing through their open channels important elements of truth. They of themselves alone could never introduce to the soul the knowledge of God. But as parts of the whole they do contribute, in an important way, to its introduction and culture.

There are also more subtle, and often unnoticed, uses of the physiological conditions which accompany all thought and

feeling. Man's soul and body are not mechanically mixed. They unite, chemically (so to speak), vitally, and make one man. The functions and emotions and ideas which belong to fatherhood and motherhood are intimately connected with physiological conditions; but these functions, emotions and ideas wonderfully teach and stimulate our faith in the Fatherhood of God. How can the person who has not, either in instinct or in action, parental faculties, form the correct conception of God? The first babe, laid for its first nourishment upon the mother-breast, is meant to be an argument stronger than any syllogism for the parental nature of God. There is an Eternal which makes for personal love and trust; it is one with the "Eternal that makes for righteousness"; it is God. Those indefinable longings which accompany the greatest physical crisis of life are designed and used by the Divine Teacher to further his self-revelation within the soul. Hence one significant reason why this crisis is so often accompanied by a crisis in the spiritual life.

Another potent argument for the existence and operative energy of God is given to the intellect for its consideration by the *automatic* action of the nervous centres, and of those so-called mental powers which accompany such nervous action. We discover that the working of our machinery, both mental and physical, is largely conducted for us, rather than by us. Thus the proof of a force, comprehensive, rational, and concerned in the welfare of our being, is brought into most intimate connection with the mind. Day by day, and momentarily, we find the unseen hand moving us. A will, an intelligence, a love, "not ourselves," stand face to face with the conscious soul in the machinery, which we from our centre of volition, and *he* from his centre, both use. Nor can the force and scope of this fact be given in the form of an argument from design submitted to the criticism of the faculty of the syllogism. That sense of awe and mystery which ministers so effectually to faith in the divine is awakened and kept alive by the consciousness that we, in our own organs of body and mind, are played upon by this invisible

hand. When Mozart, without previous teaching, improvised and used so perfectly the pedals of the first organ with pedals which he had ever met, his father wrote: "This is a new gift of God." But especially, as I believe, is that sense of dependence which Schleiermacher made the root and trunk of all religion fostered by the means indicated above. At no other so sensitive point can a man be touched as at the point of control over the physical and mental faculties which he calls his own.

But we must leave this portion of the contemplated analysis, not because it is completed, but because we hope that a few hints will serve to indicate and certify the whole. It is the *πρώτον ψεύδος* of much so-called Christian dogmatics and un-Christian science alike that they deny the present, vital, and comprehensive relations which exist between God and his universe.

We turn now briefly to notice certain instinctive cravings which are concerned in forming the right concept of God.

The Rev. George D'Oyly Snow, in an interesting article on Natural Theology, published in the *Contemporary Review* for March, 1873, uses the following language: "In answer to the question, Where is God the maker? I have replied — it is no new-fashioned answer — I find him in my own dissatisfaction." It may well be doubted whether, among the many forces by which God draws men to himself, there is to be found another more effectual than that which consists in man's inherent dissatisfaction. The law of growth through craving is fundamental and capable of illustration from every form of animal life. Put life into matter, and you get as one of its earliest exhibitions the same phenomenon which remains with the life until its extinction — you get craving, which being met by supply becomes the minister of higher life and growth. The amoeba, a small jelly-speck, driven by its instinctive craving, searches for that in the environment which is fitted to its use; and then makes its whole self into a stomach to wrap about the food which it has secured. Under excitement from this instinctive craving the locusts

go forth in bands, and, braver than the Amazonian warriors of Ashantee, scale walls and smother with their dead bodies the fires which oppose their progress. In the world of struggling races this instinctive unrest acts like a mighty hammer to spread out the nations and fuse them under its blows. In the souls of men this instinctive craving under various forms acts as the spur of the rider to drive men toward the divine in which alone they can find satisfaction and rest. For the selfishness, stormy passion, and unscrupulous gratification of this inherent desire for something more beyond, we cannot hold God accountable. But craving, pure and simple, dissatisfaction urging on and ministering to fuller life, is constitutional, and therefore divine in its origin. It is also in all its various forms connected with trust — in the lowest forms instinctive craving with instinctive trust; in the highest forms rational longing after holiness and God with free, self-conscious trust in God. It was the sense of want which led Augustine to Milan, and Nee Sima to America; and mainly through the leadership of this impulse both were brought to the true knowledge of God. The church father tells of “deep-seated craving,” which he long tried to satisfy by “hunting after the emptiness of popular praise, down even to theatrical applauses, and poetic prizes, and strifes for grassy garlands, and the follies of shows, and the intemperance of desires.”

It is to craving, in the form of dissatisfaction with the present sinful condition, that Christianity so confidently appeals. The sense of guilt is closely connected with these instinctive cravings. “So long,” says the profound Müller, writing upon this topic, “as the longing after God sleeps in the soul, thus long sleeps also guilt.” The idea of perfect justice, and in connection with this idea the conviction that there is a perfect executor of justice and a sphere wherein perfect justice is destined to reign, arises within the soul at first rather as a craving than a clearly formed conception. “Justice,” says George Eliot, expressing with great beauty, as she is wont, the half-truth of moral and religious life —

“justice is like the kingdom of God — it is not without us a fact, it is within us as a great yearning.” It is, indeed, within us as a great yearning, but it is also without us a fact, complementary to the yearning, and witnessed to by the yearning.

That instinctive craving for protection, and for the feeling of complete security, which is interwoven so closely with the feeling of dependence, is a, by no means, unimportant factor in forming the perfect concept of God. In those times of depression and weakness, which we all share with the great scientist, the strongest of us instinctively craves after an omnipotent helper and friend. The poet sings :

“In die Welt hinausgestossen
Steht der Mensch verlassen da.”

But the man thus thrust out into the world, and standing there abandoned, feels, at the thought of his desolation and helplessness, a shivering which breaks the very bones of manhood and freezes its life-blood. And there instinctively springs up within the rightly constituted soul a hope and confidence in One whose children we are, and who notes the fall of the sparrow, and throws away at random not one hair of our heads. The impersonal Cosmos, the all-pervading law, when separated in thought from him whose force the law gauges in its amount and method, are cold food for such a craving.

But we are reminded that it is a matter for the inductive philosophy to determine how far these so-called instinctive cravings have any objective reality which corresponds to themselves, and that thus far the inductive philosophy in none of its various departments — astronomy, geology, biology, sociology — has found any such reality. Surely, in this life we crave many things which we do not obtain, even things which have no existence, as when children cry for the moon, or wish to shake hands with the man who lives therein. There are arguments which, as such, may be made more or less fully to meet this caution of the inductive philosophy. But we are now occupied with this thought, — that the

craving is a fact in itself, and as such, whether it justify itself or not before the inductive philosophy, will certainly make its influence felt in forming man's conviction as to the existence and attributes of God.

Closely connected with the craving just mentioned is the obverse craving for an object which we may love without limit, and defend at all hazards below the risk of losing the object itself.

Consider, also, what a capacity for indefinite admiration, and what craving after an object the admiration of which shall never go too far, can be awakened within the human soul. It is Coleridge, if I remember rightly, who calls attention to the meaning of that unbounded, and in itself senseless, feeling which the crowd has for its hero. This feeling is testimony to the strength of human craving after the ideally excellent and admirable. It is the incense burned to the idol for the sake of so much of the divine as is in it. The abandon in hoarse shouting after him who has been lucky in battle, the adoration (which so far outstrips real merit) given to the genius in discovery, oratory, painting, and song, are a lesson as to what capacity and craving for the admirable are within man.

Under this head, especial prominence should be given to the desire of happiness. The ill-defined and unintelligent experience of want develops into the definite, purposeful, and self-conscious desire for the object which will gratify the want. When the instinctive and fundamental cravings are met by the proper supplies the result is happiness. These cravings all, therefore, minister to the desire of happiness. It is through the experience which comes only when they are gratified, that there is awakened within the soul any distinctive desire for happiness as such. The infant instinctively craves food, warmth, air, light. The craving is automatic, and in its earliest stages has not taken the form of a self-conscious desire; but it ministers to the self-conscious use of that desire which is, as it were, the resultant of all forms of craving—the desire of happiness. This

desire, as it outstrips all means of its gratification which lie outside of God, tends to lead the soul to the true knowledge of him. In close connection with the development of this desire goes on the development of its corresponding idea, which is the idea of the *summum bonum*. As the man finds none of this life's good things serving to satisfy fully his craving for happiness, he learns that none of them corresponds to his ever-expanding notion of that which constitutes the soul's highest good, until, if the result of his life-training be fortunate, his yearning and his idea meet in the same object, viz. to know, to serve, and to enjoy God.

It is, however, in connection with the activities of the conscience that this desire makes its most important contributions to the right concept of God. The ethical nature of man chastens the desire, and the notion of God becomes not merely that of a Being who fulfils our utmost cravings for happiness, but, as well, that of a Being who requires the control of those cravings according to the voice of conscience. This desire in the sinful man inevitably turns into a fear lest the objects which can gratify it may be lost, whenever it is brought face to face with the conception of a Being both holy and full of power. The fear reveals still further the nature of God.

This desire of happiness also ministers powerfully to the sense of inscrutable mystery. With a mighty craving for happiness, and an exalted idea of the possibilities which, if realized, might fully meet the craving, we stand awe-stricken before the dark, inexplicable facts of resistance, pain, and moral evil. We find pain in the very bones of the universe. Resistance and other more significant causes of adversity are seen to be fundamentally necessary to life. Under the impetus of this craving for happiness, we are led into that struggle with the unyielding facts of the cosmos which trains both head and heart for the reception of the right concept of God. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth" is written everywhere. By struggle, when its issue is happy, the head is brought to an enlarged view of the nature and work of

God. That large class of facts — the sting, the fang, the parasite, the devouring maw of the ocean wave — get the recognition which they demand from him who would rightly apprehend the divine. And the heart is led into trust, submission, obedience made perfect through suffering.

The will also, gaining a more rigorous development in the midst of the grave conflict which the desire of happiness necessitates for every man, more completely and clearly represents before the mind that free, limitless force to overcome evil and produce good, the type and earnest of which can be conveyed in no other way.

When the desire of happiness, penetrated with benevolence, goes outside of self, it directs research after the truth of history, so that this research throws new light upon the nature of God. It is pressure which drives individuals into political unity, and “kneads the cake of custom,” as Mr. Bagehot has phrased the thought. We see how the separate families and tribes of men have, by the function of adversity, formed themselves into the higher organic condition of national life. Thus God in history reveals himself in one of his most impressive characteristics to the human soul. No more beautiful description of the methods of intellectual and spiritual vitality can anywhere be found than is given us in the duke of Argyll’s “Reign of Law,” where he unfolds the relations of the external force of the earth to the internal force which moves the sea-bird’s wing. That soul can float beside the albatross, at rest, “where there is nothing else at rest in the tremendous turmoil of its own stormy seas,” who has been trained under divine tuition to mount thither as the fowl does, beating down resistance from without by force that answers from within.

There are, doubtless, many to whom this view of God revealing himself to man through all these so-called lower parts of man’s complex being, will be very objectionable. For, if we hold this view, there is quite enough in the total self-revelation of God to warrant us in asserting that we know something of his existence and attributes — that he is

powerful, intelligent, loving. But this is to assert that he is revealed to us as a Person — as, what Mr. Arnold calls, a “non-natural man.” Such an assertion is, with some, gross anthropomorphism and anthropopathism. To transcend one’s faculties by abuse of them, to imagine some *πρὸ στω* for the logical lever outside of the cognizable and thinkable universe, is, for the Hegelian, the only way to know God. To furnish the faculties, all open and all symmetrically cultured, to the self-revelation of God is, according to the view here advocated, the only way to receive the full and satisfying impression from God. In correspondence with man’s intellectual and emotional *μορφή*, or form, the revelation must inevitably be made. The only question is, whether the form furnished — the mould into which the objective reality is cast — shall be an entire or a mutilated organon. What parts of the whole it is most calamitous to neglect or mutilate we shall see better when we have briefly considered how some of the higher emotions of the soul are concerned in forming the concept of God.

“To find a legitimate satisfaction for the religious emotions is,” says a leading scientist, “the problem of problems of our day.” Among these religious emotions stand highest the three which the apostle exalts — faith, hope, and love. These are not, however, emotions pure and simple, but *attitudes*, rather, of the whole man, in which the intellectual and voluntary, as well as the emotional, powers have their part. To find “a legitimate satisfaction” for them is to bring them such an object as satisfies them, while it does not break the laws according to which the activities most prominent in scientific research have to be exercised. These activities present, in their connection, the phenomena with which they are concerned; but the religious emotions ever drive us behind and beyond the phenomena with their modes of connection to the person God. Through that loving trust, then, which the New Testament calls “faith,” must the true concept of God be received to the human soul. This is the only rational, the only possible, way of its reception. Nor do we fail to trace the law according to which supply meets

want, through the channel of trust, from lowest form of life to highest — from the callow bird who, with eye uncovered, opens its mouth to an unknown mother, up to the philosopher who by self-conscious, free, and rational trust finds the God whom he could not find by undevout researches.

“By hope we are saved”; “He that loveth not, knoweth not God.” That these religious emotions are as indispensable as they are instinctive is a truth, than which no demonstration of the intellect, or fact verified by the senses, can be plainer or more worthy of regard. Reasoning must prevent the imagination from leading these religious emotions into superstitious and harmful vagaries, but can never silence the voices with which they call the soul towards God.

Already the prominent, the incomparable influence that the condition of the moral faculties in man has upon the form, whether obscured or symmetrical, which the self-revelation of God takes within the human soul, has been more than once, by inference, asserted. Indeed, all the activities to which reference has been made are, in real life, of true ethical significance. The idea and feeling of duty, the sense of responsibility, tinge, if they do not permeate thoroughly, the whole sphere of mental movement. Even the automatic action of the nervous centres is not without its testimony to the great fact that man is gifted with a moral nature, with freedom — that he is made in the image of God. The rule of duty within him is inevitably taken as a pattern and a pledge of the great law of right without. His self-condemnation he instinctively interprets as the revelation of a condemnation from One who is greater than his heart and knoweth all things. This ethical sense of order, which binds together the otherwise heterogeneous and ethically insignificant phenomena of the life of the soul, demands an explanation of the intellect. The intellect, searching under the guidance of the great ideas of cause and final purpose, finds the explanation of such ethical order in One who is both rational and righteous — even God. But long before the intellect has certified this explanation, the voice of con-

science has gained practically a hearing as the voice of a person who loveth the righteous and maketh for righteousness.

But it is, I believe, the pure and strong action of the will which is needed above all else. It is that "heart of the heart" which, more than any other faculty in the complex whole, must be right in its activities in order that the soul may be a fit organon for the reception of the self-revelation of God. Under the influence of the ethical ideas and emotions, and in the two great forms of religious faith and love, it dominates and gives shape to the good man's conception of his Heavenly Father. For the verity of their conceptions, for their beliefs, hopes, and aspirations, men are no less truly responsible than for their conduct. We have already remarked how the idea of one force, dominating and marshalling in order the various phenomena of the cosmos, has its point of starting from our consciousness of exerting force in the control of our bodily organism and mental train. We have observed, also, how that struggle against resistance into which our desire for happiness throws us ministers to the full and complete concept of God. But it is in voluntary, rational self-surrender to a recognized Father and Lord that we discover the very gist of the condition of soul necessary to a true knowledge of divine realities.

One entire half of our complex being — viz. that which is mainly concerned in the intellectual and philosophic activities of man — has thus far been only subordinately treated in our illustration of the theme. Yet that other half is no less important and peremptory in its demands than the one which we have reviewed. The course followed in the Essay has been chosen in the belief that the reader will at once supply from the customary sources what I must leave unsaid. To hint at some of the elements in the complex whole which are contributed by certain lines of argument, and to mention certain of those comprehensive ideas which, either lying at the beginning of all processes of thought are called "innate," or crowning all actual thought may be considered as sure to dominate in all future religious beliefs, as well as scientific research, will be the utmost that can be at present attempted.

The sphere of legitimate and convincing argument for the existence and attributes of God is likely to be largely increased. That sphere covers all known phenomena of nature, of mind, of the history of the race, with its Bible and its growing experience in the progressive kingdom of God. The sciences of matter and physical forces are pouring rich treasures of newly-discovered phenomena and laws of phenomena into the lap of theology. She must spread out her lap, and with thanksgiving receive them. Science discloses only what she sees of the phenomenal; theology is to reveal and "see all things in God." For her the forces of the scientist are the manifold, irresistible, deathless energy of the Divine will; and the laws of the scientist are for her the methods, which she must humbly learn, in which that mighty will has its perpetual working. She must reject, promptly and forever, that view, which has been so damaging, that there is ever, anywhere, a severance of the connection between the Divine Workman and his perpetual work. "My Father worketh hitherto" is the testimony of God's universe and of God's Son. With this way of conducting researches, theology will draw from science now unimaginable stores of food for awe, reverence, trust, and love. Science, which halted so long after the church ran, will come on both feet, hastening to contribute testimony to the teachings of him who spake as never another.

The phenomena of history are utterly incomprehensible and incapable of rational treatment without the guiding concept of a God in history. But as they are known better, God will be known better. That unseen hand which has led and lifted the people is the hand of one who has a purpose to fulfil, and who will not tarry until he accomplish it.

Criticism, hostile as well as friendly, will be forced to show, not only how, but why, these books, so many in number, so diverse in authorship and characteristics, have been gathered, without self-conscious intent on the part of man, into one book—a whole, unique in origin, as well as influence upon the race. The phenomena of Christian con-

sciousness, so clearly traceable back for their source to the Christ of God whose name they bear, will be understood better, and he who is their source will be understood and loved better, as it becomes more and more clearly apparent that in no other way can a satisfactory account of them be given than by acknowledging Jesus as, par excellence, the Revealer of the Father. Mivart is grandly right when he declares: "From a sympathetic study of the whole universe the conception of Almighty God becomes fully revealed to the human intellect."

Memory and imagination also contribute their parts to the complete conception of God — memory, which both upon its physiological and its psychological sides discloses the existence within us of mysterious, purposeful force; and imagination, which craves what a recent work has called an "infinitely precious familiarity with the conception of a morally perfect Being."

It is under the impetus and guidance of the cognitions of cause and design that all the various arguments for the divine existence and attributes are prepared and brought before the judgment. The validity of the arguments from cause and final purpose may be questioned; but the real work of these cognitions never fails to be accomplished. Science, though owing all its development to these ideas, still, strictly speaking, has to deal with neither; it deals with succession of phenomena, mechanical adaptations. The scientist, however, as a man endowed with a philosophic and religious nature is bound, at every step, to go behind the phenomenal, and find in a free will his efficient cause, in a benevolent mind his final cause. Science, as such, has absolutely nothing to say, because it knows nothing, about what lies at the bottom and works from behind the phenomena. It tells the how of One whom it can never discover. Cause and final purpose, becoming so allied in thought that we cannot but conceive of them as joined in reality, we are instinctively so led by the tendency to unify as to form the conception of one efficient and intelligent cause for all these phenomena.

Nor can we doubt that those great conceptions of perfect unity, order and universal law, which the best thought of the ages has been engaged in elaborating, will assert and maintain their place in the concept of God. As truly as the heart of man protests against the mechanical conception of the universe, so truly does the scientific and philosophic nature protest against any conception of the divine which does not exclude all arbitrariness and caprice. Right views of the supernatural and miraculous no more interfere with the validity of these great concepts than do right views of the material cosmos. For the natural and supernatural are not two mutually exclusive spheres; nor is the assertion of God's personality the denial of the universal "reign of law." God is the one person in whom free-will is never distraught by conflicts between reason and desire, and the very centre of whose personality is, as well, the source of all force, order, and law.

The intellectual as well as the emotional half of human development has its dim and shadowy places. And just as there are indefinable yearnings, so there are ideas which are half-ideas, half-dreams, which ever elude the attempt at fixing them and yet which are by no means given to delude us. They enter into much of our reasoning about God, and we know that our conception of God cannot be complete without including them. Yet they impart much of their own dimness to that conception which they are needed to compose. They seem like fragments of deliverances, which in their completeness are too vast to be made to souls constituted like ours. But the persistency with which they evade the most subtle attempts made to comprehend and analyze them is no greater than the persistency with which they insist upon having their place in forming the true concept of God. Nor does their existence within the realm of the concept vitiate its claim to validity. I am a person; and many of the elements which go to make up the complex whole I call myself, I can clearly recall in consciousness, examine, define, and comprehend. But other elements, not

excepting some upon which my whole existence as a person seems to depend, I cannot thus treat. They make me know that even my limited personality is greater than I can comprehend. Is it strange, then, if we do not comprehend the Absolute Person, the Eternal and Infinite Father? Eternal, absolute, infinite — it is by syllogisms, framed to catch and hold such forms as these, that pantheism leads on to the awful pit, into which falls all that is manifestly dear to the heart of God's child. It is, however, those same elements of the whole which give necessarily to the Christian religion its pantheistic — I have no better word — coloring; a religion which does not obscure, as the blackness of pantheism does, all that we know of God, but placing this in clear sunlight throws a cloud above, and urges us thus toward the regions where, as we may hope, the cloud will be more and more lifted.

Of the many reflections which this view as to the origin of the concept of God suggests to us, let one suffice.

If man, as a whole of balanced and symmetrically cultured parts, is the organon of truth, then as man in the totality of his being advances, God's self-revelation to him will become more and more complete, both as a concept simply and as a motive to right conduct. As Christianity moulds the character of men, its own doctrines will be seen to give, not the mere incidents, but constituent elements of the true knowledge of God. As it transforms the whole being of man, that transformed being will better and better serve the divine purpose of receiving knowledge, force, joy, fulness of life from the divine source. They who search for their Heavenly Father, as the old-time cynic searched for an honest man, with patent doubt and sneer, will never find him.

We know no better words with which to close than those last words from the immortal Confessions of Augustine": "What man can teach man to understand this? or what angel an angel? or what angel a man? Let it be *asked* of thee, *sought* of thee, *knocked* for at thee; so, so shall it be received, so shall it be found, so shall it be opened."