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RELIGION AND SCIENCE.*

BY PROF. J. D. BELL.

WHAT do we know? This is the ultimate question in speculation, and on its decision depends the future of thought. To those unused to thinking it may seem very simple and easily answered. But the more we reflect upon it; the more we study its scientific, historical and social aspects; the more are we convinced that it is the abstrusest and most far-reaching inquiry ever put by man to himself or to his fellows; and hence there have been (since it was first broached) almost as many responses as thinkers. As only confusion and misunderstanding can result from ignoring the real issue, let us formulate it in its full force. It is as follows: Have we any real knowledge, either direct or inferential, of the Supernatural, call it First Cause, Absolute, or Infinite? In a word, have we any such knowledge as would warrant us in asserting or denying the existence of such a being? or in asserting or denying the existence of any or all attributes, which the reverential feelings of humanity in times past have applied to the object of their adorations? Let it be noted that the argument does not now turn on whether or not we have innate ideas—something in the mind antecedent to all experience of the external world. Indeed, it is perfectly competent to take the negative on the alleged knowledge of the Supernatural, while at the same time fully accepting intuition.† Provided our innate ideas be solely phenomenal, we can take whichever side we please in the great controversy of Locke and Leibnitz. The question of the origin of our knowledge is very important still and was much more so in the past, but this importance is secondary. The extent of that knowledge is the prime question to which all others must bow.

Upon reflection it must be evident that the question as above stated

* A Review of Herbert Spencer.

† The current empiricism seems utterly unphilosophical. For the organization of the brain must be antecedent to all experience whatsoever; even extending the Lockean conception to the race or to all life (as Mr. Spencer does), only pushes the difficulty further back; but does not solve it. The "mirror," "slate," and "sheet of white paper," theories of the mind are mere verbal fallacies. Life, be it in a zoophyte or in man, must precede all experience; and as thought is but the highest expression of life, this is the same as saying that our mental apparatus possesses innate (organic) ideas.

is capable of solution, and that that solution will rigidly exclude all others. It is not meant that at a single sitting the question can be settled. Men do not so give up cherished opinions. They are only abandoned when seen to be contradictory to decisive experiences. As long as they do not perceive the contradiction, men can sincerely hold the most contradictory views. But when the discrepancy is perceived, they never rest until it is removed. It must be noted, too, that in all cases of psychological surgery the operation is not performed until a new organ is prepared to take the place of the old; which new organ not only supplies the vacancy, but goes further, filling what was left empty by its predecessor, and locating functions before almost useless from positional instability. It was thus with Newton's law of Gravitation; with the great generalization of Dr. J. R. Mayer, Joule, Grove, *et al.*, known as the Conservation of Force; with the Darwinian law of Natural Selection; and it will be so with the relations of the natural and the supernatural. And as in the former the explanation of otherwise inexplicable occurrences is easily obtained by means of the law, so in the latter the difficulties inherent in every compromise will disappear in the real solution.

I.

It is admitted on all sides that a controversy exists. Thinkers are not so well agreed as to its nature or solution. The object of the present essay is threefold. To briefly examine this controversy; the compromises to which it has given rise; and the solutions proposed. Many of the thoughts here put forth were suggested by the writer's opposition to Mr. Herbert Spencer's Reconciliation of Religion and Science, which he believes to be erroneous and misleading; the exposition will consequently take somewhat of the form of an inquiry into the truth of some fundamental assertions made by that philosopher. As I shall, unfortunately, have more occasion for dissenting from Mr. Spencer's mode of reasoning than the reverse, it is the more directly incumbent upon me to bear witness to the largeness of his views, and to his acuteness in analysis and extraordinary powers of co-ordination. Though considering the task undertaken by him impossible, and his synthesis of the knowable far from being true as a whole and in many parts totally false, I acknowledge that the world owes him a debt of gratitude for provoking healthful speculation by the lucid expression of his own suggestive thoughts.

When did the controversy begin? "Of all antagonisms of belief," says Mr. Spencer,* "the oldest, the widest, the most profound and the most important is that between Religion and Science. It commenced when the recognition of the simplest uniformities in surrounding

* FIRST PRINCIPLES OF A SYSTEM OF PHILOSOPHY. 2d ed. New York, 1868. Part I. The Unknowable, p. 11.

things set a limit to the previously universal fetishism. It shows itself everywhere throughout the domain of human knowledge: affecting men's interpretations alike of the simplest mechanical accidents and of the most complicated events in the histories of nations." Is this very comprehensive assertion true? On its face it appears to be historical, but the sources of it are not indicated. It is to be regretted that very many contemporary writers, and Mr. Spencer among them, refuse their readers the privilege of checking their statements by references to the authorities for their facts.* The practice of citation, though onerous on the writer, should never be allowed to fall into desuetude, as it saves him from hasty generalizations or at least guards against their banefulness, while at the same time forming an admirable logical exercise for the reader. In this case a search for such authorities would have preserved our author from a totally groundless statement. Faith other than that in evidence being out of place in historical discussions, let us apply some well-known facts to this very confident assertion.

1. The Bible being in every one's hands will furnish a first test. The Old Testament Scriptures show us a state of society in which the recognition of uniformities had not only set limits to a previously universal fetishism, but, according to Mr. Spencer himself, a state in which this recognition had been carried so far as to differ in little but name from what M. Comte designated as the perfection of the metaphysical and positive (or scientific) systems respectively.† In this very favorable case for Mr. Spencer, it is safe to say, after careful study, that no such antagonism is found. Antagonisms did exist, but they were political—questions of ethics and government, and not in any sense discussions about the origin and extent of our knowledge.‡ For instance, men might and did deny that a certain man was sent by God, but was it ever doubted that some men were sent by God? Again, it might be denied that certain rules of conduct were revealed by God, but did any one ever doubt that God revealed some rules? Finally, men might deny the authenticity of certain traditions, said to have been revealed, but did they ever doubt the existence of revelation? After this cursory view and argument which every reader can extend and verify for himself, it is hardly presumptuous to deny that this assumed antagonism affects "men's interpretations alike of the simplest mechanical accidents and of the most complicated events in the histories of nations." Both these and all such occurrences were believed

* "Many authors entertain, not only a foolish, but a really dishonest objection to acknowledge from whence they derive much valuable information."—CHARLES DICKENS—"The Pickwick Papers."

† THE CLASSIFICATION OF THE SCIENCES. 2d ed. New York, 1870, pp. 35, 36.

‡ REVUE DES DEUX MONDES. 1867, t. LXIX, pp. 818-850 and LXX, pp. 147-179. "Les Prophètes d'Israel," and Id. t. LXXXIII, pp. 76-112. "La Religion primitive d'Israel," Essays by Albert Réville, in review of Dr. Kuënen's researches.

to be due to the anger of the deity,—the conception of Law *versus* Miracle having never entered the Hebrew mind as far as can be gathered from their sacred books.

2. Passing over the Koran, which, with the Hebrew Scriptures, may be said to contain the general speculation of the Semite man, and to which an identical train of reasoning will apply, let us turn to the Aryan man. The early thought of this race is preserved in three well-known compilations: the Veda for the Hindús; the Zend-Avesta for the Persians; and the Homeric Poems for the Greeks. A candid examination of these works conclusively shows that this assumed antagonism did not exist at the time they were composed. There is antagonism in all, but it is person against person, and not 'uniformities against persons. In the Veda the Devas (or 'bright' gods,) fight and conquer their enemies—the 'dark' powers of nature; but he would be a bold man who should assert that the former were laws and the latter persons. The bright gods are themselves superseded in the Zend-Avesta; but is it in favor of uniformities? Not at all. The radiating gods (Light, Fire, etc., conceived as persons) take their places; but the mode of interpretation has not varied. Lastly: the Homeric Poems are almost as well known as the Bible; has this antagonism been found in them? It will be perhaps a sufficient and conclusive answer to this interrogatory to cite the opinion of Mr. Grote, the greatest living authority on "the free life of Hellas." Discussing this question in, the sixteenth chapter (Part I) of his "History of Greece,"* he reaches the conclusion that in the Homeric age "no such contention had yet begun," though the elements of it seem to have existed, the Mœræ (or Fates) at rare intervals overruling the decisions of Zeus. Unfortunately for Mr. Spencer's argument, however, these Mœræ were not uniformities, but persons, like Zeus himself. As the world of speculation may be said to be divided between the Aryan man and the Semite, and as no such antagonism has appeared in the early speculations of either, Mr. Spencer's account of the commencement of the controversy must be rejected.†

The foregoing was written before the appearance of Mr. Herbert

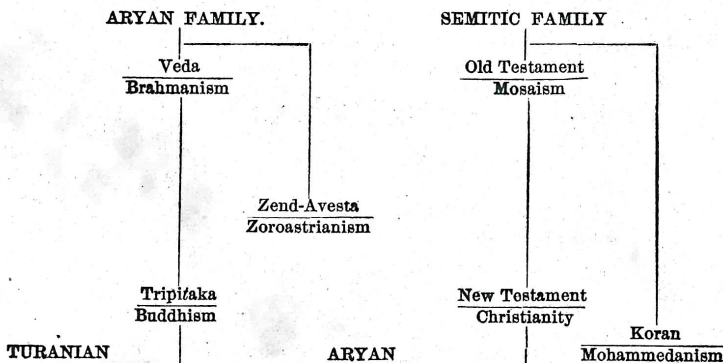
* 3d Edition, London, 1851, Vol. I, p. 483. See also Chap. LXVIII (Part II)—Sokratês.

† The following interesting diagram, showing the religions of the world whose rites are found systematized in books, is transferred from the second of the "Lectures on the Science of Religion," by Professor Max Müller, which appeared in "Frazer's Magazine" for May, 1870, pp. 581-593. The whole six lectures of the course, delivered last winter before the Royal Institution of London, will appear in successive issues of "Fraser," commencing with April. The attention of thinkers is invited to them, not indeed as being likely to contain anything very new, but as showing the drift of even orthodox thought. Surely the world is not standing still when an Oxford professor can coolly inform his brilliant Christian audience that to the scientific man all revelation must stand on the same footing, and that the mere assertion of its votaries that a religion is revealed affords no presumption in its favor. (p. 590.) These lectures can be very advantageously compared with six fine essays by Émile Burnouf on "La Science des Religions; sa Méthode et ses Lim-

Spencer's paper "On the Origin of Animal Worship, etc.,"* which suggested the propriety of so far extending the limits of the present article as to admit a few remarks on the interesting subject there discussed. The ostensible aim of that essay is to give the genesis of the important historical facts which Mr. J. F. McLennan had recently published in the "Fortnightly Review."† This acute sociological observer collected from all sources a mass of data bearing on the early worship of our race; and upon them, aided by the law of exogamy, viz.: that among savages, in order to guard against incest, marriage only takes place between individuals belonging to different clans or stock families,—all persons having the same tribal name ("the lion," "the turtle," "the beaver," etc.) being considered of the same family,‡ founded an hypothesis or

ites."—*Revue des deux Mondes*, December 1st and 15th, 1864; April 15th, August 15th and October 1st, 1868; and July 15th, 1869.

The diagram is as follows:



The Professor adds that China became the mother of two religions at almost the same time, each founded on a sacred code—the religion of Confucius and that of Lao-tse; the former resting on the Five King and Four Shu, and the latter on the Tao-te King. The eight codes here given form the Sacred library of the world. The diagram shows that each of the great families in which speculation is indigenous has given birth to three separate forms of religion. Brahmanism and Buddhism are directly affiliated, as are Mosaism and Christianity, while Zoroastrianism and Mohammedanism are only indirectly connected to the parent code. There is another curious fact pointed out by Müller, that both Buddhism and Christianity failed to take permanent root in their own families, and were compelled to abandon the fruitless task of 'reformation' with which they both set out. It should be also noted that the former went to a family lower than itself, cerebrally, while the latter came to one higher. There is another interesting fact to be gathered from the appended rough census of religions: it is that Christianity and Buddhism unite nearly two thirds of the human race. As quoted from Berghaus' Physical Atlas by Max Müller, ("Chips" from a German Workshop," Vol. I, p. 158,) the figures accompanying each form of religion indicate the percentage of the human race swayed by its dogmas:—Buddhism, 31.2 per cent; Christianity, 30.7; Mohammedanism, 15.7; Brahmanism, 13.4; Jews, 0.3 and Heathens 8.7.

* "Fortnightly Review," May, 1870, pp. 535-550.

† "The worship of Animals and Plants," *Id.*, Oct. 1st and Nov. 1st, 1869, and Feb. 1st, 1870. These essays will well repay perusal.

‡ "Primitive Marriage," by J. F. McLellan, 1865; also, "Kinship in Ancient Greece," by the same, "Fortnightly Review," April 15, 1866, pp. 569-588; as well as "The Early History of Mankind," by E. B. Tylor, London, 1865.

On "Exogamy," Mr. Darwin has the following remarks, which show how deeply

working theory. Briefly stated, it is as follows: All the ancient nations passed through "Totemism" before attaining the higher religious rites. Totem is a name borrowed from the Indians of our continent, and signifies a protecting spirit, or, as the Canadians call it, "Medicine." The Totem may be either animal or vegetable. The permanent name of the stock-tribe was derived from it, and it early became a kind of vague sin, if an animal to kill it, if a vegetable to gather it, and in either case to eat of it. This prohibition, known as "tabu," is absolute among the Fijians, it being criminal to partake of the Totem-god. In Egypt, the deity side of the Totem was still more developed, live animals having real religious rites in their honor. The same also occurred in India, as is very conclusively shown in Mr. Fergusson's magnificent "Tree and Serpent Worship." In a word, traces of this embryo cultus are found everywhere among even the most civilized nations of antiquity—polytheism itself being apparently but a pantheon of Totems derived from each of the separate stocks represented in the nation, and modified by the increasing refinement of manners and advancement in speculation. Mr. McLennan further believes that to Totemism, and not to any pretended likeness, we can trace the names of the signs of the Zodiac and of the constellations, Bear, Dog, Swan, etc.; these designations being then given to new discoveries in the heavens, as marks of the esteem in which the terrestrial animals so named were held, just as, for some years, the planet discovered by the illustrious Sir

that illustrious biologist has penetrated into ancient thought. They form a happy contrast to the nonsense so current in relation to "hygienic practices," "confusion of descent," etc., etc.:

"It would be interesting to know, if it could be ascertained, as throwing light on this question with respect to man, what occurs with the higher anthropomorphic apes—whether the young males and females soon wander away from their parents, or whether the old males become jealous of their sons and expel them, or whether any inherited instinctive feeling, from being beneficial has been generated, leading the young males and females of the same families to prefer pairing with distinct families, and to dislike pairing with each other. A considerable body of evidence has already been advanced showing that the offspring from parents which are not related are more vigorous and fertile than those from parents which are closely related; hence any slight feeling, arising from the sexual excitement of novelty or other cause, which led to the former rather than to the latter unions, would be augmented through natural selection, and thus might become instinctive; for those individuals which had an innate preference of this kind would increase in number. It seems more probable, that degraded savages should thus unconsciously have acquired their dislike and even abhorrence of incestuous marriages, rather than that they should have discovered by reasoning and observation the evil results. * * * In the case of man, the question whether evil follows from close interbreeding will probably never be answered by direct evidence, as he propagates his kind so slowly and cannot be subjected to experiment; but the almost universal practice of all races at all times of avoiding closely-related marriages is an argument of considerable weight; and whatever conclusion we arrive at in regard to the higher animals may be safely extended to man."—*The Variation of Animals and Plants under Domestication*. 2 vols. New York, without date. Chap. XVII, Vol. II, pp. 153, 154.

In connection with this question, it would be interesting to know on which part of the system—the muscular or the nervous—close interbreeding reacts most unfavorably. From many well-known facts it would seem to be the latter—but it should be experimentally settled.

W. Herschel was named from him, and as many proposed to call the planet Neptune "Le Verrier," in honor of one of its mathematical discoverers.

In the development of his thesis, Mr. McLennan had taken for granted that what is variously known as fetishism or animism represented the view of the early men on the producing causes of phenomena; in other words, that to savages, the conception of life and volition was unlimited. A tree, a stone, the wind, the earth, sun, moon, etc., might have the one and exercise the other. He also remarked, that Totemism, "the worship of animals and plants," preceded in historical order anthropomorphism or the worship of man. The former theory of early thought Mr. Spencer regards as totally false; and to the latter statement he can only accord a qualified acceptance. Dealing with it first, he says, that while if we restrict the word worship to its present meaning, Mr. McLennan's theory is true, still, if we go to the root of the matter—to the very origin of this Totemism itself—it requires great modification. "The rudimentary form of all religion," says he (p. 536), "is the propitiation of dead ancestors, who are supposed to be still existing, and to be capable of working good or evil to their descendants." This belief in everlasting life he thinks generated out of the savage conception of present human existence as double, which belief in its turn he traces to the following leading experiences: (1) The man's shadow, which accompanies him continually; (2) the reflection of his face and figure in water, which seems another self, or rather an emanation from self; (3) echoes, which appear to be voices eluding his search; (4) dreams—"the root of this belief in another self lies in the experience of dreams;" (5) suspended animation, apoplexy, catalepsy, etc. And from all these the savage view of death is generalized, viz.: that the man has but abandoned his residence and may return to it again; and, consequently, that having given favors while present, he still remains capable of doing so in his absence. The question at once arises, if this theory be true, how came men to worship animals and plants, as, from the conclusive evidence adduced, Mr. Spencer acknowledges they did? Very simply, says our author. Men named (or as he prefers to designate the process, "nick-named") each other from the phenomena of nature, in accordance with some real likeness between them; such as "the bear," for a rough or unmannerly person; "the sly old fox," for a cunning person; "carrots," for a red-haired person; "the mountain," for a fat person, etc. This is the sole origin of proper names which become surnames by hereditary descent. Thus, in case the ancestor has done some notable action, his children will be proud of it and retain it. Now, when once two things have the same name, owing to the "concreteness" of primitive language, the distinction in nature is lost, and what belongs to the one is unconsciously applied to the other. Hence comes the belief that the animal is the ancestor of the tribe; hence worship is offered

to it; and hence, finally, there appears in history the semblance of fetishness or animism. In a word, Mr. Spencer regards the embryo religious cultus, Totemism; and the primeval scientific hypothesis, fetishism or animism, simply as "habitual misrepresentations," caused by words.

This extraordinary hypothesis attempts to account for three things:—(1) for men's names; (2) for their "worship of animals and plants"; and (3) for their fetishism. The following reasons show their incompleteness, even if they do not refute Mr. Spencer's conclusions.

I. The slender evidence afforded by his Scotch excursion and by the customs of some manufacturing districts, hardly warrants the sweeping deduction that this "bow-wow" mode of naming men is the sole and original one. All travelers inform us that the natives gladly call their children after them. Among ourselves the same thing takes place. How many Washingtons, Lincolns, Jeffersons, Jacksons are there? We know that occupations gave names to men; as did their places of residence. They were and are "nick-named" from the color of their skin ("nigger"—Gr. *Aithiops*); from their gait in walking ("limper"); from defects in pronunciation ("stutterer"); from important events, either sad or joyful ("Ichabod," the glory is departed from Israel, etc.); from acts, either voluntary or involuntary ("Jacob," supplanter; "Karfa," replacer); * from good or bad qualities; and it is said that, in some parts of Ireland, servants often address each other by their master's surname. Mr. Spencer asserts that we must carry back our present mode of "nick-naming" to the infancy of the race. Very good! But the mode is not single (unfortunately for his hypothesis) but infinitely complex. To form a true conception of the subject, therefore, we must take all the facts—not one. If we do so, a glance will show how impossible it is to accept Mr. Spencer's theory. All the modes of naming here pointed out, and there are many more, should have given rise, if the "word" be omnipotent, to the worship of everything which ever gave a name to man. Has it done so?

II. In the next place, even granting Mr. Spencer's "nick-name" theory (which we are far from doing), it leaves the real question without solution. What did men first name—those things which impressed them as most important or as least important? Men are nick-

* "Travels in, etc., of Africa;" by Mungo Park. New Ed. London, 1823. Ch. XX, p. 408, ff. Especial attention is called to this brief but suggestive sketch of the Mandingoes, their mode of "naming," etc. He adds: "Among the negroes every individual, besides his own proper name, has likewise a *kotong* or surname, to denote the family or clan to which he belongs; . . . and he is much flattered when addressed by it." This looks like the "Kobong" of the New Zealanders and the "Totem" of our North American Indians. There is a good account of the Indian mode of choosing an occupation, in the paper from the N. A. Review, referred to on p. 132, note. See also "Nouveau voyage dans le Pays des Nègres, etc." par M. Anne Raffénel. Paris, 1856. T. I, p. 403, on naming children; and p. 237, ff., for an account of the Bambara god—*Bouri*. The whole volume is worthy of attention.

named from natural objects, but what were these objects named from? On this supremely important point our philosopher has thrown no light. Now, no matter what theory may be held on the origin of language, the thought of the name-giver, be it ever so crude, must have exercised a preponderating influence in the formation of the symbol. Language in its beginnings is analytical; the name separates the thing receiving it from certain other things. Dr. Latham* thinks, correctly enough, that it is the attribute creating the feeling which suggests the name; and that the other attributes connected with the cause are practically non-existent. But his opinion that the intellect has little to do with the operation, seems erroneous—as emotion is at least as strong in animals as in ourselves, yet without producing articulate speech. If we apply this view to the case in hand, we see that the fact (admitted by Mr. Spencer) of external objects being first named, proves that, whether really so or not, they were to men in that state more important than their fathers, who were only named after them. But as men in all ages have really made deities of the objects most important to them, and as philological research shows that naming followed a similar course, it follows that Mr. Spencer's hypothesis cannot be true. For, if so, men would have named and worshipped the *least* important things. While, secondly, if language be essentially analytical, the very fact that no word represented the inanimate as distinguished from the animate, shows plainly that the distinction had not been perceived. It is, indeed, somewhat surprising that Mr. Spencer should throughout his paper have spoken as if words were like the "themistes" of the old Greeks,—things breathed into man from without, and hence entirely separate from his mental apparatus. It is conceded that there can be thought without language, but can there be language without thought? It should never be forgotten that the world (objective to man) always supplies the subject-matter of thought, while the mind itself connects these objects together. "Things in motion," said Shakespeare, "sooner catch the eye than what not stirs." Consequently, we find the early men slaves to the dynamical aspects of nature,—all the occurrences requiring explanation were explained by some force. Now, it cannot be questioned that the force best known to men was the organic feeling of life—vital force; nor can it be doubted that they always explain the less known by the more known. Hence, the fetishistic view of nature as alive, and the theological or volitional hypothesis of the universe, as created, supported, moved, etc., by the will of a god. It is only much later that, by the progress of science, a more correct view of nature is obtained. Then comes into view the great law, applied in physics by Bacon, and distinctly for-

* "Elements of Comparative Philology," by R. G. Latham, F. R. S., etc. London, 1862; p. 737. See also the ninth of Max Müller's "Lectures on the Science of Language." I. Series. New York, 1862; and the eleventh of Prof. Whitney's "Lectures on Language, etc." New York, 1867.

mulated by M. Comte, as applicable to all phenomena,—that our theories, the connections furnished by the mind itself, should be subordinated to our objective materials. In a word, that observation must be supreme; all theories not founded on observed facts and against which any future observed facts can be opposed, must, according to it, be abandoned.

The assumed “concreteness” of words has, therefore, nothing to do originally with the confusion, which modern thinkers have named variously the fetishistic or animistic hypothesis. All words are by no means ‘concrete’ (in Mr. Spencer’s sense) at the earliest period. But even if they were, it could only show that, as the analytical faculties and language are correlated, the correctness of the word arose from confusion in the thought.*

Its cumbrousness has not been urged against Mr. Spencer’s theory. We do not know whether nature intended things to be simple or not, and, therefore, complexity affords no presumption against a proposed scheme for connecting them. But there is one point which cannot be passed over in silence. If men, when they first named the phenomena of nature, drew a perfectly definite distinction between animate and inanimate, between human and merely animal, and if they afterwards confused the two together, by “the worship of animals and plants,” imagining them to be their ancestors, then it follows that, as men advanced in civilization, they retrograded in powers of analysis. In other words, civilization (or progress) depends, in part at least, on well directed emotions; to seek out this proper direction is a process of analytical reasoning; still, as man ascended the scale on the one side, he was going down on the other. When it is remembered that the lower races fail most conspicuously in analysis,—even among the Chinese, it is said, there is not a single native mathematician,—such a deduction from a sweeping theory is likely “to give us pause and make us rather bear the ills we have than fly to other that we know not of.” Mr. Spencer thinks that his theory affords a better explanation of the facts of mythology than the current hypothesis. If the latter be taken with Mr. McLennan’s “totem” supplement, this does not seem to be true. Nor do the instances given by him furnish con-

* Those wishing to follow up the subject of fetishism are referred to Mr. E. B. Tylor, “The Early History of Mankind” (London, 1865), and “The Religion of Savages,” *Fortnightly Review*, Aug. 15, 1866, pp. 71-86; to Mr. G. Grote, “The History of Greece,” Part I, especially Ch. XVI, in which he endorses M. Comte’s view (vol. I, p. 498); to R. F. Burton, “The Lake Regions of Central Africa” (London, 1860), Ch. XIX, vol. II, pp. 324-378; and more especially to M. Auguste Comte, *Cours de Philosophie positive*, leçon 52, t. V, 1st ed., 1841, pp. 30-115, and 2d and 3d editions, edited by Littré, 1864, and 1869, pp. 24-83. Now that the Science of Religions is taking its place in Sociology, the remarkable discussion of the subject by M. Comte is worthy of attention. See work cited, leçons 52, 53, 54, contained in the fifth volume. The laws of mind, or the *Philosophia prima*, will be found stated in Chapters III and IV of the fourth volume of the *Politique positive*. Attention is also directed to the essays printed as an Appendix to that volume.

vincing proofs of its truth—especially when coupled with the reasons above given against its reception.

As to the unqualified assertion that, "the rudimentary form of all religion is the *propitiation* of dead ancestors, etc.," it is extremely rash at the present day to decide such a point *ex cathedra*. It must be admitted that 'propitiation' is one form, but it was totally impossible for such a religion to become organizing. Until it superadds the 'thanksgiving' form it remains always a rudiment, and hence merely merits the name of one of the elements, out of which, when supplemented by others, religious rites are developed. Propitiation is always joyless: only when the man is sick and the family in distress is it thought necessary.* Being much more mercantile than religious, this propitiation belief, except in such moments, exerts little influence on its firmest adherents. The mere make-shift for religion found among the poorest and most degraded of humanity, it has the fatal want of continuity and reverence. Anything like a proper conception of religion springs up only when men begin to be better fed. In such cases the food presented to them appears a worthy object of reverence. And, there can be little doubt that "grace before meals" is a relic of Totemism still lingering among us, and one of the earliest real religious customs of humanity. The numerous feasts of the ancient religions, and the times they were held, "harvest," "sheep shearing," etc., point to the thanksgiving aspect of ancient faiths. While the traces of it, everywhere apparent, demonstrate its greater importance in the immense majority of cases. It can surely not be omitted in tracing the genesis of religion.

As to the other part of the statement, the question at once arises, who in savage modes of thought were a man's ancestors? To the answer—solely his human progenitors—it may be objected, that though this is the correct view and the popular one at present, nothing shows it to have been held by the early thinkers. In their opinion, on the contrary, all dynamical phenomena might produce men, and thus become ancestors of individuals or the race. Habitual misrepresentation cannot account for such a belief. It is *sui generis*. In this connection attention should be directed to two historical facts decidedly opposed to Mr. Spencer's hypothesis—(1) The religion of ancient Israel seems to have been a nature worship in which the attributes of strength, stability, etc. (El, strong, Jahveh Zabaoth, leader of the hosts of heaven), were revered. The large element of fear in the primitive conception, and which was never discarded, as its usual concomitant, led to the most onerous propitiatory ceremonial.† But as far as can be gathered from the researches of the learned, no man-worship appears in it from beginning to end. Indeed it is a well known historical fact that

* See a fine account of one of these ceremonies in "The Zulu-land," by Rev. Lewis Grout, Phila. : 1864, chap. xi. pp. 132-162.

† See Réville's Essay on "The Primitive Religion of Israel," mentioned above.

the conception of a god-man, so familiar to the Greeks, was so utterly distasteful to the Jews as to lead more than anything else to the destruction of Christ. The second fact is still more germane to the subject—"In no Indian language could the early missionaries find a word to express the idea of God. *Manitou* and *Okie* meant anything endowed with supernatural powers, from a snake-skin or a greasy Indian conjurer up to Manabozho and Jonskeha (kind of creator of the world). The priests were forced to use a circumlocution, 'The Great Chief of Men,' or 'The Great Manitou who lives in the Sky.' Yet it should seem that the idea of a supreme controlling spirit might naturally arise from the peculiar character of Indian belief. The idea that each race of animals has its archetype or chief, would easily suggest the existence of a supreme chief of the spirits or of the human race—a conception imperfectly shadowed forth in Manabozho. The Jesuit missionaries seized this advantage. 'If each sort of animal has its king,' they urged, 'so, too, have men; and as man is above all the animals, so is the spirit that rules over man the master of all the other spirits.' The Indian mind readily accepted the idea, and tribes in no sense Christian quickly rose to the belief in a one controlling spirit. The Great Spirit became a distinct existence, a prevailing power in the universe, and a dispenser of justice."*

Mr. Spencer's humanistic hypothesis seems utterly irreconcilable with either of these facts. In this latter, each sort of animal had its king, and still man had none. The author of the paper from which the above extract has been made, shows very clearly the heterogeneous elements out of which even so rudimentary a religion as these Indians had, was formed. It seems not to be "habitual misrepresentation" that leads men to worship the elements,—thunder, lightning,—but what leads them in other circumstances to offer the best cow to the enraged shade of their father, viz: the conception of power over their destinies to be remorselessly used to their disadvantage. In a word, complexity in genesis and development is what above everything we must bear in mind in tracing the history of religions.

Finally, on the subject of naming Mr. Spencer has adduced no proof whatsoever that stock-names derived from Totems are the residua of the nick-naming process which he so graphically describes. Indeed it appears as if the stock-name stood on an entirely different footing, from what, by an anachronism, we may call the baptismal name. Park and many other travelers show the way in which savages obtain the latter, but they found the surname invariable,—each family being once for all provided with such a designation. The whole subject deserves careful study, but in the meantime a suggestion may not be out of place. Recurring to Mr. Darwin's acute hint on the subject of exogamy, might not names have been originally given to men in order to guard against the possibility of incest, and incidentally to bind them together

* "Indian Superstitions," North Am. Review, July 1866 (N. S.), Vol. CIII, p. 10.

in war, blood, feud, etc.? Would not these names be derived from what was to them the most important of surrounding existences? and would not these in the very rudest times be their food—the animals and plants on which they lived? To the savage emaciated by hunger, food must have seemed the greatest of life-givers. He, who a few hours before, was lying pale, listless, taciturn, with muscles relaxed, and nerves unstrung, now on the reception of food and with a slight interval for rest, appears as a new man—his carriage erect, with ruddy color, voluble tongue, and nerve and muscle active. The kind of food which they ate, first permanently divided men, and united them. Can we wonder that when their circumstances improved, they should regard with reverence, what preserved them alive and separated them from all others. To the savage, life is the greatest of boons; why should he then deprive of life the being which was his early life-giver? Hence the Fijian “tabu.” As to the belief that men were descended from their Totems, it may have arisen out of the idea pointed out above, viz: that food was the greatest of life-givers. It can hardly be a reminiscence of the occurrence of any such fact—that is even if we accept the Darwinian theory.

As to religion, the more it is studied the more apparent it is that the deities of every people are divided into two great classes—extra-human and human.* The former are from the first separated into two kinds—the one, the powers of nature, remote, terrible, recurring only at intervals, contains the rudiments of what we know as the supernatural; the other, present, familiar, but still marvelous, softens down the fearful side of the former, and if allowed to proceed ends by sapping its vitality. The religion of Israel seems to have been of the former kind; while the joyful religions of the Aryan nations, (specially but wrongly designated as polytheistic, as if all religions were not both monotheistic and polytheistic,) seem to have been of the latter. The limits of the present essay merely permit the indication of this point, together with the remark that with the decay of the extra-human deities has grown the dignity of the human. Nature was the enemy of man in the early times, and was consequently propitiated. Through man's inquiries it has become his friend, and is now vaguely revered. Hence the pantheism so apparent at the present day. The same thing has in a somewhat different mode taken place with man himself,—he is now revered as a member of the great human fam-

* “Polynesian Reminiscences,” by W. T. Prichard, F. R. G. S., etc. London, 1866, chap. V, pp. 111, ff. “Fiji and the Fijians,” by Thomas Williams. New York, 1859, chap. VII. By the way, there is much in this chapter utterly irreconcilable with Spencer's hypothesis. “New Zealand, etc.,” by Dr. Ferdinand von Hochstetter, (Eng. trans. by E. Sauter.) Stuttgart, 1867, chap. X, p. 209, and the opinions of Schieren there referred to. See also “The Lake Regions of Central Africa,” by R. F. Burton. London, 1860, Vol. II, chap. XIX, pp. 324-378. He especially repudiates the ‘euhemerism’ supported by Mr. Spencer. A work too little known should also be consulted, “The Rambles and Recollections of an Indian official,” by Lt. Col. Wm. H. Sleeman. 2 vols. London, 1844.

ily, and not, as in former times, because he holds a high position. Love has taken the place of fear. Indeed, so far has this view penetrated even orthodox thought, and that too outside of Germany, that it is being boldly claimed that religion is a psychological product, no more revealed than language. Before resuming the argument proper, it may be well to add that a great deal asserted by Mr. Spencer is admitted as both true and important; but from the considerations above adduced, it must appear that he has failed to support his hypothesis. In such discussions as the present a thinker cannot too carefully guard himself against the sarcasm of Xenophanés—that if horses had deities they would have made them in their own likeness. This was partially true as to the Greeks, but as to the lower races the reverse would be nearer the truth. The best observers agree in asserting that there is no feeling of personal pride among the latter, and hence their great gods were more likely to be taken objectively to the human race. Peoples proud of their individualism seem alone to have what may really be called human gods; but as such a feeling comes late in the race, Mr. McLennan's assertion that the anthropomorphic gods succeeded to the animal gods seems fully borne out. The truth of the whole matter may be thus expressed: the formative element of all religions is human, but the matter varies with the people, its scale of civilization, physical surroundings, etc.

Who are Parties to this Controversy?—Mr. Spencer, accepting the popular opinion, answers, Religion and Science. In order to test the truth of this response, let us place clearly before us what he and others mean by these two terms. About Science there can be no difficulty. We find spread out before us a universe, containing certain existences, matter, life, society, exhibiting certain properties or forces, without which we never find them. In order to predict their future manifestations, which, theoretically and practically, contain matters of high interest to us, we trace out their general facts or laws. Two things are to be noted—subject-matter and method. The former, matter of various kinds with its forces; the latter, a mode of investigating and classifying them, and a 'test of truth' for the conclusions reached. Now, what is Religion? This very important factor in Mr. Spencer's alleged antagonism is very vaguely dealt with. After following him carefully throughout his exposition, the only inference to be drawn is that, having constantly heard from the pulpit and seen in the newspapers Religion and Science pitted against each other, he accepted the statement as true, and forthwith set about the task of reconciling them. He asserts (F. P., p. 30) that "to the aboriginal man and to every civilized child the problem of the Universe suggests itself;" and (p. 43) that, "leaving out the accompanying moral code, which is in all cases a supplementary growth, a religious creed is definable as an *à priori* theory of the universe." Is the inquiry into the whence and whither of the universe religious? if so, what is scientific, as opposed to it? Is a relig-

ious creed the religion itself? if so, in what does it differ from science, except that the creed of the one is subjective and the creed of the other objective? But if Mr. Spencer could escape from the difficulties here raised (which he cannot), how can he reconcile these statements with that on p. 17, that "Religion under all its forms is distinguished from everything else in this, that its subject-matter is that which passes the sphere of experience?" How further can he reconcile this assertion with that on p. 44, that "Religions diametrically opposed in their overt dogmas are yet perfectly at one in the tacit conviction that the existence of the world, with all it contains and all which surrounds it, is a mystery, ever pressing for solution?" If this mystery is ever pressing for solution, the Universe must be the subject-matter of religious speculation, and consequently it is *not* "that which passes the sphere of experience."

The Real Merits of the Case.—No matter how modified, no such antagonism as Mr. Spencer conceives has existed; his definition of Religion will not hold; and therefore no Reconciliation is called for. What science has always opposed is religious creeds—not because they asserted a mystery, but because they gave certain explanations of it. Indeed, with the most unpardonable inconsistency, Mr. Spencer asserts both and endeavors to reconcile them. But they are irreconcilable. It is not about the subject-matter presented for interpretation, but about the method of interpreting that subject-matter, that the controversy originated and is now carried on by all those in earnest in the matter. Further, as a statement of fact, we deny that the subject-matter of religion has anywhere ever passed the bounds of experience. Though it may not be consonant to usage to so designate them, all religious creeds whatsoever have been scientific—that is to say, attempts to explain the Universe.* The idea of mystery, in Mr. Spencer's sense, is not found in ancient times; and the conception of an unattainable unknown had never presented itself to the primeval mind. How it could with a volitional (or, in Comtean phrase, 'theological') hypothesis, is a mystery which no one until Mr. Spencer had attempted to solve. In the earliest times everything on which speculation was exercised was animated; man's theories did not rise above his feeling of power or muscular sensations. Then the fetish-man, the rain-maker, the medicine-man, the sorcerer—each could do with nature as he wished: he could close the windows of heaven that it should not rain, and open them again by incantation; he could literally kill and make alive. Later, gods had large domains, they gave revelations, had prophets and oracles to clear up the difficulties which should present themselves.† These it would seem were very adequate precautions against the Unknowable.

This being premised, the controversy can be limited to the method

* Emile Burnouf's essays referred to above—especially V, *Revue des deux Mondes*, Oct. 1, 1868.

† On the subject of 'Prophecy' see Réville's papers, referred to above.

of explaining the facts presented by the universe. Now if we can interpret those facts in two opposed modes there is hope of reconciling the parties. How chimerical this is all thinkers know. The parties to this controversy are not Religion and Science; they are different philosophies or religious creeds. The whole war is carried on inside of religion itself, the strife being for the chief place in its gift—that of corner-stone of the great edifice, and, consequently, of being supreme guide of mankind in all its relations, practical and theoretical, moral and esthetic. The adversaries are three in number—theology, metaphysics, and science. The first, represented among us by Christianity in all its varied forms, has in its hands nearly all the machinery for controlling men's minds. It has immense sums of money; stately churches; gorgeous ritual; eloquent, and in many cases honest preachers. But what is its record at the present day. It has been slowly giving way. It asserts that the world was created by the deity's volition, and is still ruled by his ordinance—but how few of its intelligent votaries dare state these things as they were stated in the past. The six days of creation laid down in the Mosaic cosmogony are explained away in such mode as to shock the moral sensibility of the conscientious, and provoke the questionings of the inquiring. Theologians have for centuries defended their own doctrines very feebly; that task has mostly fallen into the hands of metaphysicians, whose impress, in the shape of ontological entities instead of the fine personal conceptions of the older creed, is plainly visible. A metaphysical god has taken the place of Jehovah; and we can even see, by the advance of Unitarianism, etc., that these conceptions, long masters of society through the pulpit, are endeavoring to become masters of society through the pulpit. Both of these, though essentially disparate, regard with fear the rise and steady advance of the scientific doctrine elaborated by the observational method. It asserts that we have been unable to reach any creation; and that far from any such event being recent, as the ignorance of the past asserted, that of even our earth is immensely remote. It further shows that as far as we have gone laws, not volitions, govern the universe; while (as indeed the scientific conception implies,) these laws do not depend upon any volitions. The fecundity of this method and the sterility of that opposed to it; the development of scientific doctrine and its continuous addition of new domain, contrasted with the unprogressiveness of its opponents; and its immense practical importance as opposed to their utter impotence in the affairs of life, all point in the direction of its ultimate victory. Would it not be contradictory to all experience if such was not the sure precursor of that end? Here is one mode of explaining the universe which asserts that man has had communion with God, and yet has, in a modified form. Still we challenge it to show anything practical ever thus reached. It was not surely by prayer that the Atlantic telegraph was laid or the Pacific railway built. Here is another that

holds that man carries with him at all times a machine (mind) which can inform him of absolute knowledge, 'the nature of things,' etc. But we did not go there to receive our oracles in relation to the proper mode of laying that cable, or the proper route for that railway. Nor do astronomers go there to learn the distances of the stars; nor chemico-astronomers to learn their elements. Ancient traditions, dignified as Revelation, but full of contradictions and notorious ignorance;* modern introspection, full of pretense and high-named "discoveries," but barren of result, have, forsooth, more titles to be called religions than has science, with its homogeneous method, mutually verifying results and immense practical importance. On the contrary it will be found that in the present state of the human mind in Western Europe and America, science can do more to legitimately satisfy all its yearnings than the assertions of theologians or the reveries of introspectionists, no matter how sanctified by age or covered with words. If this is not the object of religion, what is?

It is currently supposed that this contention arose first and solely in Greece, when physical speculation began. Kapila and Buddha, in India, were at least as early as the sixth century before Christ, and possibly earlier. These thinkers felt this contradiction, and Buddha gave a solution of it, which is one of the most wonderful in speculative inquiry. Kapila was the Hume of India, and it is doubtful if the subtle Scot has improved much on the introspective Hindú. But no matter where it arose, it is confined to the Aryan race; the observing race; the men who prized knowledge, for that is the meaning of Veda, the title of their Sruti (or revelation). This clash of methods continued in Europe for some centuries, until Christianity finally put the old controversy to rest. It slept for ages, but was resumed again on its ceremonial side by the reformers of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, and on its speculative side by the physicists (more especially) after the rise of the Italian school of scientists in the sixteenth century. "Clash of methods" appears in the foregoing. To some readers it may have occurred that not the methods, but the extent of our knowledge or assumed knowledge clash. This is true; but it is the method,

* The sterility of theological thought and the ignorance of Revelation is perhaps shown by nothing more clearly than its account of a pretended fall of man. There is almost complete certainty that it is just such a fiction as Rousseau's 'state of nature.' Here are the remarks of Mr. E. B. Tylor: "The advocates of the theory that savages are degenerate descendants of civilized men have still full scope in pointing out the imperfections of their adversaries' evidence and argument. But the new facts, as they come in month by month, tell steadily in one direction. The more widely and deeply the study of ethnography is carried on, the stronger does the evidence become that the condition of mankind in the remote antiquity of the race, is not unfairly represented by modern savage tribes."—*Nature*, Nov. 25, 1869, p. 105.

See also "Pre-historic Times," by Sir J. Lubbock, Bart., F. R. S., etc. 2d Ed., London, 1869, passim.

Every intelligent reader is acquainted with the acute remarks of Thucydides on the early state of man in the opening of his History.

and the method alone which sets limits to our knowledge. With the theological method—explanation by volitions—there can be no unknown; it is only by means of the positive method—explanation by law—that such an unknown arises as a definite conception. Kapila's dialectic limited the knowledge of men, subjectively considered, to the most wonderful extent, and hence, on his acceptance of its results, Buddha, in furtherance of its religious projects, was able to lopp off at a single stroke nearly the whole ceremonial observances of India. The (so-called) physical philosophers of Greece limited men's knowledge, objectively considered, and hence were able to overturn many of the ancient *idola* of the human mind, and lay the foundation for future progress.*

II.

Having recognized that the controversy arose in India and in Greece at least six centuries before Christ, and that the ultimate question is as to the extent of our knowledge, which is itself a question of methods, let us now proceed to briefly review some of the compromises to which it has given rise.

Kapila, with Kantian inconsistency, did not deny "revelation." He, an utter agnoiologist,† as much so as Buddha himself, accepted the Veda. According to Max Müller, his arguments are very similar to those used by Dean Mansel in his celebrated Bampton Lectures. Passing into Greece, we find Anaxagoras supposing a controlling mind (Nous) and matter. He forgets all about the mind, as was pointed out by Plato and Aristotle, after formulating it at the beginning.

* Max Müller finely remarks ("Chips from a German Workshop," 2 vols. New York, 1869. Vol. I, p. 65) that Hindú thought was a psychological experiment. The philosophers of India seem to have been impressed by the want of consonance between what they found in consciousness on mental examination, and what should be in it according to the traditional theology. They reached as near to a true psychology as unaided introspection ever can hope to do. Except within very narrow limits introspection, no matter how honestly and carefully performed, must be fallacious. Man, the individual, is there made the measure of the universe of mind. But no proof has been adduced to show that any two men have consciousnesses alike, any more than they have feet, or hands, or eyes alike. In the next place, consciousness improves with civilization and increased education; there is, therefore, no reason to think that what a man in our day finds in his consciousness, was in that of his barbarous ancestor. The addition of opium and intoxicating liquors to nutrition shows how consciousness can be changed. How do we know that it is not so, but less marked, with other articles of diet? A breakfast might, therefore, vitiate a whole psychological analysis. To obviate these difficulties, Psychology must be studied historically. The language, manners and customs, religious ceremonies, laws, etc., must show us the ancient thought of the race. The other view of the question seems to have struck the Greek—the external and not the internal, the historical and not the introspective. Hence the fecundity of the beginning made by him. With the Hindú, there was only a subjective test of truth; the Greek founded an objective one—he declared in history the omnipotence of evidence, and in physics the omnipotence of observation.

† Gr. *Agnouia*, ignorance; and *logos*, discourse. Applied to one who is ignorant of the existence or non-existence of the gods.

Sokrates* divided the universe into two parts; the physical half belonging to the gods, into which men were interdicted from inquiring; and the human half, which was open to their search. The Platonic compromise was based on that great thinker's mental analysis and historical inquiries; and is presented to us in his abortive attempt at social reform. When centuries afterwards Christianity put life into this scheme—gave it an object around which to crystallize, a solution and not a compromise was presented to the world. The Church was very largely indebted to Greek thought for its speculative embodiment; to Greek subtilty for the disgregation of thought which afforded its doctrine such free scope; to the Greek genius of Alexander who placed Greece beyond itself; and more than all, to Greece it was indebted for its founder. The god-man is, as above remarked, Grecian, not Mosaic.† But despite all this, the speculation of that great people, as far as organization was considered, was a failure. They were, however, the great seminal minds of the world. Much of the Church's metaphysics was borrowed from the dialectics of Plato and his followers; and some of its rules bear the impress of "The Republic" and "The Laws;" and Aristotle's philosophy, to a certain extent objective and observational, served for ages as its physical creed. Still we must remember, neither the socialism of Plato coupled with his idealism, nor the physicism of Aristotle coupled with his shadowy, metaphysical god, were alone able to reconstruct the world. Christianity supplied the emotional life, without which all the rest was vain.

Descending to modern times, we find the same desire as in the ancient world to save some part of supernaturalism. Descartes formally abjured any social bearing which his "Method" might seem to imply; and this abjuration evidently sprung from his desire to retain his position in the Church. The powerful appeals of Bacon, together with the discoveries of Galileo and the physicists, had compelled a readjustment of philosophy, and the "Discourse on Method" was the result. The continued advance of observational science, the remarkable speculations of Thomas Hobbes and Locke's celebrated "Essay upon Human Understanding," called for another adjustment. The task was undertaken by Leibnitz, one of the greatest, though unfortunately, too little unitary minds, the race has ever produced. His compromise is scattered up and down through his works rather than codified in any one. It is at present of only historical importance. Again, the advance of science, both physical and historical, and the powerful, though in many places self-contradictory, negative criticism of Hume, called for a new metaphysical revelation.

Immanuel Kant presented it to the world. In many respects the

* "Xenophon's Memorabilia," "Plato's Apology," and "Grote's Greece." Part II, ch. LXVIII.

† "The Place of Greece in the Providential Order of the World," by the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone. (An Address, etc.) London, 1865.

"Kritik der reinen Vernunft" leaves little to be desired. He has stated and defended the phenomenality of all knowledge with an exactness and vigor which cannot be too highly praised. He has guarded against Hume's glaring error of denying the Unconditioned—a mistake which must detract very much from his famed acuteness. But, while gladly acknowledging this, we find: (1) that Kant, not satisfied with showing that Hume's position was suicidal, and not seeing that the only true position was one of neutrality, goes beyond the limits of our faculties in the opposite direction from that of the Scotch philosopher. (2) That the great German thinker has not only "pure" reason, but "practical" reason; and, consequently, what he rejects out of the former, he takes into the latter. And (3) that its "high priori" tendencies afforded no barrier against the developments given to them by Schelling, Hegel, and others. Kantism has taught the world something, but has failed as a system. It had the seeds of decay too deeply sown in it, to be long-lived. Even now, Dr. McCosh, in his "Intuitions of the Mind," criticises and refutes some of Kant's antinomies.

Until Sir W. Hamilton, the Scottish philosophy of the Supernatural never had a defender worthy of it. He, too, presented the world with a scheme for reconciling the chronic controversies of ages. Like Kant's, it reposed upon a verbal distinction. The great metaphysician thought he had discovered a difference between "belief" and "knowledge," and on this his whole compromise rests. It is, however, now well known that this distinction is purely hypothetical—thinkers of the most opposite schools, as Mr. Mill, M. Paul Janet, of the Institute of France, and Dr. McCosh, agreeing in repudiating it; both in its metaphysical bearings as used against Cousin, and in its theological consequences as developed by Sir W. Hamilton's admiring disciple (now) Dean Mansel. Knowledge is and must be considered ultimate; and if we have no knowledge, we can have neither physical belief nor theological faith.

Two celebrated contemporary naturalists, Dr. Hooker and Prof. Huxley, hold an opinion the exact reverse of that of Sokrates. According to them, the physical universe is open to the inquiries of science, while man belongs to the gods. The former says: * "If in her track, Science bears in mind that it is a common object of religion and science to seek to understand the infancy of human existence, that the laws of mind are not yet relegated to the domain of the teachers of physical science; and that the laws of matter are not within the religious teacher's province, these may then work together in harmony and with good will." While to the same purpose, but more definitely, the latter remarks: † "Some, among whom I count my-

* "President's Address before the British Association, 1868." Report, p. lxxiv. The word "yet" is suggestive.

† "The Scientific Aspects of Positivism." "Fortnightly Review," June 1, 1869. pp. 663, ff.

self, think the battle (between Theology and Science) will forever remain a drawn one, and that for all practical purposes this result is as good as anthropomorphism (or Theology) winning the day." And still the eminent professor just before speaks about philosophers arming themselves for battle on this last and greatest of questions. What is the use if it cannot be decided? It is apparent that this position, like that of Sokrates, is one of unstable equilibrium—the question must have a solution.

It now remains to briefly examine Mr. Spencer's compromise, or as he calls it reconciliation. We have cursorily examined its historical basis, let us now turn our attention to its metaphysical. Mr. Spencer divides the Universe into two parts—the one Knowable by our faculties; the other Unknowable. The former is the domain of Science; the latter, that of Religion. (1) Mr. Spencer's nomenclature is open to the very gravest objection—an objection which goes to the very root of his distinction. He has not very clearly defined his terms, but a little reflection will show that if the Knowable means anything more than the known, either by induction or inference, it overpasses the limits of our faculties; necessitating the proposer of such a step to define how far he intends to advance, and his safeguards against error in that *terra incognita*. Again, the Unknowable is not a negative conception, but a positive one (F. P., p. 91). If it does not mean all that is beyond knowledge, that is to say, unknown, it must be a known and not an Unknowable. Otherwise how can its existence be asserted? Mr. Spencer holds that we have an indefinite consciousness of this Unknowable (p. 88). If this be so, we surely know we have this consciousness; and knowing this, it makes no difference whether we can formulate it or not, we must be said to know it. Can we formulate the force of gravitation? Not at all; we can only formulate the law of its manifestations. That we *know* gravitation must be conceded. Just in the same way, if this Unknowable is present as an 'indefinite' consciousness, who can tell but at some future time, some one will formulate the laws of its manifestations, and then it will be known in just the same way as we know the forces of matter? *

* How little we have added to purely metaphysical inquiry will be shown on the complete publication of the philosophical works of the Hindús. As pure (or introspective) thinkers, they stand unrivaled as far as can be judged from extracts and the comments of the learned. When we once have a comparative science of metaphysics, the futility of it will more than ever appear—though where there was no physical science, it was all which could be done to prevent the mind from stagnating. The *indefinite* consciousness which Mr. Spencer finds in himself, and called by him the Unknowable, is apparently the same as that found by the ancient Hindús, and called by them much more correctly, Brahman (or power). Both the Hindú philosophers and Mr. Spencer end by projecting this conception into the Universe. But if that consciousness does exist, how can we tell that it is the power which presents the Universe to us? This is wholly illegitimate reasoning. If the metaphysical conception of a god contained in man be true on the one hand, it is no less true on the other, that man's religious instinct always prompts him to supplement it by another beyond himself. May not this consciousness called the Un-

(2) In the next place, none of Mr. Spencer's arguments demonstrate his conclusion. His argument to show that everywhere we reach by the limits of our faculties a boundary, is and must be accepted. But the man who points out an insuperable barrier has no justification for stepping over it, and giving "a local habitation and a name" to such supposed existence. If we reach a certain point beyond which it is absolutely impossible to go at the present day, and beyond which no one in the past has gone, what confidence can be put in any assertion presuming to tell us aught of anything outside of this limit? It is unknown, and that is all we can say. Mr. Spencer will, however, not rest satisfied with this plain statement of the case. Everywhere his argument presupposes, and he asserts in many places, that we only know the Relative as an antithesis to the Absolute (F. P., p. 88); that this Unknowable is the cause of the Knowable—that in fact the forces of nature are *effects* (F. P., pp. 158-161); and that, in a word, it is the source of things. Now if all this can be legitimately predicated of it, the Unknowable is not destitute of attributes or relations. If the Relative is known only by its antithesis to the Absolute, the Absolute must be itself known, or this antithesis could not be perceived. Again, before it can legitimately be asserted that the Unknowable is the cause of the Knowable, it must be known. Besides cause and effect being a relation, and relations being Knowable, this highest of relations must be so. Hence we know the Absolute in two ways: negatively, as distinguished from the Relative, and positively, as its cause; in the same way we know the Unknowable—negatively, as contrasted with the Knowable, and positively, as its cause.

This is all contrary to Mr. Spencer's hypothesis. Again, if Mr. Spencer does not know the Unknowable, what right has he to define it as a power? He censures those who conceive the cause of the Universe as a man! But if it be absolutely unknowable, we cannot tell whether it is a man or not; and when once this hypothetical power is admitted, it is impossible to prevent men from clothing it in what they know and respect—goodness and knowledge. Mr. Spencer has been eminently successful in showing that our knowledge is limited by an unknown, but he has not shown that it is an Unknowable *power*. He has utterly failed in showing the existence of such a power. His whole argument presupposes that such ghosts of matter as "things in themselves" exist. Now if they do, by their very definition they are what Prof. Ferrier designated as those things which we can neither know nor be ignorant of. As such they are of no moment to us; no matter how transcendent may be their importance to more favored beings than

knowable by Spencer, and Brahman by the Hindús, be the substratum of mind itself, and nothing more—the ultimate fact of our psychological system, beyond which we cannot go, and on which all our intellectual processes are built up? In a word, may it not be our gravitation, which needs a Newton to formulate its law? That it is God is unproved; and when examined, improbable. (See for 'Brahman' "Chips," Vol. I, p. 68.)

ourselves. But if an adversary should require Mr. Spencer to show their existence, before he gives them a name and assigns them as the object of the adoration of Humanity, in what manner could he do so? and yet the request seems legitimate.

(3) This brings us to the last point to which we will now advert. Mr. Spencer holds that we must have something in the nature of a religion, and he assigns this Infinite Unknowable as the object of religious adoration.* Many will no doubt be a little curious to know what the nature of such worship can be. A careful reading of "First Principles," may perhaps satisfy their curiosity. As it does not seem to have received that attention which an indication of the duty of the religious man of the future deserves, it is presented in full. "Very likely," says he (p. 113), "there will ever remain a need, to give shape to that indefinite sense of an Ultimate Existence which forms the basis of our intelligence. * * * Perhaps the constant formation of such symbols and constant rejection of them as inadequate, may be hereafter, as it has hitherto been, a means of discipline. Perpetually to construct ideas requiring the utmost stretch of our faculties, and perpetually to find that such ideas must be abandoned as futile imaginations, may realize to us more fully than any other course the greatness of that which we vainly strive to grasp. Such efforts and failures may serve to maintain in our minds a due sense of the incommensurable difference between the Conditioned and the Unconditioned. By continually seeking to know, and being continually thrown back with a deepened conviction of the impossibility of knowing, we may keep alive the consciousness that it is alike our highest wisdom and our highest duty to regard that through which all things exist, as the Unknowable."

The first thing that strikes one on reading this extraordinary passage is, that the celebrated "relativity of all knowledge" is useless as a guide in practice or speculation. If we have to be continually beating against the bars, what need in telling us that they will not give way? Such information would seem to warn us against wasting our strength on them. Here, on the contrary, we find, after all, that it is very likely the old contest will last forever. In what, more than in name, does this position differ from that of the Supernaturalists? But, moreover, think of the enormous loss of mental power that this "formation of symbols" will entail; and for no practical object. In a world cursed with misery and ignorance, who can read such a proposition with any patience? He who considers that the Supernatural can be known, and that the Absolute ought to be worshipped, is justified in meditating upon the conception. But that a philosopher who holds that our faculties confine us to the relative, that all beyond is absolutely unknowable, and as a consequence that we can form no conception whatsoever of it; who

* "The Classification of the Sciences," 2d Ed., p. 41; and "First Principles," passim.

besides holds that we know nothing of immortality or a place where the Unknowable could punish us for not so meditating; that, in a word, a thinker who deals with philosophy from the scientific standpoint should recommend us to waste our time and energies in this fashion, is a monstrous inconsistency, which nothing but its existence could render probable.*

III.

Having devoted more space than could well be spared to Mr. Spencer's "Reconciliation," let us now say a few words on a real solution of the difficulty. The controversy is of old standing, and already two solutions have been given; both being in operation for ages. The first was the Buddhistic. Owing to the grinding of the rules of Caste, which haunted a man even beyond the grave, Buddha denied eternal life. He was perhaps the first to preach the immortality of works, and no finer system of ethics has yet been founded than his. The gods required so much time and their servants so much money, that Buddha was led to investigate their existence, and he came to the conclusion that no one had proved this existence. Buddha, as Max Müller says, turned a philosophical system into a Religion, but he seems not to have been able to see his way to a substitute for the gods he declared *unknown*—for in this as in so many other things wiser than Hume, Buddha did not deny the existence of the gods. The common people, however, solved the question. They worshipped Buddha himself, and installed to keep him company an innumerable company of Bodhisattvas (or saints). That this was a real solution is shown by the fact that Buddhism has existed for 2,400 years, and Max Müller ("Chips," Vol. I, p. 250), no favorable judge, asserts that if the show of hands were now taken, it would have a plurality over any existing religion. A great deal is said about *Nirvana* or annihilation, the *summum bonum* of the Buddhists. But if we consider the state of India in his time, no imaginable need was at all equal to the rest there promised.

The Christian solution was the second, and is so well known as to need few comments. It has many points in common with Buddhism. Like it, it preached good works and the abolition of sacrifices. Its founders did not go as far as Buddha, because there was not the same

* In the text no remarks have been made upon the extraordinary fallacies which Mr. Spencer has borrowed from Hamilton and Mansel purporting to give an account of Ultimate Religious and Scientific Ideas. The reader who wishes to see them handled with deserved severity and unrivaled philosophical acumen, may consult Mr. Mills' "Examination of Sir W. Hamilton's Philosophy," especially Chaps. IV, VI, XII and XXIV. It is a matter of doubt whether Mr. Spencer really holds the relativity of knowledge more firmly than did Sir W. Hamilton. Dr. McCosh also dissents from these errors, as might be expected. See his fine work "The Intuitions of the Mind," 2d Ed., N. Y., 1867. At p. 169 of which he asserts that knowledge is even the root of theological faith.

necessity. It is really a "stable" compromise. It tried to accept both the Semite tendency and the Greek. For ages it seemed a complete fusion. But the Greek inquiring spirit was only sleeping; when it awoke, the irreconcilability of these two tendencies appeared. The struggle between them called for a new solution—a solution which should remedy the defects shown in those of the past.

For ages there had been growing up slowly the belief in invariable laws in the Cosmos. The last decades have witnessed the wide dissemination of it. In the physical domain, no thinker now denies their existence, and on all sides of us we see philosophers, even against their wishes, recognizing that to both life and society do they also apply. As all the presumptions are in favor of its ultimate success, let us see what results from it. I. All "ontology" becomes impossible. It is the very essence of the "being" with which this study deals to be absolute. The domain of law is, however, of the phenomenally relative. Hence with the advance of science these questions of absolute being are, in one domain after another, abandoned; the completeness of a science being shown by its studied ignorance of such questions. It seems but a legitimate inference that the complete extension of scientific method over the whole of human thought, must end by showing the inanity of such study, and the much better channels of speculation. It will be seen that this "reign of law" does not deny the existence of Absolute being or beings, it merely declares any law of their manifestations unknown; and from the failure of the greatest minds of the past, though continuously engaged in the search, it draws the inference, appearing more or less strong to different minds, that this knowledge is unattainable. At the same time that our assumed knowledge of absolute existence has been fading away, our real knowledge of "infinity" has been continuously expanding. The ancients who imagined that a high mountain reached heaven, "the starry-visaged home of the gods," or those who on the plains of Shinar attempted to build a tower with the same view, had in reality no conception of the Infinite. While to the modern astronomer it is ever present both in time and space. And the researches on the "Antiquity of Man," not to speak of the utterly inconceivable age of lower forms of life, are introducing the conception into biological and sociological discussions. This infinity is objective and impersonal, while the ontological is subjective and personal; the first is real, the second illusory.

It has been remarked by M. Émile Burnouf that there is a subtle pantheism underlying Buddhistic (so-called) atheism, or rather agnoiologism. In the same way modern naturalism or Positivism is built on a modified and tacit form of the pantheistic spirit—too absolute and infinite for any symbols of either expression or thought to contain. Sir W. Hamilton called this region, the Unconditioned. The name is a good one: much better than the unknown or the Unknowable. For in reality it is neither; being known as to its existence, but utterly in-

scrutable in the laws of its manifestation. "It is," in the fine language of M. Littré,* "an ocean washing our beach, for which we have neither ship nor sail, but the clear vision of which is as salutary as formidable."

This is the speculative side of the solution. We owe the form in which it is here stated, to M. Auguste Comte. All other defenders of the phenomenality of knowledge attempt to show it by an analysis of man's knowing faculty. Even granting that all which is claimed could be shown in this way, it is proper to supplement objectively and experimentally the *à priori* laws of mind, by the *à posteriori* advance in speculation from the lower forms of speculation to the higher. While this will appear still more necessary when we remember that the transcendental laws of mind have failed to stand the test of time—those fully admitted in one age being rejected in the next, and even between contemporaries ostensibly holding the same views on such subjects, there are startling discrepancies; † and in the second place being personal, they can never carry conviction to the mind of a disbeliever. The contrary is true of the objective method and the resulting doctrine.

II. There is a second result of this belief in invariable natural laws. When it was established in India that the attributes of the gods were unknown and their existence unproved, the abolition of propitiatory rites was the immediate consequence. The same result followed the advent of Christianity, but from different causes. The whole onerous ceremonial of "sacrifice" was swept away. It had completed its part in the education of humanity. Founded in selfishness, it taught men altruism. Originally men gave up their dearest objects to buy

* "Auguste Comte et la Philosophie positive." 2d Ed. Paris, 1864, p. 519.

"Cours de Philosophie positive." Par Auguste Comte. 6 vols, 8vo. 3d Ed. Paris, 1869.

"Préface d'un disciple," par E. Littré, t. I., pp. xxxviii-xlvi. It was only after the text of this essay was in type that I met this fine piece of criticism. Its essence is as follows:

(1) This notion of the Unknowable (using Mr. Spencer's word) belongs to M. Comte. "He was the first who, by extending the positive method to Philosophy, has given philosophical consciousness this notion, withdrawing it at the same time from the provisional adequacy of Metaphysic, and the provisional inadequacy of Science." * * * (2) Mr. Spencer has used Unknowable in two senses, and has failed to show their identity or even connection. The Unknowable of the faith (or God in the theological sense) served to organize societies so long as progress belonged to theological doctrines. The Unknowable of science, on the contrary, can take no part in the government of the social world; for it is truly unknown, and upon the unknown nothing can be built. * * * (3) Admitting Mr. Spencer's principle as true, faith and science should agree; and if they do not, some defect is shown in the principle. At all times faith defines the Unknowable—teaches the origin and end of things; but science declares it indeterminable. Either the former must lose its character or the latter; or if neither, then eternal conflict. "If faith insists upon this determination, it breaks with the scientific definition of the Unknowable; if it does not, it breaks with faith that requires at least this determination. The impossibility of the attempted reconciliation could not be more plainly shown." M. Littré calls all that is beyond knowledge, Immensity.

† Witness Sir W. Hamilton, Mansel, Mr. J. S. Mill, Mr. Herbert Spencer—all of whom hold the relativity of knowledge, and yet individually explain it so differently.

the favor of the god or appease his wrath; afterwards they gave them up without expectation of a *quid pro quo*; and later still they sacrificed their interests for the benefit of others. To us, sacrifice has no other meaning; and all are aware how much we owe to this change from an extra-human and selfish standard of morality to a human and unselfish one. But with the conception of invariable laws in the Conditioned, there arises the at first startling conception that prayer, the solace of so many afflicted ones in the past and one of the most touching religious rites, must be abandoned. Weakness seems to be one of the ultimate religious ideas. Prayer is suggested by it, and for the ignorant alone produces results.* As the reduction of phenomena to law proceeds, one domain after another is given up. Asking has been transformed into seeking. Every probability is in favor of the final universality of this mode of overcoming nature. We no longer expect a law to be broken by a miracle, but we inquire into the order of the phenomenon's manifestation. Every research made in this way, contrary to the old selfish prayer, not only is of benefit to the immediate seeker at that particular moment, but also to him and to others in all future time in like circumstances. It becomes, as Comte has finely said, one of the logical powers of the human mind. We here again see that in fecundity and simplicity, though not in obviousness, the new far surpasses the old. The latter could be vitiated by a word pronounced wrong; was only of moment at the time, and only succeeded by chance; while with the latter, personal peculiarities have little to do; is useful at all times, and even its failures are matters for future redress.

III. The belief in invariable natural laws leads to the further consequence, that as no religion exists without a Deity and Ceremonies, however simple (God and the Rite), and no men without religion, that as from the earliest times there seem to have been two forms of deities—extra-human and human, the latter coming into prominence as the former faded away—so we may expect it to still continue. With the decay of the propitiation of nature, real reverence for it has arisen; and with the decay of the old degrading ceremonies before one man, there arises reverence for all. There seems to be another point worthy of mention—that with every step in the scale of civilization, the religious emotions have been more cast into the esthetic accompaniments, as their dogmas have broadened into great moral rules. The religion of the future will apparently have a mainly esthetic tendency; its doctrines will be the generalization of science, and its deity the latent pantheism of the Unconditioned in connection with the best type of human excellence.

* George Combe held and Prof. Tyndall apparently holds, that though prayer is useless objectively, it may be a great subjective help. Only in one way, when men believe that, what they ask will be given. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is," is as true now as when St. Paul wrote it.