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JOURNAL OF
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ORDINARY MEETING, MAY 2, 1881.

J. E. HOWARD, ESQ., F.R.S., VICE-PRESIDENT, IN THE CHAIR.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed, and the following elections were announced :—

LIFE MEMBER :—Rev. T. Ladds, M.A., Leighton.

MEMBERS :—Rev. J. B. Whiting, M.A., Ramsgate ; Miss A. W. Richardson, Ireland.

LIFE ASSOCIATE :—H. S. Williams, Esq., M.A., F.R.A.S., A.C., Swansea.

ASSOCIATES :—Herbert Crichton Stuart, M.A., D.L., Bute ; S. W. Ford, Esq., M.A., United States ; Rev. S. D. Peet, M.A., United States ; Rev. S. D. Stubbs, M.A., London.

Also the presentation of the following works for the library :

“ Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society.” *From the same.*
“ Beneath the Surface.” By Rev. E. Duke, F.G.S. *Ditto.*

The following paper was then read by the author :—

AN EXAMINATION OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF MR. HERBERT SPENCER. By the Rev. W. D. GROUND.

THE “ System of Philosophy ” associated with the name of Herbert Spencer has now been nearly twenty years before the philosophical world, and it has slowly made its way until it has won a place in the first rank of such productions. Whatever we may think of it, it is not easy to withhold our intellectual homage. It is the last, and probably the greatest, attempt ever made to present a true philosophy of the Kosmos ; it is imbued with the modern scientific spirit ; it claims to be strictly in accord with scientific principles ; it displays a breadth of generalisation and a wealth of energy such as we find only in the greatest works of all time ; and it is by many

believed to be one of the worthiest triumphs ever achieved by the unaided intellect of man. It is never easy to estimate justly any contemporary Work—we stand too near to it to see its true proportions,—but it seems to not a few that Mr. Spencer may fairly claim a place in the front rank of the intellect of the world. His greatness in this respect must in justice be conceded, and it must also be allowed that he displays high moral refinement. Yet, notwithstanding this, his system, considered as a system, can only be characterised as the entire negation of every moral element. There are no terms in his philosophy into which the idea of morality can be translated. That philosophy and the moral idea are mutually exclusive, like two circles which have no part of their area in common. He explains everything in the universe, including all the works of man's intellect, and all the emotions and aspirations of man's spiritual nature, simply in terms of Force, and he deliberately and resolutely excludes the idea that along the lines of that Force a spiritual element runs. He shows simply the working of Law, and he labours to create the impression that Law and Force exhaust all the elements of the problem. Now, we may allow that wherever God works, He works according to law,—a Law He has imposed,—and wherever He works, Force will be manifested. It *may* be, therefore, that much of Mr. Spencer's Philosophy is nothing but the presentation of two aspects of the true conception of the universe; and if we add the third and spiritual aspect, making Law and Force only the roads which intelligent spirit and moral energy make use of, it *may* be we thus arrive at a more complete and full-orbed conception of God's working in our world. But until this third aspect be added, Mr. Spencer's philosophy means nothing less than the complete and thorough-going destruction of every element out of which the distinctive conception of a Personal God or a personal self can be framed; morality, conscience, faith, prayer, are shown by it to be mere delusions, so far at least as their relations to God are concerned; and the whole system is a vast spiritual desert, where not a breath from heaven can blow. Undiluted by the spiritual, its atmosphere is deadly in the extreme. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, have lost all faith in God, and been rendered desolate for life, since they became acquainted with its tenets. With an intellectual elevation like a range of Alpine mountains, it fascinates the unwary, who are, in too many instances, only led to the regions where all thoughts of God die out, and there remain only negation and despair.

In seeking to examine this philosophy it will be understood that no easy task is before us. Its combination of intellectual

range, scientific precision, high moral tone, mental energy, profound subtlety, and deadly though veiled antagonism to righteousness, make up a whole such as has never been seen in the world before. The systems of philosophy encountered by St. Paul were, compared with this, but as unproved assertions to the deductions of exact science, or as crumbling sand to solid granite. And whilst Mr. Spencer supplies the out-works and the fortification, that fortification is manned by the great body of scientific men. It is greatly understating the support accorded to the doctrine of Evolution, on which his system mainly rests, if we say that a distinct majority of the leading men of science in all countries of the globe give it their hearty and enthusiastic adhesion. Before it can be supplanted the opinions of the scientific world must be radically changed. If the acceptance of the doctrine of Evolution logically compels the acceptance of Mr. Spencer's philosophy then there is a bitter and awful conflict between Science and Theology looming before us, the issues whereof it is impossible to predict. Such a conflict must come independently of the question whether Evolution be true or false. True or false, it has now become the accepted scientific hypothesis, and nothing but stern and terrible warfare, carried on probably for fifty years, will drive it back from the position it has gained. It must be reckoned with whatever opinions any may hold concerning it. But let us now proceed to our examination, it being understood that we have to deal with a giant, and that if we would grapple with him effectively we must gird ourselves for earnest and manly struggle.

I. In the first place, then, let us prove that the existence and the immateriality of Mind is a cardinal doctrine of Mr. Spencer's Analytic system.

II. Let us point out vast tracts in his Synthetic system where Mind is altogether ignored, and Man is regarded as nothing more than a composition of solar force.

If these two points be satisfactorily established, then, of necessity, a complete and fatal contradiction has been made out to exist between two parts,—Analysis and Synthesis,—of what is claimed to be a logical unity, and, by consequence, the system, as a system, is hopelessly destroyed.

I. The existence and the immateriality of Mind is a cardinal doctrine of Mr. Spencer's Philosophy.

It is one of the last and most certain deliverances of his Philosophy that Mind and Matter both exist, and that between these two there is a chasm which no effort of ours enables us to cross. He exhausts the resources of language to declare that this is the one fact which transcends in absolute certainty every

other fact. Somehow this seems to have escaped the notice of many who have criticised his writings, and he is commonly believed to uphold something like Materialism. Greater error, however, there can hardly be. Materialism has never before had such a powerful and uncompromising opponent, and it is hardly probable that it can ever again make head against his attacks. The doctrine of the absolute immateriality of Mind is a structural part of his philosophy, and one which is simply invaluable to those who see the spiritual aspect of things. He states the doctrine over and over again. On this point the following passages amongst others are surely conclusive:—

In “First Principles,” the entire chapter on “The Data of Philosophy” is devoted to showing that the verdict of consciousness as to the existence of the self and the not-self must be accepted. He thus sums up the whole:—

“What is this datum, or rather what are these data, which philosophy cannot do without? Clearly one primordial datum is involved in the foregoing statement. Already by implication we have assumed, and must for ever continue to assume, that congruities and incongruities exist, and are cognisable by us. We cannot avoid accepting as true the verdict of consciousness that some manifestations are like one another, and some are unlike one another.”*

On the next page, he says:—

“Consequently the assumption that a congruity or an incongruity exists when consciousness testifies to it, is an inevitable assumption. It is useless to say, as Sir W. Hamilton does, that consciousness is to be deemed trustworthy until proved mendacious. It cannot be proved mendacious in this, its fundamental act; since, as we see, proof involves a complete acceptance of this primordial act. Nay, more, the very thing supposed to be proved cannot be expressed without recognising this primordial act as valid; since unless we accept the verdict of consciousness that they differ, mendacity and trustworthiness become identical. Process and product of reasoning both disappear in the absence of this assumption.”†

Thus we see he asserts that the *process* asserted as valid by consciousness must be accepted. He next proceeds to show that the *product* given by consciousness must also be accepted.

He analyses all that is given by consciousness, and divides it into two great classes. He then says:—

“What is the division” [into these classes] “equivalent to?”

* *First Principles*, second edition (from which all quotations in this paper are made), p. 140.

† *Ibid.*, p. 141.

Obviously it corresponds to the division between *object* and *subject*. This profoundest of distinctions among the manifestations of the Unknowable" [by "Unknowable" he means "Matter and Mind"] "we recognise by grouping them into self and not-self."*

A few lines further on he continues:—

"The persistent consciousness of likeness or difference is one which, by its very persistence, makes itself accepted; and one which transcends scepticism, since without it even doubt becomes impossible. And the primordial division of self from not-self is a cumulative result of persistent consciousnesses of likenesses and differences among manifestations."†

He closes the chapter by saying:—

"So much, then, for the data of philosophy. In common with religion, philosophy assumes the primordial *implication* of consciousness, which, as we saw in the last part, has the deepest of all foundations. It assumes the validity of a certain primordial *process* of consciousness, without which inference is impossible, and without which there cannot even be either affirmation or denial. And it assumes the validity of a certain primordial *product* of consciousness, which, though it originates in an earlier process, is also, in one sense, a product of this process, since by this process it is tested and stamped as genuine."‡

The chapter is again summed up in the "Principles of Psychology" in these words:—

"In the second part of 'First Principles,' when dealing with the Data of Philosophy, it was shown that the co-existence of subject and object is a deliverance of consciousness which, taking precedence of all analytic examination, but subsequently verified by analytic examination, is a truth transcending all others in certainty."§

Statements of similar import, some of which are quoted on the next page, occur at intervals throughout the Philosophy. What has now been adduced must surely prove that Mr. Spencer asserts, as clearly as words can assert, the absolute validity of the simple deliverances of consciousness, as regards the co-existence of subject and object. It might still, however, be contended that he regards both subject and object, Mind and Matter, as only fleeting phenomena, with no distinct

* *First Principles*, p. 154.

† *Ibid.*, p. 154.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

§ *Principles of Psychology*, second edition (from which all quotations are made), vol. i. p. 209.

reality underlying them as their substratum ; but against such a notion the following passage seems to me conclusive.

He has arrived at the point where he sums up the general results arrived at by the whole Science of Psychology, and he supposes an objector to say, "Thus, then, we are brought face to face with unmistakable Materialism." This objection he repels with all his power of plain, straightforward statement, and solid argument. He fairly ridicules the idea that Mind can be explained by material forces ; he says as plainly that it is not reducible into Motion ; and, after some further argument, the object of which is to show that Mind and Matter are very far apart, he thus states the final result we reach concerning them :—

"See, then, our predicament. We can think of Matter only in terms of Mind. We can think of Mind only in terms of Matter. When we have pushed our explorations of the first to the uttermost limit we are referred to the second for a final answer ; and when we have got the final answer of the second we are referred back to the first for an interpretation of it. We find the value of x in terms of y ; then we find the value of y in terms of x , and so on we may continue for ever without coming nearer to a solution. The antithesis of subject and object, never to be transcended while consciousness lasts, renders impossible all knowledge of that ultimate reality in which subject and object are united."*

It seems to me that no honest interpretation can be given to this passage unless we hold it to state that Mind and Matter are both real existences,—are as far as the poles asunder, the link uniting them being unrepresentable in thought,—are all that we know of two unknown things represented by factors like x and y , neither of which can be expressed in terms of the other.

The following passages are still more conclusive on the point:—"Though accumulated observations and experiments have led us by a very indirect series of inferences to the belief that mind and nervous action are the subjective and objective faces of the same thing, we remain utterly incapable of seeing, and even of imagining, how the two are related. Mind still continues to us a something without any kinship to other things ; and from the Science which discovers by introspection the laws of this something, there is no passage by transitional steps to the Sciences which discover the laws of those other things."†

* *Principles of Psychology*, vol. i. p. 627. † *Ibid.*, p. 140.

A few pages later he says:—"Can we, then, think of the subjective and objective activities as the same? Can the oscillation of a molecule be represented in consciousness side by side with a nervous shock, and the two be recognised as one? No effort enables us to assimilate them."*

Since Mr. Spencer represents a large class of thinkers, it may be well to show, in passing, that, in thus asserting the existence and the immateriality of Mind, Professors Tyndall and Huxley are in complete accord with him. However often any of these gentlemen may forget the fact, they are compelled to allow, when forced to reflect, that the physical realm is of a different order altogether from the mental realm, and, probably, their acts of forgetfulness spring from an inability to break for a time the chains of rigorous materiality in which their whole lives are spent. In simple words, they find it hard, as every Christian finds it, "to live by faith." They know that there is in man an immaterial spirit for which his organisation can never account, but they are not able at all times to realise the truth. In their brighter and nobler moments, as Professor Tyndall confessed in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, the mist clears away, and they see clearly man's spiritual nature. At other times they sink down to a lower level, and then they speak as if we were only creatures of clay. From what, then, do these alternations come? They come from this. When they are only scientists, and not men of science,—when they are but logical, generalising instruments, employed only in the realm of the material,—they are, at such a time, living in their own narrower world, and they speak as if that world were all that exists. But when they live out their lives as full-orbed men, and regard their scientific powers, as they are, as only one tract of their nature, then the vast reality of their spiritual being forces itself into prominence, and they see and feel that, although man's body rests upon the earth, and is of the earth, he yet has kinship to the spirit Creator who gave that earth its shape. Let us, then, pardon their *lapsus*, and try to make them logical and permanent believers, by seeking to rival them in scientific precision, whilst at the same time all our Science is nothing but a large framework in which a nobler conception of the spiritual is set.

But that such is their honest faith the following passages evidence.

Professor Tyndall says, in the celebrated Belfast address:—

* *Principles of Psychology*, vol. i. p. 158.

“We can trace the development of a nervous system, and correlate with it the parallel phenomena of sensation and thought. We see, with undoubting certainty, that they go hand in hand. But we try to soar in a vacuum the moment we seek to comprehend the connexion between them. An Archimedean fulcrum is here required, which the human mind cannot command.” A few lines later he says:—“Man the *object* is separated by an impassable gulf from man the *subject*. There is no motor energy in intellect to carry it without logical rupture from the one to the other.”*

In his address to the Physical and Mathematical Section of the British Association, 1868, he says:—

“The passage from the physics of the brain to the corresponding facts of consciousness is unthinkable.”

Similar passages occur in the address given by the Professor to the Midland Institute, Birmingham, which it can hardly be necessary to quote.

Professor Huxley has stated the same thing in other words. Thus, in “Lay Sermons” he says:—

“The man of science, who, forgetting the limits of philosophical inquiry, slides from these formulæ and symbols into what is commonly understood by *Materialism*, seems to me to place himself on a level with the mathematician who should mistake the *x*'s and *y*'s with which he works his problems for real entities, and with this further disadvantage as compared with the mathematician, that the blunders of the latter are of no practical consequence, while the errors of systematic materialism may paralyse the energies and destroy the beauty of a life.”†

It seems to me that our first point is now clearly established. The existence and the immateriality of Mind has been proved to be a cardinal and structural doctrine of Mr. Spencer's system. Professors Tyndall and Huxley have been shown to concur. The entire school of thought represented by these men may therefore be justly held as allowing that the existence of Mind, which can be accounted for by no physical facts, is one of the things which cannot be dislodged from any complete conception of the universe.

II. We have now to establish a complete contradiction to what has been already proved, by demonstrating that vast tracts of Mr. Spencer's Synthetic system ignore altogether the existence of Mind, and regard Man as nothing more than a composition of solar force.

* Address, Sixth Thousand, p. 59.

† *Lay Sermons*.

As preliminary to this task, let it be distinctly understood that our clear understanding of the mode in which any fact came into consciousness by no means robs that fact of its validity and its authority. If only it *be* a fact of consciousness,—a primary deliverance of consciousness,—we are compelled to take it on its own credentials, and we have no right to go behind it, and inquire by what authority it presumes to dictate to us. If it be a king *de facto* it must be obeyed, and any reference to its antecedents with the view of showing its unfitness to rule is quite inadmissible. We may prove it to be of plebeian origin, but if it has become a structural element of our mental being we have no choice but to permit its domination over us. Mr. Spencer most distinctly allows, and most vigorously contends for the truth of this proposition, with regard to the Logical Laws. If his Philosophy has proved anything it has certainly proved this,—that those Laws of thought,—those Logical Laws which determine how all our reasoning shall be carried on, are not, as they seem to be, primary and original creations in us, but are rather the slow elaborations and co-ordinations of much humbler elements of Mind, which elaborations have been carried on through unnumbered organisms, have steadily acquired stability, range, precision; have been handed down in ever-increasing complexity from one generation to another, until they have at length taken their places as elements not to be dislodged from our mental structure. No part of his system is more satisfactory than his proof of this proposition, though, as it extends over the whole of 920 pages,* it is impossible to show its full force in the present paper. Nevertheless, although the genesis of those Laws is, as Mr. Spencer holds, most conclusively proved, yet he shows, in reasoning of remarkable beauty and power,† that our knowledge of their origin militates nothing whatever against their authority over us, inasmuch as we can never learn anything as to the way by which they came to that authority, without assuming their validity over and over again. The very reasoning by which we demonstrate their untrustworthiness has, as its necessary foundation, the assumption that they are trustworthy. Mr. Spencer, therefore, as a wise man, rejects the conclusion arrived at by a long process of reasoning, in favour of that simple and straightforward verdict which is given by consciousness. He proclaims as distinctly

* *Principles of Psychology*, vols. i. and ii., up to end of "Special Analysis," p. 297.

† "General Analysis," in vol. ii. of *Principles of Psychology*, pp. 305-489.

as Sir William Hamilton that consciousness is an impregnable rock, on which any true philosophy must found: he asserts that the deliverances of consciousness must be accepted, no matter what evidence there may be to the contrary.

Having, then, Mind given us as one of the factors of man's nature, we are entitled to go to mental philosophers and ask them what they find in Mind. We have a clear and undoubted right to bring in their analysis, and to learn from them what regions together make up the entire territory of consciousness. In this matter we cannot accept Mr. Spencer's dictum. His authority as a pure mental philosopher is of little weight. In this realm there are far greater names than his, and to these we must defer. He tells us, from his examination of the universe, that Mind exists. We now, then, call in the specialist, the mental philosopher, and ask him what it is that Mind contains.

There are three primary deliverances which mental philosophy declares to be facts of consciousness. These are:—1. Our sense of Personality and of Identity,—the consciousness that we are personal individual units, and that we are the same beings as we were awhile ago. 2. Our sense of a Law of Moral Obligation, informing us of the existence of a code laid down to guide our conduct, requiring our obedience to that code, and hinting, more or less clearly, at certain vague yet terrible penalties which disobedience will certainly bring upon us. 3. Our sense of Moral Liberty, which tells us that whatever motives may be brought to bear upon us, and whatever precepts or hints may be given to guide us, we yet stand perfectly free to accept or reject such guidance, and are compelled to be supreme arbiters of our own destiny, choosers of our own shape and character, fashioners of that self which shall endure as long as consciousness lasts.

That these three are facts of consciousness is not allowed by all philosophers; probably, however, in number and weight their assertors greatly predominate. Plato, Kant, and Hamilton may be cited as giving them clear and glowing expression; Moses, St. Paul, and St. John certainly hold the first two, as, in a sense which is amply sufficient for us, they as certainly hold the last.

We thus obtain three great propositions, to the truth of which we have a witness of the most absolute validity. With each of these three propositions Mr. Spencer's system of philosophy comes into complete and thorough-going antagonism. He claims to have established the logical contradictory in each case. That is to say, he claims to have proved three propositions which are utterly contradicted by what certainly

seem to be plain facts of consciousness. He claims to have shown that our consciousness of Personality is a delusion, and that we are really nothing more than a bundle of fibres, modifications of solar force. He claims to have shown that what we call Conscience is the mere upgrowth of our mental and emotional nature evolved in us by the play of social forces. He claims to have shown that we have no real Liberty, that we are only aggregates of protoplasm, registering in our organisms all the forces that play upon us, and combining these according to unvarying law.

I now proceed to deal with the first of these.

1. *Our Sense of Personality and Identity.*

If consciousness tells us any one thing, it surely assures us that we are persons ; it declares the existence of a self ; it says that our whole organisation in all its parts is unified, so that one *ego* inhabits and ranges over its entire territory. As stated above, Mr. Spencer claims to prove that we are only bundles of nerve and other matter ; afferent and efferent threads of nerve fibre, with uniting ganglia ; a huge concourse of atoms, not fortuitous, but bound together under strict and unvarying laws. He maintains that connexions and co-ordinations have been gradually established in this organism ; that the deepest and greatest of such connexions have become structural in us by long-continued descent, so that they make the broad channels along which our nervous energy must go, in much the same way as Geology declares the course of a great river has been slowly but surely determined by the volume of water scooping out the river-bed. Hence they appear in us, he contends, in the shape of the Logical Laws, structurally embedded in our mental being. He says:—"The universal law that, other things equal, the cohesion of psychical states is proportionate to the frequency with which they have followed one another in experience, supplies an explanation of the so-called 'forms of thought,' as soon as it is supplemented by the law that habitual psychical successions entail some hereditary tendency to such successions, which, under persistent conditions, will become cumulative in generation after generation. We saw that the establishment of those compound reflex actions called instincts is comprehensible on the principle that inner relations are, by perpetual repetition, organised into correspondence with outer relations. We have now to observe that the establishment of those consolidated, those indissoluble, those instinctive mental relations constituting our ideas of Space and Time, is comprehensible on the same principle." He then shows that Space and Time being

the invariable attributes of the non-ego, will produce a similar invariability in the ego, and he continues:—"As the substrata of all other relations in the *non-ego*, they" (Space and Time) "must be responded to by conceptions that are the substrata of all other relations in the *ego*. Being the constant and infinitely-repeated elements of thought, they must become the automatic elements of thought—the elements of thought which it is impossible to get rid of—the 'forms of intuition.'"* In a similar way, he contends, all our powers of emotion, aspiration, affection, faith, have grown up, and, in this fashion, the cultivated European of to-day has been evolved out of the most rudimentary forms of life. This doctrine cannot readily be stated in Mr. Spencer's own words, it is a crystallisation of the reasoning in an argument which stretches over 4,000 pages.

The following passage covers some of the ground:—"The corollary here drawn from the general argument is, that the human brain is an organised register of infinitely numerous experiences received during the evolution of life, or, rather, during the evolution of that series of organisms through which the human organism has been reached. The effects of the most uniform and frequent of these experiences have been successively bequeathed, principal and interest; and have slowly amounted to that high intelligence which lies latent in the brain of the infant—which the infant in after-life exercises and perhaps strengthens or further complicates—and which, with minute additions, it bequeaths to future generations. And thus it happens that the European inherits from twenty to thirty cubic inches more brain than the Papuan. Thus it happens that faculties, as of music, which scarcely exist in some inferior human races, become congenital in superior ones. Thus it happens that out of savages unable to count up to the number of their fingers, and speaking a language containing only nouns and verbs, arise at length our Newtons and Shakspeares."†

Now, against all this we are surely entitled to oppose the simple statement of that consciousness which Mr. Spencer himself has admitted is the final court of appeal, and to say to him in reply, "No matter however clearly you may account for our nervous structure,—if you could show us a map of ourselves, wherein all our powers were traced back to molluscs, as distinctly as the Great Western Railway can be mapped from London to Bristol,—if also you could prove, with the

* *Principles of Psychology*, vol. i. pp. 466-7. † *Ibid.*, pp. 470-1.

certainly of a demonstration of Euclid, that the stream of Force which made us was compelled at every turning-point to go along that way, and could go along no other way,—we are still entitled to turn round to you, and say, ‘I do not care much where my nerves came from; I only know that, having got them, they are mine. There is a something which I call Self, which flashes like a spirit from one end of my organism to the other, and claims the whole as its own; and if you tell me that I am only a bundle of afferent and efferent nerves, then, as a plain man, loving truth, I fling over with scorn all your strange phraseology, and I oppose to it the straightforward verdict of my simple common sense. By your own confession, common sense is the means by which you arrive at this wonderful idea that I am a mere automaton; you admit that the oftener you use that common sense in reasoning the greater is the probability of error; you admit that your conclusion is one in which that common sense has been used thousands of times. I prefer, then, to go to the same common sense only once, and to accept that dictum which she clearly enunciates. That ‘the whole is greater than its part’ is at least as certain as that ‘circles are to one another as the squares of their diameters,’ even if the latter be fairly demonstrable from the former, and that I am a personal self is at least as certain as that I am only a bundle of variously modified fibres. This last statement is contradicted by the first. I prefer, therefore, to take that way which lies just before my own door, and not go far round about only to be landed in a philosophical quagmire.”

Taking this as the reply of a plain common-sense man, I conceive it is valid, and that Mr. Spencer has no means of rebutting it save by denying the validity of that consciousness to which he himself appeals. If it be valid, obviously a complete contradiction is established between his doctrine on this matter of our personality, and his doctrine as to the absolute certainty of the statements of consciousness.

It is, however, clear that if one part of Mr. Spencer’s philosophy contradicts another part, it cannot be a logical unity, and careful search can hardly fail to detect a gap in the reasoning. Such a gap occurs just where it might have been expected, when Mr. Spencer attempts to pass from the conception of a composition of solar forces to our organism as at present constituted. At this point, if I am able to understand his arguments, he does nothing but assume the very point at issue. His reasoning is not easy to follow, but, when he is comprehended, I think it cannot be denied that his argument is altogether at fault. I would call special attention to this, for it is

one of the chief points in this paper. If I am right, his System is broken into two, and that means that, as a Philosophy, it is destroyed. In "First Principles," in the chapter on the "Transformation and Equivalence of Forces," he has been showing that all the changes in the physical universe came from the solar rays. That is to say, he proves the doctrine of the "Correlation of the Physical Forces." He then proceeds to show that from the same force come all the organic, vital, and mental changes. He allows that his reasoning is hardly conclusive, and he therefore attempts to prove that his doctrine is a necessary corollary from the "Persistence of Force," which, as he has proved, is a datum of consciousness. The following are his words :—

"Each manifestation of force can be interpreted only as the effect of some antecedent force ; no matter whether it be an inorganic action, an animal movement, a thought, or a feeling. Either this must be conceded, or else it must be asserted that our successive states of consciousness are self-created. Either mental energies as well as bodily ones are quantitatively correlated to certain energies expended in their production, and to certain other energies which they initiate ; or else nothing must become something, and something must become nothing. The alternatives are, to deny the persistence of force, or to admit that every physical and psychical change is generated by certain antecedent forces, and that from given amounts of such forces neither more nor less of such physical and psychical changes can result. And since the persistence of force, being a datum of consciousness, cannot be denied, its unavoidable corollary must be accepted."*

I have expended some hours of thought upon this passage, in order to make sure of not unjustly accusing a thinker like Mr. Spencer of faulty reasoning ; but each examination only makes me more certain that, for once at least, he is altogether illogical. Let us look at what he says, sentence by sentence. "Each manifestation of force can be interpreted only as the effect of some antecedent force, no matter whether it be an inorganic action, an animal movement, a thought, or a feeling." All this we may concede, adding only this proviso, that as every antecedent force which generates an action must operate in the same region as that action, must be *in eâdem materiâ*, and as Mr. Spencer has assured us that the antecedent solar ray is at the opposite pole of being from the mental energy it is said to originate, we are curious to learn how this

* *First Principles*, second edition, p. 221.

chasm is going to be bridged over. The magician is going to pass from the extended beam of light (for, to the scientific imagination, the Matter or Ether of which light is the undulation has surface and weight as manifestly as a cannon-ball—an *undulation* is unthinkable save as existing in a *material* substance), he is going to travel logically from this extended beam of light to the unextended Mind; and we wonder by what road. He continues: "Either this must be conceded, or else it must be asserted that our successive states of consciousness are self-created." This may pass without remark. But he goes on,—“Either mental energies as well as bodily ones are quantitatively correlated to certain energies expended in their production, and to certain other energies which they initiate, or else nothing must become something, and something must become nothing.” Now, see the sophism in this sentence. Undoubtedly “mental energies” are “quantitatively correlated to certain energies expended in their production,” but the energies which alone can generate mental energies must themselves be *mental*, for Matter can never build up Mind. No x , multiplied by any conceivable factor, can make y . Where organic life is already existing, solar rays may so act upon it as to give it power to assimilate inorganic Matter, and so build up the Matter of which its nerve tissue is composed; but the Mind, which dwells in that nerve tissue, can only be produced by something that can build up Mind. This, solar rays are powerless to do. By the “certain energies” which are expended in the production of Mind, Mr. Spencer means physical energies—the energies of the sun—and his argument is pure nonsense if he does not mean these; but, when we supply this, the sophism appears at once. “Either mental energies as well as bodily ones are quantitatively correlated to certain [physical] energies expended in their production,”—here we see the absurdity in a moment,—“mental energies quantitatively correlated to physical energies”! when Mr. Spencer has assured us the two are in different regions of thought, separated by a barrier we can never cross! I thought “correlated” meant brought into co-relation with, and I thought “quantitatively correlated” meant that one term of the relation was the same quantity as the other term; but how the mental force required to produce “Paradise Lost” can be equal in quantity to any amount of sunlight passes my imagination to conceive.

It will be observed that Mr. Spencer here goes far beyond the statement of Professor Tyndall. In the Belfast Address we were told:—“We can trace the development of a nervous system, and correlate with it the parallel phenomena of sen-

sation and thought." To this language there can be no objection. A nervous system already implies Mind; nervous matter is a composition of two factors, objective and subjective: objective it is Matter, subjective it is Mind. Of course, therefore, sensation and thought may be correlated with it. But Mr. Spencer speaks of correlating "physical energies,"—the rays of the sun,—“with mental energies,” the operations of the mind!

It can hardly be necessary to pursue the argument further. Mr. Spencer's reasoning hopelessly breaks down. Having an impossible task to accomplish, he fails to accomplish it.

Probably it will be well to show from other passages that Mr. Spencer really attempts to pass without a logical break from the inorganic to the organic. On this point the following quotation seems to me conclusive:—"The separation between Biology and Geology once seemed impassable; and to many seems so now. But every day brings new reasons for believing that the one group of phenomena has grown out of the other. Organisms are highly differentiated portions of the Matter forming the Earth's crust and its gaseous envelope; and their differentiation from the rest has arisen, like other differentiations, by degrees. The chasm between the inorganic and the organic is being filled up. On the one hand, some four or five thousand compounds once regarded as exclusively organic have now been produced artificially from inorganic Matter; and chemists do not doubt their ability so to produce the highest forms of organic Matter. On the other hand, the microscope has traced down organisms to simpler and simpler forms, until, in the *Protogenes* of Professor Haeckel, there has been reached a type distinguishable from a fragment of albumen only by its finely-granular character."*

The above statement is important, not only as showing clearly Mr. Spencer's opinion, but also as affording a good instance of the extreme looseness of statement, so alien from the true scientific spirit, which sometimes mars his pages.

Once more he says, "That Life consists in the maintenance of inner actions corresponding with outer actions, was confirmed on further observing how the degree of Life varies as the degree of correspondence. It was pointed out that, beginning with the low life of plants and of rudimentary animals, the progress to life of higher and higher kinds essentially consists in a continual improvement of the adaptation between organic processes and processes which environ the

* *Principles of Psychology*, vol. i. p. 137.

organism. We observed how along with complexity of organisation there goes an increase in the number, in the range, in the speciality, in the complexity, of the adjustments of inner relations to outer relations. And in tracing up the increase we found ourselves passing without a break from the phenomena of bodily life to the phenomena of mental life.”*

These passages must make it abundantly clear that it is a cardinal and structural doctrine of Mr. Spencer's whole Philosophy that there has been no break between the first mechanical forces of Matter and the best and noblest developments of Mind. This doctrine we have now surely overthrown. It has been proved from his own statements in his own words, that “no effort enables us to assimilate” Mind and the Matter that is in close alliance with it. If, then, our reasoning be sound, his philosophy is no longer a whole, it is broken into fragments. It fails to account for the facts of the universe.

And now, having pierced his centre, we can, I think, drive him back along the whole line. His sophistical evasion of the real difficulty,—his illicit introduction of a factor he has no right to introduce, which we have marked in this instance,—perpetually characterises his reasoning; and although he cannot often be brought to book as in this case, yet at every point in his argument there is the same use of a forbidden element. He is engaged in elaborating the element of physical Force, and he is entitled to take all that Force can give him. But until *he shows how Force can become Mind*, how the extended beam of light can become the unextended, he is not entitled to one iota of mental energy. We may say to him, adapting well-known words:—

“ Take thou thy beams of light ;
But, in the taking them, if thou dost filch
The smallest particle of Mind's proper powers,
Thy system falls all shatter'd and o'erthrown ;
Thy serried ranks are cleft, and ne'er again
Shall Reason own thee as her loyal son.”

Now this offence Mr. Spencer commits. He steals some Mind, and he maintains underneath the surface of his reasoning an illicit channel of communication by which he can, all unperceived, take feloniously as much more Mind as his necessities may demand. His argument is curiously like the common account of the introduction of sin into our world. One sin, seemingly simple, *introduced the principle*,

* *Principles of Psychology*, vol. i. pp. 293-4.

and that sin went on working *underneath the surface*, present in every part of the long line of all the generations of men. Or, to take another illustration. He is like one weaving a thread of varied strands, who by sleight of hand has obtained one strand to which he has no just right, and then having it, keeps working onward, ever taking more, and so produces his thread with the one strand which everybody knows has no right to be there. So Mr. Spencer, being engaged in developing solar rays, has seized this thread of Mind; he then skilfully contrives to wind solar rays and Mind together, until at length he reaches molluscs, and he still continues the process until, lo and behold! out of the first patch of star-dust we have evolved the powers of a Shakspeare! His logical sin is, therefore, one of the most dangerous and most unpardonable kind, for it is one which is ever secretly repeated, and ever on a larger scale,—he has embezzled some Mind, and he goes on purloining until he has done his best to construct a universe without an Intelligent Creator.

Thus along every part of the far-extending generalisation which stretches from the humblest organic form right through the whole of animated nature, until it finds its completion in Man, and in the highest powers of the highest man, Mr. Spencer has contrived, in this illogical fashion, to put that element of Mind to which he has no conceivable right. His long line of circumvallation is manned by men whom he has stolen, one by one as he needed them, from the opposite ranks. Solar rays acting on extended and solid molecules of the Matter of which nervous fibres are made, can indirectly build up that Matter (*i.e.*, they give the Matter energy to build up itself), but they can never build up the Mind which rides upon or dwells within those molecules. If *Eozoa* are declared to be sentient, we can only attribute such sentiency to a low kind of Mind, which dwells within them, and we refuse as resolutely as ever to regard that Mind as only the synonym of a nervous change. With them, as with us, Mind rides upon the nervous changes, is correlated with those changes, but it is separated from them by the whole diameter of being. And as the line of evolution is carried on by Mr. Spencer from *Eozoa* up to higher organisms, at each step of the process, as the nervous matter is developed, he quietly *takes for granted* that Mind develops along with it. Having once crossed *per saltum* the chasm between the inorganic and the organic, he steadily continues moving on these forbidden paths until the exigencies of his argument, as we shall see, force him to a further unwarranted leap. And as he shows nervous matter developing at an ever

greater ratio, and as he assumes that Mind develops at the same ratio, the result is that his original sin is growing to ever greater proportions. At first he had stolen only the mind needed for a mollusc, at last he has grown bold, and filches away all the Promethean fire needed for the creations of a Shakspeare.

Now, if this reasoning be just and honest, as it seems to me it is,—and I gladly welcome any one who can point to a flaw; we want truth, not victory,—then surely we have done nothing less than, in effect, throw down Mr. Spencer's high line of defence from one end of his fortresses to the other. For we have shown that it can be fatally pierced at any point we choose to name. Every tiny evolution of nerve matter he claims to be an evolution of Mind,—and his philosophy falls in utter ruin if it be not such an evolution of Mind. Now, we have shown it is not such an evolution; hence at every point of his mighty generalisation he can be successfully assailed, and all his defences ground into powder. We have nothing to do but to choose our points of attack. Let us select one.

The mode in which Mr. Spencer attempts to show that a rudimentary eye might be produced by the known action of light on the organism will suffice for our purpose. He has been showing that Life, as we can trace it, may be described as correspondence between an organism and its environments; he has also shown that Life becomes larger and more complex as a greater and more complex environment plays upon the organism; and he is in the midst of a chapter where he traces that correspondence as extending in Space. He has shown how all the senses might, by this means, be developed, and he comes to the sense of Sight. These are his words:—"Though that ability to distinguish light from darkness which characterises the entire body in sundry of the humblest types, foreshadows the visual faculty, nothing like what we call sight results until this ability is concentrated in a particular spot. The rudimentary eye consisting as in a *Planaria* of some pigment grains may be considered as simply a part of the surface more irritable by light than the rest. Some idea of the impression it is fitted to receive may be formed by turning our closed eyes towards the light, and passing the hand backwards and forwards before them. But as soon as even this slight specialisation of function is reached it becomes possible for the organism to respond to the motions of opaque bodies that pass near; while only a general sensitiveness to light exists, the intercepting of the sun's rays by something which throws the whole or a greater part of the creature into shade is required to produce an internal

change; but when there comes to be a specially sensitive spot, anything which casts a shadow on that spot alone, produces an internal change. And as that which obscures only a small part of the organism is usually a comparatively small object, this advance from diffused sensitiveness to concentrated sensitiveness enables the organism to respond, not only to marked general changes in luminousness which its environment undergoes, but also to marked special changes in luminousness caused by the motions of adjacent bodies."*

Mr. Spencer here commences to travel from the sensation of the oyster to the perception of the eagle. This is therefore an important turning-point, being nothing less than a line of higher departure. We can see how he shows that the sensation caused *by actual contact*, which all organised bodies manifest, might, by the known action of light upon a sensitive organism, set up a higher degree of nervous activity in that part of the organism which was thus acted upon; which higher nervous activity would, in accordance with well-known physiological laws, slowly but surely produce such structural modification as would enable the organism to detect the existence of opaque bodies *not* in actual contact with it. The remarkable fish, the *Scopulus*, which inhabits the lowest depths of the Atlantic, and hence needs more light, to obtain which light it has developed three imperfect eyes on each side of the back, is perhaps a concrete example illustrating Mr. Spencer's abstract statement. It is quite certain that if our sense of touch were made fine enough it could appreciate the impact of beams of light. Professor Crookes's beautiful experiments, showing the dynamical power of light, sufficiently prove this. The transition, therefore, from sensation to perception is not intrinsically improbable. But let this be distinctly remarked. Whatever increase of Mind or of nervous sentiency we attribute to a creature thus developed, to that increase Mr. Spencer has no manner of right. He must steal every particle thereof. If the Mind in the nervous organisation of a creature able to detect only actual contact be 20, and the Mind in a creature able to detect an object not actually touching it be 25, that difference of five represents so much Mind that the exigencies of Mr. Spencer's argument compel him to purloin. As nervous matter is specialised and differentiated it needs Mind as, so to speak, its subjective lining; and as Mr. Spencer has never shown how he can honestly obtain one particle of this lining, we have no choice but to declare, since

* *Principles of Psychology*, second edition, vol. i. p. 314.

he really claims to have shown the Evolution of Mind, that he can do so only by committing logical felony on a scale, with an audacity and in a fashion so dexterous, that he must stand out as one of the most distinguished of all the sophists who have bewildered mankind.

The extent of his embezzlement may be inferred from one simple statement. It stretches over the whole realm of animated nature, from the most rudimentary organism up to and including the powers of Newton, Shakspeare, Michael Angelo, Handel, and even Moses, St. Paul, St. John.

He claims to have proved that all the great men in our world might have been developed by solar rays. We have shown that solar rays can never give him Mind: hence, as he claims to have proved the evolution and growth of all that Mind, we can only charge him with an intellectual fraud, having these gigantic proportions. Aiming to be the Colossus of philosophy, and to unify all human knowledge, this towering ambition necessarily made possible a sin of corresponding greatness. Some of the consequences of this sin we stated at the beginning in the shape of hundreds and thousands of lives bereft of all faith in God and the unseen, through this far-extending falsehood!

It seems to me, then, that our second point is now conclusively proved. We require Mr. Spencer to hand back all that Mind to which he has no manner of right, and to leave his philosophy entirely bereft thereof. He now has the *Matter* of which nervous fibre is made, but he has not the *Mind* which dwells in that fibre. Hence it is true that there are vast tracts in his system,—to wit, the whole nervous organisation of all animated nature,—where Mind, when he has restored what he has stolen, is altogether ignored. But Mind is, he has himself assured us, one of the existences, for whose reality we have most absolute proof. Here, then, is a complete and glaring contradiction between two parts of what he claims to be a logical whole. It seems to me his system is destroyed; a vast chasm is made in it, which I do not think even he can ever repair.

We may, however, allow that if only he will keep within his proper limits, very much of what he has written will stand in lines of unfading truth and beauty, and he will have the honour of lifting the human intellect to a higher plane of thought and life. He is so great and many-sided, and he has contributed such a vast amount of intellectual force, that no one who reverences the mind of man as one of the greatest handiworks of God can honestly refuse him homage. He stands before us vast in proportion, of the build of the giants, perhaps of the

immortals; and his nature is not yet made up so as to show us what will be his ultimate place,—whether amidst those who shed kindly benefactions on the race, or those who, like evil angels, leave behind them a heritage of negation, unbelief, and despair. But if his system is to bear the impress of truth, its name must be changed. If he will call it the “Science of the Physical Laws,” it will remain as a most valuable monument of learning and research. But it is no “System of Philosophy.” It is no unification of knowledge. He must yield up that proud title. The device on the cover represents a terrible falsehood. That device is a number of crystals, upon which rests a bed of mould, out of which a flower springs; on the lower branches a caterpillar is crawling upwards towards the fully developed blossom, on whose top a butterfly rests. Its meaning can only be that highly-developed organic life grows, without a break, from the properties and forces of mere inorganic matter. If the reasoning of this paper be correct, this has now been proved to be an untrue statement. Mr. Spencer may continue to use the device he has chosen, but, in that case, he seems to me like a knight who persists in quartering the arms of some great hero, after it has been shown that he has no manner of title thereto.

In future papers I hope to show that the two other great deliverances of consciousness are similarly upheld by a sound philosophy, and that Mr. Spencer’s reasoning against them is weaker and more illogical than it has been shown to be on the present occasion.

For the convenience of readers who may not be well acquainted with Mr. Spencer’s Works, a short abstract of his “First Principles” is here subjoined. It is believed that this will greatly strengthen the argument of the preceding Paper by making evident that our assault has been directed against a central and all-essential part. It will be understood that no positive opinion is expressed as to the actual validity of Mr. Spencer’s arguments save where objection is taken against him.

Part I. of “First Principles” is devoted to “The Unknowable.” Here “Ultimate Religious Ideas” and “Ultimate Scientific Ideas” are analysed, and are each shown to contain some underlying truth, some “Unknown Reality,” of which Reality, however, they can be but imperfect expressions. From this point we are made to rise to the conception that all our knowledge, and indeed all conceivable knowledge, is, not absolute, but only relative,—is really only

a term to hide our ignorance,—and some of the reasoning which Hamilton put forward to establish his “Law of the Conditioned” is accepted. As, therefore, neither Science nor Religion can arrive at absolute truth, it is contended that the reconciliation between them must be made by each admitting that its explanations are only proximate, and not ultimate, and that the Universe displays, in all its phenomena, the existence of an Unknown Power, which Power must remain to us for ever inscrutable.

[In saying that the “Power” manifested in the Universe is “Unknown” and “Unknowable,” Mr. Spencer seems to hint that his conception of the Supreme Being may rise as much above Personality as Intelligence and Will rise above mere mechanism. This is very startling. Mr. Spencer may have a conception of God higher than that which satisfied men like Moses and St. John, although this staggers belief; but, inasmuch as he denies to man both Conscience and Will, thus degrading man to a position lower by far than any they attributed to him, it becomes simply incredible that Mr. Spencer’s conception of God can be so incomparably exalted.]

Part II. of “First Principles” is devoted to “The Knowable.” Philosophy is first defined as the unification of knowledge, the gathering up into one extended logical conception of all truths contributed by each one of the Sciences. But a point of certain knowledge is needed as a Datum from whence to start, and a provisional Datum is found in the assertion of consciousness that subject and object both exist. All the objective facts which consciousness gives us are then resolved into our subjective conceptions of Space, Time, Matter, Motion, Force. These five are further resolved into one higher generalisation, viz., the “Persistence of Force.” Thus the “Persistence of Force” is shown to be the only objective fact to whose existence consciousness testifies. The reasoning which proves this seems very strong. Thus the “Persistence of Force” forms a solid rock of certain truth in the midst of a fluid and changing universe. It is then shown that from this “Persistence of Force” there follows of necessity the continuance and the precision of natural law, *i.e.*, there follows what the Duke of Argyll calls “The Reign of Law” and the “Unity of Nature.” The one law of our Globe, the “Correlation of the Physical Forces,” is then traced in its multiplied results. Up to this point, if there be a break in the reasoning, I am unable to discover it. The “Correlation” is applied to Astronomy, Geology, vegetable growth, and then—without any break—to the growth of animals, the growth of man, to all mental changes,

and all social movements. It is admitted that to include Mental Evolution in the sweep of this all-comprehending law will startle, but it is contended that there is no help for it. In order to strengthen the argument, the attempt is made to show that all this is a necessary corollary from the "Persistence of Force." It is here that Mr. Spencer's reasoning, quoted on pages 14 and 15 of the foregoing Paper, occurs. Manifestly, then, his whole argument, the continuity of his Philosophy, depends on his showing that the one Law, the "Persistence of Force,"—of the Solar Force,—can account for all the things to be found in Man, in his Mind, Will, Feelings, Conscience.

We have shown the unwarranted leap he is compelled to make in order to arrive at this result. Evidently, therefore, his system, which ought to be a unity, is here broken up into two contradictory fragments. He next shows that the motion generated by the Solar Force always follows the line of least resistance; and out of the working of this law he explains many hundreds of facts in Astronomy, Geology, Organic Growth, Mental Evolution, Political Economy. The conception of Evolution thus gained is then carried on through several chapters; and it is shown that, on this principle, many thousands of known facts in all the Sciences, in Art, in History, can be accounted for. From the working of this law it is shown that large "Homogeneous" masses would result; which, being very unstable, would have a great tendency to break up, or be evolved into the "Heterogeneous"; the results whereof would be the "Multiplication of Effects," the "Differentiation" and "Segregation" of "Individuals," and the general development of a highly individualised and specialised type. This "Individuality," it is shown, would grow, in speciality and perfectness, until its final consummation or "Equilibration" was gained, after which the process of "Dissolution" would begin. This great law, the "Instability of the Homogeneous," is thus shown to be capable of accounting for some of the greatest, deepest, most complex, and most remarkable of all the movements that have gone on in our race.

Thus, from the first patch of star-dust to the full-orbed completeness of our nineteenth century life, the system attempts to make one broad logical road!

The argument it makes for Evolution is this:—If Evolution be not true, it is passing strange that millions of facts are explained by it. A true key of the universe must fit the universe; when, therefore, a key does fit so often, the presumption is that it is the true one.

The CHAIRMAN.—It now becomes my duty to convey the expression of our thanks to Mr. Ground for what I think we must all feel to have been a very ably-reasoned and well-conducted argument, which has been successful so far as I can judge, in proving the hollowness of the system he attacks. There are, perhaps, some minor points which I might have wished to have seen somewhat differently treated. I would rather not have seen so very much admiration for Mr. Herbert Spencer combined with the reasoning of the paper; which proves so successfully that if this “writer” is indeed a “giant” in philosophy, he is but a giant stuffed with straw. I cannot, therefore, give my assent to some of the concluding remarks in the paper, especially where the writer says, “Very much of what he (Mr. Herbert Spencer) has written will stand in lines of unfading truth and beauty, and he will have the honour of lifting the human intellect to a higher plane of thought and life.” I do not see what powers of the “giant” have been so much developed in the 4,000 pages of the book referred to; for if all those 4,000 pages rest on an utter fallacy, as I most fully and freely believe they do, what have we to consider but something to perplex and bewilder us, and to lead to those dreadful consequences which have been so well pointed out? Voltaire is reported to have said, “*Ce n'est pas la logique qui manque aux hommes, mais le point de départ.*” We cannot surrender our common sense, even to a giant in philosophy who has unified everything. We cannot give up to Mr. Herbert Spencer those points which are so ably and well pointed out as the fallacies on which his whole system is built. Mr. Herbert Spencer tells us about force. What does he mean by “force”? He does not know himself. I cannot learn from him, nor can the whole of the philosophy of the present day tell me what “force” is. (Hear, hear.) Still less can it explain to me in what way “force,” as a term, is to be explained. For instance, the attraction of atoms in the atomic theory is as much proved as any theory can be by chemical change, and so forth; but it is utterly inexplicable by anything like what the word “force” implies.

The HON. SECRETARY.—The following short letter has been received from the Rev. Canon Saumarez Smith, D.D., Principal of St. Aidan's Theological College, Birkenhead:—

“*Principal's Lodge, St. Aidan's College, Birkenhead.*

“*30th April, 1881.*

“Mr. Ground's paper seems to me a clear, able, and suggestive criticism, and one that admirably points out how, admire as we may the mental energy and grasp of Mr. Herbert Spencer, we cannot regard his ambitious argument as really *philosophical*. He does not accept, simply and sincerely, ‘the deliverance of consciousness,’ and so becomes, whether he would wish to be regarded so or not, onesided and illogical.”

Professor O'DELL.—I have studied mind under many phases, both sane and insane, civilized and uncivilized; I have also studied Mr. Herbert Spencer's works to a great extent. There is one thing that strikes me as

being very feebly developed in the mental conformation of Mr. Herbert Spencer, when we compare his mind with the minds of most other men; and that is, that he must be short of that faculty which we all possess, and which we define as the faculty of spirituality—the belief in the spiritual. Go where you will, and I myself have been in many places among the civilized and uncivilized, and have never yet come across a man who did not believe in a spiritual existence. Some people will say, it is the priest who has taught this, but this belief is held where the foot of priest has never been, and I have found uncivilized beings bowing down to a stone god, and believing in a spiritual existence. I say that there is in every mind a natural belief in the spiritual, just as there is in most minds a knowledge of colour—that is, variety of colour. But if one man, with a marvellous intellectual power and perfect mode of expression, stands up and tells us we are all wrong, and that there is no such thing as colour, are we to accept his theory, simply on account of his power of mind and the beauty of his diction? By no means. And so it is, or ought to be, with Mr. Herbert Spencer and Professor Huxley and Mr. Darwin. If they tell us that there is no such thing as the spiritual, they tell us so in contradiction to our own observation; and I am one of those who believe very much in common sense, though common sense seems to be ignored by those philosophers who are opposed to the immortality of man, and the doctrines of Christianity. I consider that Mr. Herbert Spencer must be deficient in this spiritual principle which we all recognise and believe in, and which he himself would recognise if he would only look for it. I believe Mr. Herbert Spencer says that the mind is an emanation of the brain. Huxley, Darwin, and Tyndall say the same. They believe in mind, but only as an emanation of the brain; consequently they must believe that the mind is mortal. If they believe that the mind is not the soul itself, but one of the component parts of the soul, therefore it follows that there is no such thing as soul; for, if the mind be mortal and a component part of the soul, the soul is mortal also,—therefore there can be no such thing as a soul in the ordinary sense, and no such thing as immortality. If Mr. Herbert Spencer believes this, then I ask where can the consciousness of the past be obtained? Because we are told that the human frame decays—the body, the bones, and the brain,—once in every seven years, and that being so, where can the memory of the past exist? Where is the storehouse; where can the memory of yesterday, or of last week be? We have been told that for every thought created there is a cell of the brain that bursts. If the soul is so intimately connected with the body that when the body dies the mind must die too, then the thoughts must die. I would here ask permission to read a few lines from a sermon preached on the death of the Earl of Beaconsfield, an extract offering a strong proof of the immortality of the mind. There is, I think, a wrong conclusion generally come to on the death of old people—some of us here may have come to the same conclusion,—and that is, that as people grow old and feeble, the mind

becomes weak. Now in the case of the Earl of Beaconsfield we find that this was not the case, and I might mention hundreds of other cases of eminent men who have retained all their mental power when the body was more feeble than at any other time, and I regard this as a great proof of the fact that the mind is independent of the brain and of the corporeal system. Canon Liddon, in his sermon at St. Paul's Cathedral on the occasion referred to, says:—"If he (the Earl of Beaconsfield) had ceased to exist, it would be natural only to reconsider again and again the years of varied and brilliant effort which closed on Tuesday; but in that temple of truth they might not thus palter with reality. None ceased to exist at death, and when the human mind gave some evidence of many-sided and vigorous power up to the very moment of dissolution, we seemed to have before us a sensible basis" (I bring this forward as a strong argument that the mind ceases not after death) "for an independent conviction" (and I put this in opposition to the theories of Mr. Herbert Spencer) "that it lived after the catastrophe which had rent it from the body." (Applause.)

The Right Hon. the Lord O'NEILL.—I have really very little to say upon this subject. I perfectly agree with the argument used by the author of the paper which has been read to us to-night. The only matters for notice on my part that would occur to me are some of what may be called the *obiter dicta* in the paper. There was one thing I rather regretted to learn, and that was that the doctrine of evolution has become the accepted doctrine among scientific men all over the world. I had hoped that that was not the case. There have been many very eminent men who have refused to accept that doctrine,—among others the well-known Dr. Virchow, who says we are further from arriving at such a conclusion now than we have ever been. But, however, I do not profess to know much about the state of the case, only I should hope that there are many practical men who do not believe in that doctrine. I have myself taken occasion more than once before this Institute to express my belief that even if that doctrine were established it would not be found to contradict Scripture; but at the same time I do not think it can be accepted as a scientific doctrine, and it has certainly the *primâ facie* appearance of contradicting Scripture. I should, therefore, regret very much to think that it was becoming the universal doctrine of scientific men. I think this is all I need say on the subject, beyond the remark that I quite agree in all the conclusions arrived at on the main subject of the paper. (Applause.)

The CHAIRMAN.—I may say that I noticed the same expression myself, and entirely concur in the observations made by Lord O'Neill on the subject; but I think it would be well to remember that "The doctrine of evolution" defines nothing. The term implies many theories and views, of which the only consistent one is that of Haeckel, who traces evolution from no creative act "in the beginning"—who, in fact, considers matter eternal. Now, Darwin does not take this ground, but speaks of a Creator, and his system is very different from that of Haeckel; while Wallace, again, makes man a being with a spirit, and quite a different creation from the

ordinary animal. So that we cannot include under the one phrase "the Doctrine of Evolution" so many different theories. Neither do I at all believe that any doctrine of evolution has become the universally-accepted doctrine. Perhaps we all, in a certain sense, believe in evolution; that creation has been a process of successive stages, and that a great deal that looks like development has been in the creative plan from the beginning.

The Rev. Prebendary IRONS, D.D.—I have listened to Mr. Ground's paper with unmixed pleasure. The points that have been objected to by one or two preceding me do not seem to me to touch the main course of the argument at all. I fully went with the first speaker in saying that the estimate formed of Mr. Herbert Spencer was somewhat exaggerated, and yet I have to acknowledge the great admiration I entertain of Spencer's style, and acuteness and power of analysis; and I do not think we gain anything by depreciating our opponents. There is a sentence in the paper which slightly expresses what I mean on this subject. It is quite at the beginning, where the lecturer says there may be a spiritual element added to the other elements of the Spencerian philosophy without disturbing its main features. I hope it is so. In the last century, we know, the doctrines of Locke were wholly pre-eminent. Every one adhered to them; and they have left us a terrible legacy. Locke's teaching that there was nothing whatever in the intellect that was not first of all in the senses,—though corrected by Coleridge's adding that there was the intellect itself,—was still a great calamity for the philosophical world. It tintured the whole line of thought in this country and in France. Up to this day we have in consequence of the Lockean philosophy lost our hold of the *à priori* to a large extent. As has been stated on former occasions in this room, we shall have to go through a great deal of hard thinking and powerful semi-infidelity before we shall get rid of the mischief that has been done by the suppression of the *à priori* in the philosophical thought of England. You will find, however, throughout Herbert Spencer's works that they take it for granted that there is an *à priori*. He does not at any time really ignore it, and this may be thought to encourage the hope that some day he will think as we do. Passing now to the higher subject sketched in the paper before us, it is not to be doubted that Mr. Herbert Spencer acknowledges mind to be an entirely distinct being from matter; and yet he says *we* can only speak of mind in terms of matter, while on the other hand *we* can only speak of matter in terms of mind. *Who is it—this we—*we ask, that is doing all this? Spencer seems to admit the *ego*—the personal being—that very self who is able to handle both mind and matter, and to deal with them in its imperious way, using its own instruments to some extent as it will. It is this third element that I want Mr. Spencer to make something of. If he will only bring out his conscious *self*, and show what the Person is, which surely after all demands our study, he might soon move on from that personality to the acknowledgment of a personal Deity; and then to the rest of those doctrines of a higher philosophy which he now and then hints at, but never yet has fully explained. I am sorry that he stands where he does, yet I think it is right he should think out and

exhaust Lockeism, which is what it seems to me he has not done. Until that is fully accomplished the philosophy of the future will be very little better than the philosophy of the past. When we have pushed our explorations of mind to the uttermost limits we are referred to matter, he says, for the final answer. Now, "we" are the third party. He tells us there are mind and matter to start with, and then he introduces the demanding *ego*,—the person who is to deal with the whole subject. He should here define surely what he means by the "agnosticism" he professes. He scarcely has done this, because it does not suffice to tell us that agnosticism means a confession that we do not know. Within a certain region we do know. The Gnostics of the earlier Church—the Gnostics of Christian times—were in the habit of attempting the realm of the unseen, and there speculating. We object to this; and although Clement of Alexandria thought fit to call the true Christian a Gnostic he did not call him so in that sense, but in another, viz., as truly wise; which I must not detain you by dwelling on. Now, modern Agnostics, those who do not know those things which the Gnostics professed to know, ought to tell us more distinctly that they are only Agnostics beyond the sphere of the physical, where they have no perceptions. They would know everything in the sphere of the physical, but beyond that they admit themselves to have no natural knowledge whatever. They are quite right; and in that sense every Christian is an Agnostic so far as his natural knowledge is concerned—he has no formal knowledge of things unseen by the aid of merely natural faculties and powers. We have no exact knowledge of causation. We can recognise that in the physical world in all its departments there is evidently a causation of various kinds; but we cannot penetrate any farther. We are shut up in the limits of the physical. We can go no farther than acknowledging that there is an unseen world beyond, in which lie causation, contingency, the power of conscious action. These at once take us into another sphere: they are utterly beyond the physical, and if people would only honestly tell us that they mean no more by their agnosticism than that the natural man discerneth not things of the Spirit, I should quite agree with them. I here put it into more theological language than I should care to force on them at the outset; but I think they are bound to tell us that the unseen which lies beyond the phenomenal world, does contain the realities without which everything in the seen or physical world would have been unknown. Mr. Herbert Spencer exhausts a great deal of space in order to prove this, or nearly to prove it; but he is indistinct, and will not come to the point with the broad statement that in the world of the unseen lie all the powers which originate what he calls "forces." Professor Tait and Mr. Balfour Stewart almost deny that there are such things as forces: they wish to get rid of the word altogether. It is very difficult for them to find place for forces in the physical universe. Forces lie beyond: call them by what name you will, they lie beyond. If once Mr. Herbert Spencer would deal effectually with this question of the causes of the physical which lie in the unseen, he would have less difficulty in finding out the God whom we adore, who is the Cause of all things finite, and

who by His infinite power is able to produce all things out of nothing. I wish to pause a moment on this expression—"all things out of nothing"; because Mr. Herbert Spencer further on in his book on *First Principles* distinctly denies that anything can possibly be conceived to have been made out of nothing. Now, if there be an originating power at all, it is that which gives us something that was not before. It is folly to admit causation and origination, and to dispute that there is beyond this world a power that can make things out of nothing. We ourselves, as originators, as causes, are shadows of Him who has placed His image upon us. Every time we exercise the power of thinking we are conscious that we have thoughts which came out of us we know not exactly how, but certainly not from conscious material. We, as finite beings, are as shadows of the infinite God, whose likeness we bear. We are intelligences, we are makers and originators. We, too, make things out of nothing. A great author and poet is a maker, an originator, a cause, and to some real extent he causes things to be which were not. Sometimes he makes up existing materials, but even then there are flashes of truth, there are pictorial and real illustrations which come from the man himself. As the infinite and eternal God speaks to us, it is done: the action of the Divine Will is not inoperative. We cannot conceive of God as a Great Being who has both power and will, without also understanding that His will does something; that His power is effectual power. If you work out this thought you will find that something out of nothing is a logical result; but if I am detaining you too long, I ask your forgiveness, and will only add a few more words. The paper before us seems to me, with the exception of the laudatory matter which I should in some degree, though not very much, be inclined to modify, to be quite perfect in expression. It is exact, it is logical. It adopts a way of putting the whole subject which Mr. Herbert Spencer is bound to notice: and I shall look forward also to a promised second paper from our lecturer with the deepest interest, because it will take us into the region of the ethical. When we see indeed the manner in which Mr. Herbert Spencer's philosophy is bound to evade ethics, I think we should stint our admiration of the moral tone pervading (as the paper hints) Mr. Herbert Spencer's book. But this, perhaps, is hypercriticism. I can quite understand that the refinement of the society in which Mr. Spencer moves has produced a tone and temper in him which may be called, and which doubtless is, moral and refined, and in that sense he displays a grace and sensitiveness and a reality which we may well imitate. Now and then he is hard on the theologian, but being a theologian myself, I can without effort say I forgive him. The fact is that he does not understand us, though he may and probably will understand us, if he will but try, and among our many philosophers may one day achieve a lofty and permanent place.

MR. W. GRIFFITH. —It is, perhaps, unwise in criticising the opinions of an author to concede too much in praising him too highly, or, on the other hand, to treat him with injustice in order to avoid doing so. It may be proper to consider the position which Mr. Herbert Spencer holds in con-

nexion with the sceptical philosophy of the present day. Hume began with an hypothesis and ended in doubting everything; Mr. Herbert Spencer begins by doubting everything, and concludes by believing a great deal. This is certainly a great step in advance, and upon that we may congratulate ourselves. But while admitting that Mr. Herbert Spencer has achieved so much as to convince himself that there is something beyond matter in the realm of thought, I do not think that we ought to say that his effort is the last and probably the greatest attempt to present the true philosophy of the cosmos. If we see anything of philosophy in what he writes, philosophy will tell us that he is treading in the steps of those who have gone before him—men like Descartes, who held that matter consisted of certain minute particles—atomic particles—estimable in quantity, but destitute of all qualities impressed by a Creator; yet even Descartes was not original in this theory. Democritus, himself, admitted as much, and believed in what is sometimes called the atomic theory, which dates from the time of Empedocles and the Ionic philosophers, who sought an explanation of the phenomena of nature in the supposition that the forms and modifications of matter are the cause of all things. It was to Anaxagoras that the Greek world was indebted for the suggestion of a higher cause called *νοῦς*, mind or thought. Mr. Spencer is beginning to think that there is such a thing as thought, but is not sure whether it is always dependent or can be independent of matter. I was somewhat surprised when the author stated that the systems of philosophy encountered by St. Paul were, as compared with that of Mr. Herbert Spencer, but as unproved assertions to the deductions of exact science, or as crumbling sand to solid granite. I do not understand how any one who has read the works of Aristotle could be disposed to adopt this conclusion. Aristotle lived in that period of Greek history when every theory of the universe had been, or was being, thoroughly investigated, when the atomic theory of Democritus was fully sounded, and when the *νοῦς* of Anaxagoras and the *Δημιουργός* of Plato were well considered, and he came to conclude, with the other great thinkers of his day, that philosophy had arrived at the final solution that the intelligence which existed in connexion with matter involved a higher intelligence independent of matter, an intelligence which was the same as the Supreme Creator of the Universe, of whose will and expression matter was only the product. I have hitherto been dealing with the historical points of the subject; but with regard to Mr. Herbert Spencer, I may say that he has advantages which the ancient philosophers did not possess. The science of the material has made great advances, and all the facts that have been collected during the centuries that have passed since Aristotle's time, have been at his disposal. Whether he has made a good use of them is another question. It is to be remarked that the grand results which Aristotle achieved tended to prove that matter is the creature of mind, and that mind is the great expression of the Creator; while the philosophers of the dark ages, studying the logic of Aristotle, have merely used his terms of reasoning in connexion with *à priori* topics that led them into much metaphysics that have been useless and

unsound. Fortunately, in the progress of the human mind, Bacon appeared, and he wisely adopted the experimental view of proving all his conclusions by an appeal to facts, and on this point I somewhat differ from Dr. Irons. I do not think he has done full justice to the *à posteriori* mode of philosophising. If it were not for our investigation of facts as they exist, our natural science would be in as backward a state as that of the ancient schools; our knowledge of the solar system as dark as that which preceded Copernicus, when it was maintained that the earth was the centre of the solar system, and that the sun revolved round the earth. Now, Mr. Spencer, in connexion with these questions of fact, has undoubtedly achieved—what? He has had the advantage of the collective knowledge of previous investigators. Has he made good use of it? Unfortunately, he has not proceeded as far as he might have done. He has advanced beyond the theory of Democritus and fallen short of that of Anaxagoras, and says that there is a human mind in connexion with matter, and not independent of matter, making the ultimate notion of mind merely the pulsation of the nerves. This, of course, brings us back to the old theory that mind and matter are inherent one in the other. Still, while we wish to do full justice to this author, we must admit that he is deficient in logical accuracy. It is very certain that Mr. Herbert Spencer falls far short of the truth, and it is on this point that I think the author has achieved a great deal in showing that the system of Mr. Herbert Spencer is illogical and inconclusive. It is now many years since I studied Dr. Carpenter's "Comparative Physiology," and I cannot but think that our new philosopher has borrowed from that great authority, and drawn inferences from the borrowed facts which the late learned Registrar of the University of London would repudiate. Whether or not that be so, the system, if system it can be called, of development is fanciful, imaginative, and a speculation. It is inconsistent with the facts of chemistry, which show with irrefutable exactness that combinations of isometric equivalents of the same elements produce totally different inorganic results, the properties and power of the products being different. In other words, qualities of matter are fixed, and fixed independent of the atoms. Mr. Herbert Spencer is merely proceeding in the darkness in which he has lived, and has not yet arrived at that full light to which the careful consideration of the facts of the case should have led him. And here I think that there is great force in what Professor O'Dell has said, namely, that if we carefully consider the facts existing around us, we are bound to admit that there is a spiritual element in our nature. If we take the great novels and plays—the mighty works and dramas of men like Shakspeare—we must confess that the whole of our literature, ancient and modern, goes to prove that there is a spiritual element altogether independent of materialism. We need only do what Mr. Herbert Spencer himself has done, appeal to our own consciousness, and we must at once admit this; and here, again, we must remark another error in the Spencerian theory. He says that truth and error, or, to use his own words, mendacity and trustworthiness, would become identical unless we accepted the verdict of consciousness that they

differ. I would say at once that the consciousness of one individual is not the test to another man of truth or error—that virtue is a thing that is independent of the consciousness of any particular individual. Whose consciousness are we to take? Is it to be that of Mr. Spencer or of some one else? For, the more individuals we take, the more difference we find in individual minds. Therefore, I should differ from Mr. Spencer in making any question of mendacity or trustworthiness dependent merely on the consciousness of an individual. I would rather appeal to the verdict of mankind, and say there is a spiritual element independent of these things, and that on this point Mr. Spencer falls short of the truth. Another objection to his theory is the terribly nugatory character it possesses. It must necessarily follow that if we once accept it we shall find that all good things will cease; and if there be no future, why should we not say, “Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die”? But the common sense of humanity—to use no higher argument—at once condemns this. The paper before us contains so many propositions that it is impossible to deal with them all. We can but touch on a few points as they arise, and I must conclude by thanking the author for a very interesting and useful paper on a subject of much importance.

Mr. L. T. DIBDIN.—I have heard a great many papers read in this room, but never one that seemed to me more clear. It deals with a great subject so ably as to be almost inimitable. I think that whenever Mr. Herbert Spencer comes to read this paper, and to reply to it, as I consider he is bound to do, he will have no easy task. I am not altogether disposed to concur in all the statements that have been made upon the paper, and should like to allude to the remarks of one speaker, who seemed to say that the great argument to be applied to this subject was that adduced by Mr. Herbert Spencer himself, and founded on consciousness. Everybody admits that the argument from consciousness is a very strong argument, but I do not think it can be fairly carried to the extent to which that speaker carried it; if so, it would have been unnecessary to write this paper. The argument from consciousness must not be pressed too strongly, so as entirely to overweight and countervail arguments of a purely logical character; because, though I admit that if the result of argument were found to be in direct contradiction to the teaching of mere consciousness, probably with the majority of mankind consciousness would decide the matter, yet it will not do, unless there be absolute contradiction, to assume this. I say so for this reason: consciousness is not always a safe guide, and we cannot always lay down the precise conditions under which it is a safe guide. But I should like to call attention to something in the paper we have heard read to-night. I do not wish to throw any doubt upon it as not being clear; on the contrary, it is one of the clearest argued papers I ever read, but when one has read it only for the first time one may very fairly fail to grasp its full intention. This may have been the case in regard to the argument of the author on the quotation from Herbert Spencer, given on the 69th and following page of the paper. I do not know whether I

have gathered the force of Mr. Ground's comment upon that; but it would seem that Mr. Herbert Spencer begins by laying down the doctrine of the growth of energies—the development of one energy out of another, and that he then assumes the connexion between mental and bodily energies—asserting that all our energies are developed out of other energies, and that therefore the mental energies may be developed out of the physical energies. This brings us to what is the real vice of the whole of Mr. Herbert Spencer's reasoning, and that is, that he does not show the point when the advance from the lower stages of creation to the higher comes in. Whatever may be the case as to evolution, whether it is a true doctrine or not, I do not say; but every philosopher will admit that it is a very plausible theory, and so long as Mr. Herbert Spencer is simply evolving one physical existence out of another—not a higher one—he has a fair field in which he may have a great deal to say; and afterwards, also, when he has introduced mind, and is trying to bring that from a lower to a higher state, he has a good deal to say which I think Mr. Ground will admit is very difficult to answer; but it is on this point *where mind comes in* that I think it impossible to follow Mr. Herbert Spencer's arguments. This quiet passing over of the very critical point of the case, reminds me of a story told of an eminent living judge who was once a very successful advocate. He was arguing before the late Lord ——, who in his latter days suffered a good deal from a tendency to go to sleep on the bench. The advocate's case was very good up to a certain point, where, however, it was very weak. Knowing where this weak point was, the advocate was very loud and sonorous till he came to it, when he adopted a very soothing tone of voice, and Lord —— went to sleep. After he had got over the weak point he became very loud and demonstrative again, the result being that Lord —— woke up and decided in his favour. Now, this seems to be very much like the way in which Mr. Herbert Spencer treats the introduction of mind into the universe. There is another assumption that follows on this as a sort of corollary, and that is, that the growth of mind is proportionate to the development of the physical existence; that is to say, that as we get into the higher types of physical existence mind must necessarily show a higher phase of development. These two assumptions go to the bottom of what has been criticised in the paper to-night. There is one point about the eye to which attention is drawn on page 74. It is very beautifully put, and the passage is one that we may well read over again when we get home. It reminds me of a paper read many years ago by the late Rev. W. Mitchell. I am sure that Dr. Irons and other old members of the Institute will well remember how, in the early days of the Institute, when Mr. Reddie occupied the Secretary's chair, Mr. Mitchell read a paper on Lyell's development of the eye from a physical point of view, and how he demolished that theory altogether, and by that paper laid, to some extent, the foundation of the high reputation of this Institute. This criticism on the same argument, from a logical point of view, is a fitting corollary to the other. I should like to point out how the same

assumption, as to the introduction of mind, runs through the whole of this material philosophy. Mr. Herbert Spencer, of course, treats the subject from a philosophical point of view; men like Professor Tyndal treat it from an experimental point of view, but whenever they attempt to formulate any system, and to bind mind to matter, they do exactly the same thing, and assume the point where mind is initiated. I notice that the paper before us is full of strong language. Mr. Ground uses some hard expressions in regard to Mr. Herbert Spencer, in phrases that strike very oddly, especially on a lawyer's ear. But is there not a cause for this? In page 76 the author says, "Some of the consequences of this sin we stated at the beginning in the shape of hundreds and thousands of lives bereft of all faith in God and the unseen, through this far-extending falsehood!" This is the reason why these matters are not mere matters to be discussed, like any ordinary intellectual propositions, on the result of which serious consequences do not depend; they are, on the contrary, matters of the very first importance. I know that I ought not to enter upon political topics here, but I cannot help referring to the significant commentary which the question, probably at this moment in the Bradlaugh debate in the House of Commons, affords on the present subject. It should ever be remembered that the philosophy of Mr. Herbert Spencer is but a higher and refined development of the coarse and brutal atheism of Mr. Bradlaugh. (Hear.)

Professor GRIFFITH.—In reference to the first passage in the paper quoted by the last speaker, the author, after giving a very beautiful extract from Mr. Herbert Spencer's book, says: "All this we may concede, adding only this proviso—that as every antecedent force which generates an action must operate in the same region as that action, must be *in eadem materiâ*," I should like to ask, first of all, what is it he means by *in eadem materiâ*? and next, what is his authority for the introduction of this exotic proviso? Where is his proof that cause and effect must always be in the same plane? Touch fire, and it shall give you pain. Do fire and pain belong to the same sphere of being? Strike the keys of the piano artistically and you have music. In that case you have, first of all, mental energy moving the fingers and then the piano. Next, something in the ear is moved by air-vibrations, and the nerves are set a-going. Then follows musical feeling. I therefore ask, cannot causes in one plane produce effects on quite a different plane? Let us touch another point: "The magician is going to pass from the extended beam of light (for to the scientific imagination the matter of which light is composed has surface and weight as manifestly as a cannon-ball), he is going to travel logically from this extended beam of light to the unextended mind." I must ask, is this quite fair? I am sure the author means honestly; but I am none the less convinced that this is based on a serious misapprehension. Mr. Herbert Spencer is the last man in the world to mistake visualization for particles of matter, or to confound mere physical light, even on the old corpuscular theory with the immediate act of seeing. Light, or the force of light, does not consist in dead particles of matter, but in the energy, the divine or God-given energy, which has sent

it into space at the rate of thousands of miles a second, and which has caused those particles to impinge on the eye. It is the motion, not dead weight, but the *vis* of apulsion. Mr. Spencer does not call force a physical thing. To imply that he has the slightest sympathy with any such notion, is to do him serious wrong. His argument does not run in that direction. There is another point. "Matter can never touch mind." Are we quite sure of this? Will not a diseased brain touch our mental conceptions? Are the effects of pain limited to the bodily frame? But even if we were to grant that matter can never touch mind, we must admit that mind can touch matter. You will perceive this by moving your arm; and that is all that Mr. Herbert Spencer's argument requires. Mr. Spencer never urges that spirit may rise out of matter. The question with him is, can matter rise out of spirit? Is there a factual dualism, or is matter nothing else than a simple *exterioration* of mind—a subjective shadow—projection of our inner self-hood? There is a great deal more I should like to say; in fact, I should like to give an hour to each of these phases, and half an hour to compliment my friend, Mr. Ground, on the paper he has read. From the bottom of my heart I congratulate him on the tone of his criticism, for, notwithstanding it is a rather harsh criticism, there is no bad feeling from beginning to end; and I must also congratulate him on his keen appreciation of the noted author he has undertaken to grapple with. I repeat that I congratulate Mr. Ground from the bottom of my heart; but, in conclusion, I must submit that I think the bridge he has built for us from subject to object, from non-life to life, is very beautiful, but I should be sorry to trust my life to it.

Mr. W. OGLE, M.D.—It has long been my earnest desire that an Institute established for the examination of those propositions of science which touch especially on religion, should give Mr. Spencer's views full consideration. It is quite possible that his doctrines, though taken up before, have never been treated with so much effect, and I think that we are very much indebted to Mr. Ground for the way in which he has dealt with them. We are also indebted to him for having given us so much of Mr. Herbert Spencer in so small a compass. Also, though I am somewhat startled by the expressions of admiration regarding one towards whom we are in the position of opponents, I think it is a very great advantage that the person we oppose should be put before us in the best possible way. I feel that this is certainly an admirable point in the paper. But I really have risen to-night very much because I am so seldom here, and I wished to say how great an interest I take in this Institute. I hope that the papers that are to come from Mr. Ground will, in God's providence, deal with some of those other teachings of Mr. Spencer which ought to be taken up by the Victoria Institute. I allude especially to his system of Sociology, in which, if I have been rightly informed, he endeavours to claim that Sociology shall be regarded as a true science—a conclusion which I believe to be perfectly sound. But I am no less certain that there is some fundamental error in his mode of establishing this proposition;

because in his system, unless I am greatly mistaken, those social laws which are derived, not from experience, but immediately by revelation from God's word, are ignored. A Sociology which ignores a personal God and lawgiver must be, to say the least of it, as incomplete as would be a solar system in which no reference is made to the existence and influence of the sun. I look to the Victoria Institute to set Mr. H. Spencer right upon this point.

Mr. GROUND.—I have to thank the meeting for the very kind way in which it has received this paper. As there is very little time remaining to me, I must apologise for having to pass by very much of the criticism by which the paper has been met, but which I am very glad to have heard, and about which I may say a word or two. I would first refer to what has been said as to my references to Mr. Herbert Spencer's genius. It is possible I was over-impressed by this, but I read his philosophy at a particular time, and as I read it I thought that although never before had I met with any argument which in the least degree seemed to shake the foundations of Revelation, yet that here was something which, unanswered, was certainly startling, and might have that effect. In that state of alarm Mr. Spencer loomed as a giant before me, and perhaps I thought his proportions greater than they are. We seldom do estimate aright a living man. We need to portray him on the canvas of Eternity, if his true shape and size are to be seen. I feel sure, however, that some in this Institute greatly underrate Mr. Spencer,—a mistake which, in my judgment, would, if not corrected, bring disastrous consequences, but it is possible that I may have gone to the opposite extreme. In reading his Philosophy I am distinctly conscious that vaster thoughts are before me than when reading Shakspeare. Shakspeare one can take up any time, as the companion of any idle hour, and the amount of mental stimulus he gives is relatively trifling. Not so is it with Spencer. It is only when the eye is keenest, the will strongest, the nervous force most abundant, that you can be sure of following him. The first carries you through the gentle undulations of an English county, and his highest elevations are hardly so much as going up Snowdon or Helvellyn, but Spencer carries you up the awful Alpine ranges, where the spaces of thought over which the eye roves are incomparably vaster, and where the exertion demanded is far greater. Spencer has a certain Miltonic grandeur. I could name places in his Philosophy where views are given us of creation in which, if we add the spiritual conceptions of which I spoke, the idea presented rises, to my mind, in extent, sublimity, and overpowering greatness, above everything I have yet met with in all uninspired literature. To grasp his system is like standing in the Sistine chapel, and bearing the full weight of the conceptions of Michael Angelo. Whilst this fact explains the fascination Mr. Spencer exerts over many, it also shows us the great danger either of letting his system continue, as it no doubt is, the reigning philosophy of the world, or of depreciating it below its just value. So long as it remains enthroned, a deadly paralysing force is exerted on all the higher circles of thought, and all the freshest and most ingenuous spirits; and out of this force an infidelity of a very terrible type can hardly fail to come.

One of the speakers took exception to my statement that "the systems of philosophy encountered by St. Paul were, compared with this system, but as unproved assertions to the deductions of exact science," and he cites the works of Aristotle as exact and severe deductions. In reply I would say that I am not aware that St. Paul conflicted with Aristotle. There was much in the old systems which was true, which could be at once accepted. What was not true was only mere flimsy speculation, and had no solid argument to back it. But in Mr. Spencer's system we meet with what seems, and often is, severe scientific reasoning, leading up to a conclusion opposed by Revelation,—*i.e.*, from premisses *the truth of which we are forced to grant*, we are led *by exact logic* to a conclusion *from which we recoil*. St. Paul, so far as I know, never met a case of this sort. The only parallel instance is St. Stephen, and it needed his glorious Defence in order to make evident to men where the sophism lay.

Reference has been made to the indefinite* nature of the phrase "the Doctrine of Evolution," and questions have been raised as to the area over which it is accepted. I understand the phrase to mean the doctrine that all the different orders and genera of the animated world have been evolved,—some say, with a few breaks; some, without any break,—from one primary root, the whole world of life being one organic whole; one class of animals growing out of another class as the branches and twigs grow out of the trunk of a tree. Now that this doctrine, with various slight modifications, is held by the majority of the leading men of science in all countries of the globe, seems to me a fairly ascertained fact. In Dublin a scientific man told me that three-fourths of those he knew held it. I have heard similar statements elsewhere. I am told it was almost universally accepted at Cambridge ten years ago. Professor Huxley, on the Jubilee of Darwinism, said that it had now made good its claims to rule the scientific world, and must henceforth be regarded as the only tenable hypothesis yet propounded. I think these authorities fairly justify my statement.

Permit me to thank Prebendary Irons very warmly for the exceedingly kind and appreciative way in which he has spoken of my paper. There is just one little point where I do not understand Spencer to have the fault attributed to him. Mr. Spencer denies that we can conceive of something having been made out of nothing. This Dr. Irons combats. I understand Mr. Spencer here to mean, with Sir William Hamilton, that the *act of creation* is by us incomprehensible. Now, to conceive or comprehend the *act of creation* would be to link together in our thought two propositions—something; nothing—one of which—nothing—cannot come into thought at all. No effort of ours can bridge over the logical chasm between something and 0. Hence the act of creation can never be thought. We can trace the Divine Power in creation from the moment it comes into sight and becomes something, but we cannot pass into that region, to be traversed by Deity alone, whence the power issued. As Hamilton showed, we can

* See Chairman's remarks, p. 82.

construe the act of creation only by conceiving the power manifested in creation to have been before existing potentially in the Person of the Deity, and to have come into an existence cognisable by us by his creative *Fiat*. Now to reply to my esteemed friend Professor Griffith. He asks what is my authority for saying that cause and effect must be *in eadem materia*, in the same plane. He instances fire and pain; motion of the keys of a piano, and our sensation of sound, in both of which he affirms the cause is *not* in the same plane as the effect. To this I beg to demur. It is the physical nerve which is submitted to the action of the physical fire, and these are in the same plane. It is the mind that feels in that nerve, but it is the nerve to which what causes the feeling is applied. As for ourselves, we are both mind and matter, and hence are open to receive impressions on both these sides of our being. In the same way, Professor Griffith's illustration of the motion of a piano's keys and our sensation of sound seems to me unable to prove his assertion. The waves of [physical] air made by the motion of the strings of the piano beat upon the [physical] auditory nerve, which nerve since it is matter, can receive their impact, and since it contains mind can also interpret that impact in terms of consciousness. I submit, therefore, that in both the instances cited Professor Griffith is altogether wrong. I have a very profound sense of the value of his judgment in general, but, on this occasion, I am utterly unable to regard it as sound or just. In conclusion, permit me to thank him, and you all for the very kind way in which my paper has been received.

(The meeting was then adjourned.)

FURTHER REPLY BY THE AUTHOR.

During the meeting I was unable to make out the exact drift of the second part of Professor Griffith's criticism, wherein he stated that I had seriously misapprehended Mr. Spencer's meaning. I have now had some conversation with him, of which he kindly permits me to make use:—I gather that he deems Mr. Spencer to hold and state in his Philosophy, the doctrine that there is a force beyond the phenomenal, in which implicitly resided not only all the matter but all the mind that is in the universe. Mr. Spencer, according to him, attempts nothing more than to trace the working of this force in our mundane sphere, in its twofold aspect of mind and matter remaining all the time *profoundly conscious of this immanence of the Unseen*, and, in his own conception, tracing all things as evolved from it. Thus in Professor Griffith's idea there is, in the system, a power, not unlike the Fates in a Greek play, who rides high above all the multiform events of life, and ordereth them all after the counsel of His own will. According to him, Mr. Spencer's Philosophy is a sublime Theophany, and the danger with which it threatens us is the resolving of all things into God—a more vigorous Spinosism, carried out on a larger scale! To this I beg to reply:—

1. Even if true it makes nothing against my argument. Mr. Spencer has no right to travel from matter to mind without saying, if this indeed be his notion, that he regards matter as originally endowed, before it came into

the phenomenal world, with all the powers and potencies of mind. Never a line has he written, so far as I know, which can be tortured into this.

2. My reading of Mr. Spencer's works leads me more and more in quite another direction. Each fresh examination thereof impresses me more clearly with the conviction that Mr. Spencer owns no God but Force, and, I fear, Force Irresponsible, Impersonal, Unintelligent. Even where he has most clearly drawn the outlines of the God of Love, he gives never a hint that he himself can see the picture; he seems to me like an artist who paints most carefully each feature, but never penetrates to the soul which dwells in the features, and lights them up with living beauty. Only those who can bring this spiritual setting can, I fear, see a spiritual element in Mr. Spencer; my friend, Professor Griffith, has it in large measure, and it is I think the loftiness of his own nature which puts into Mr. Spencer's philosophy an element others cannot detect. A celestial rainbow does sometimes hang over the thoughts; Mr. Spencer supplies the raindrops, and puts them in the right angle for our eyes, but that which gives the glory is light from above.

3. The influence exerted over a wide area, and for the last twenty years, by Mr. Spencer's system has certainly not been of a character to impress men more profoundly with the sense of the immanence in nature of an ever-working, all-glorious mind. Mr. Spencer has in that time stimulated thousands of men; the currents of thought he has thus caused have mingled, more or less completely, in one broad stream, and that stream has certainly not carried nearer God. Now if the whole tendency of his system is to set forth God, if it is a lofty philosophical Calvinism, if each sentence is penned for that end, it is passing strange, it is incomprehensible, that the sum total of the resultants of its influence upon thought should drive God farther away from men's minds. This seems to me to amount to a *reductio ad absurdum*.

4. It seems to me irresistibly droll—a good philosophical joke—that Mr. Spencer should be deemed another Malebranche, giving us a second "Vision of all things in God." I can but think that no one would be more astonished to learn it than Mr. Spencer himself.

For these reasons, respecting as I do Professor Griffith's judgment, I could not accept it in this instance, with my present impressions, without utter mental dislocation.