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THE  
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ON  
METAPHYSICAL SPECULATION  
IN ENGLAND:

BEING A DEGREE THESIS  
BY THE  
REV. W. CUNNINGHAM.

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## NOTE.

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This dissertation was approved by the examiners for the degree of Doctor of Science in the University of Edinburgh, and is published in accordance with their recommendation. It has been strictly limited to the question of the direct and indirect influence of Descartes on English thinkers; and the various systems have only been dealt with in so far as seemed requisite for throwing light on this subject. At the same time a somewhat lengthy introduction has been necessary, in order to arrive at a conclusion as to the kind of influence which one writer exercises on others, and several pages have been devoted to earlier philosophy with the hope of showing how great was the impulse which English speculation received from Descartes. Constant use has been made of the authorities whose names are prefixed to the various sections, and works that have been employed for the elucidation of special points are indicated in the footnotes.

TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE,

*May, 1876.*

#### ERRATA.

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- P. ix, line 6, for *Vortesungen* read *Vorlesungen*.  
P. 11 and *passim*, for *præcartesian* read *pre-Cartesian*.  
P. 11 and *passim*, for *postcartesian* read *post-Cartesian*.  
P. 27, for *Guidano* read *Giordano*.  
P. 37, line 26, for *der* read *des*.  
P. 87, note, line 9, for *seraphical* read *spherical*.



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# INTRODUCTION.

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[*J. E. Erdmann.* Versuch einer wissenschaftlichen Darstellung der Geschichte der neueren Philosophie, I, 1—99. *K. Fischer.* Geschichte der neuern Philosophie, Bd. I. Einleitung. *G. W. F. Hegel.* Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie. Werke XIII, 11—133.]

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§ 1. "THE great revolution which Descartes produced in Philosophy was the effect of a superiority of genius, aided by the circumstances of the times."\*

SECTION 1.

True,—but the question occurs, how far was it due to superior genius, and how far to the circumstances of the times? Locke, Berkeley, and Hume were classed by Reid as members of the "idealistic school" of Descartes; but was there not also a spirit floating in the air which directed them all alike? How far were the later writers guided by this rather than by any individual author?

Superior genius and circumstances of the time.

And indeed there seems to be a farther difficulty which must be looked into. Was not Descartes' system itself moulded by the circumstances of the time? could it have been produced at another epoch in the world? If the success of the revolution was

\* *Reid*, Intellectual Powers, i, p. 268.

## SECTION I.

A philosophy,  
how related to its  
surroundings.

partly the effect of external wants, the form of the system was not less affected by its surroundings. What was true of the succeeding philosophies was true of his own and of all. The science and the art and the politics of the day all leave their mark on the philosophy ; and we find that a still more general problem is confronting us, How is a system of philosophy related to its surroundings ? What is the influence of its environment of former systems and present opinions on the development of a philosophy ? If we can find an answer to this question in its general form, we shall be at least one step nearer the solution of the problem in regard to the influence of Descartes upon his successors.

The Introduction will be occupied with the more general question, the Essay itself with the particular problems presented by the relation of Descartes to subsequent thinkers in England.

§ 2. What connection exists between a philosophy and the circumstances of this age ? We must first look a little more closely at the two terms whose relationship we wish to detect. The circumstances of the ages, changing as time advances, embracing all the phenomena of growing science, of varying taste, of political crises, or of military successes, are the subject matter of History. But Philosophy claims to be altogether apart from these : its content is unchanging and eternal truth. It is

only as it can substantiate this claim that any system has a title to be considered philosophical : and if this be so, it seems as if the conception of a history of Philosophy or a philosophy of History were almost a contradiction in terms. How can Eternal Truth have a history in Time ? How in the chaos of contending partisans shall we discover a guiding principle ? Thus our analysis has led us one step farther, till we must ask, What is the relation of Philosophy to History ? This is the most general form of the question, and how remote soever it may seem from the points which we are concerned to investigate, on the correctness of our answer must depend the possibility of completing the other task satisfactorily. It will help us to see the position in which Philosophy stands to the various systems ; and the relation which each of these systems holds to the circumstances of its age will be easily apparent, if we can find the true connection between Philosophy as a whole, and phenomena in time as recorded by History.

Philosophy and  
History

The connection between them is due to the fact that both treat of Man. Philosophy endeavours to solve the problems of Man's existence, and the way in which he is related to the physical world, as a part of it, or as controlling it. What is the sort of contact between Man and his environment ? Farther, Philosophy seeks to determine the relation subsisting

both treat of  
Man in his relation to the Universe,

## SECTION 2.

between human intelligence and other intelligences, between human will and the Will. Man in his relations is the subject matter of Philosophy, and also the subject matter of History. In her pages we read how Man has spread through the physical world and brought one and another country into his possession ; how he has used the various physical forces for his purposes, and how his character has been moulded by the circumstances where he found himself. Man in his relation to the physical world is certainly the subject matter of the history of civilization ; and historians have found that there are facts to be dealt with in the progress of humanity which cannot be treated from the purely physical side. There have been epochs of intellectual and moral advance which had no evident antecedent in physical circumstances, as well as vast differences in the type of mind between nations similarly situated with regard to climate and soil. So that History has also touched on the other side of the problem, and has roughly delineated the course of the relations between the Thinking Principle and Man. The subject matter of the two studies seems to be the same.

but from two  
different sides

The fundamental difference lies in the points of view from which the subject is regarded by the philosopher and by the historian. Shall we think of Man as he is in his own nature apart from this or that little influence which may modify him here and



now,—of man as apart from special conditions of space and time? Then we are seeking a philosophical solution of the problems. But if on the other hand we deal merely with these special conditions, recounting them, and then arranging and classifying them, we are engaged on History. Philosophy deals with the universal, History with the special and particular. The relations under which Man must stand to the World and God are the subject of Philosophy, the relations in which some particular men did stand at some particular time are described to us in History. Man in his universal relations is what we see from the one position; Man in his particular relations is what we principally find in the other. The two sides are requisite to complete each other: there is no contradiction, no opposition between them: each supplements the other.

which  
supplement  
each other

Although then the two sides fall apart, we may see that they cannot be treated apart without considerable difficulty. They are inextricably involved in one another. There is no human action which does not partake of the nature of both; which is not the expression of Man's thought, and occasioned by his circumstances; there is a universal element running through the particulars, traceable in them all. And it is equally true that we can never find the subject of Philosophy by itself; Man with no special relations modifying his being. There is another way

SECTION 2.  
 as can be seen in  
 the progress of  
 each.

in which we can see their mutual dependence,—as delineated in time. We find Philosophy at first altogether apart from the events of life, seeking an explanation of Being pure and simple, and finding it in some natural elements outside the range of thought. This was her birth; since then she has grown indeed, till in these days she finds that she can trace out the universal element in all matters of human study or interest, in the researches of the physiologist, the principles of the economist, and the discussions of ecclesiasts. Philosophy no longer aims at an explanation of abstract Being, but of actual life: it has advanced nearer the domain of History. On the other hand the historian had a very different task in chronicling the feuds of petty monarchs or even of petty states, and in describing modern life. We have no longer mere muscular contests to record, but a conscious battling for ideas. The consciousness of his freedom and individuality has abundantly modified Man's action, and thus his particular circumstances have become a far more accurate exhibition of his universal relations than was formerly the case. If Philosophy is more closely entwined with particular phenomena than it once was, History finds that events are the expression of Man's universal relations. The two sides are coalescing into one truth. When human beings shall be fully conscious of their nature and its relations, when they

shall wholly and constantly guide their conduct by a reference to the conditions of their existence, the knowledge of these universal relations will give us an explanation of all events of human conduct ; and the study of these events will lead us directly to the truths which they reveal.

SECTION 2.

This then is the ground of the connection between the two—they have the same subject matter, but they consider it in different, too often in abstract ways. And this will become more apparent if we adopt one point of view. Let us look for a little at Man in his universal relations (with the World and God), and endeavour to work onwards to the other side of his life—the particular circumstances—from Man as a thinking being to Man as surrounded by phenomena in time.

§ 3. We may find it very hard to analyse the crowd of circumstances and objects around us so as to get an element which is common to all : yet it is by no means impossible to do so. There is this starting point : the various circumstances get their influence because they are mine : they act on the mind because they are represented by my cognitions. There is one permanent self within, to which they are all related : and their influence is conveyed through the medium of thought. It is when I reflect upon them, and compare them, and weigh them together, that they have their influence on me. My thinking

The common subject matter as regarded by Philosophy.

## SECTION 3.

Man as a  
thinking being

power is the common unity which runs through all my different sensations. It is as a thinking being, nay more as a self-conscious being, that Man is related to the Universe. Apart from his thinking and reflecting power all these particular elements would be changed. It is only when we keep our eyes fixed on this side of his life that we can hope to comprehend Man's relations to the World.

Is it possible to find any similar property which is common to all the objects which arouse his interest or stimulate his activity? If we could detect something which is found in them all, however diverse they may be, we should have solved the difficulty by knowing how we must regard the World. But where shall we look for this? It was easy enough to see that when these circumstances were taken up into the mind by Man, and dealt with by him, they must have a common form to suit his activity: that subjectively and for him they are known as his cognitions and that all his knowledge is merely of objects as related to his thinking power. In their relation to him we find a similarity, but what is there common to them all, in themselves, and as apart from him? Of course if we like we may predicate the category of Being, but this does not add much to our information. What-is-related-to-us is, does not seem to be a valuable truth or to take us much nearer a solution of the difficulty. We should never have supposed for a

moment that it was not: the mere fact that we predicate relationship to ourselves involves the idea of Being. We do not want a mere abstract assertion like this, we want to understand what this Being, which is common to all things, is, and wherein they have their Being.

It appears to me that the notion which we desire to express is that of coherence: what we mean in ordinary talk by reality, is something that is part of a definite order. The phrase, common in these days, "He is really changed" surely means that a change has occurred which marks many sides of his character. It is not mere presence to our senses, that is at the root of what we mean by existence. This has been often pointed out with regard to dreams. They are distinguished from what is because they are incoherent. They give rise to vivid sensations, but since they never continue to present them in a definite series, men do not regard their dreams as having any correspondence to external things. We do not dream what is, as we perceive it.

is related to a  
coherent

What then is the element in the various objects around us, which gives them this coherence, the one quality that is common to them all? It is certainly not to be found in the mere impressions raised in us: subjective impression and external object we can distinguish by vividness, as Hume did: but do we find much permanence in each external object? Do not

## SECTION 3.

they change and pass away? To-day's roses will wither, the colours fade, the petals drop, and the seeds ripen. There is no permanence or persistence in them. But the roses next year will be as bright as the ones that have passed: the individuals pass and perish, but the type remains. It is the type, the ideal which remains and persists while the roses that exhibit it pass away. It is not in any individual presented to the senses that we know the true object: it may be a monstrosity: it is only in the type which moulds the individuals, and to which the various individuals all more or less closely conform, that we find a true persistence: not in the things presented to our senses, but in the type to which these things conform.\*

and therefore  
intelligible  
Universe

Nor indeed is it merely in rising from individual objects that we find our conception of permanence in the idea to which they conform. It is only on this that we can rest our assurance of the invariability of the natural order. We may assume this invariability with Mr. Mill, and climb with its aid to generalizations of constancy in the phenomena: but unless we are prepared with him to imagine that this gives a proof of the original assumption, it is impossible to find any rational ground for it in mere empiricism. It is by passing beyond individual

\* *Gegenbaur*, Grundzüge der vergleichenden Anatomie, 2nd Ed., p. 73.

sensations to find the laws according to which the sensations occur,—to find an order of thought,—that we can come to have any reason for expecting the recurrence of these sensations. It is when we recognise them as following an order that can be thought, or as concatenated in groups whose connection is intelligible, that we find a permanence in objects, and coherence in the order of nature.

SECTION 3.

It may indeed be objected that the fact which is common to all objects, which gives them all their being, is that they are material. But even if this were true, it is no explanation of the kind we seek. It is a mere abstract assertion, like the predication of Being. We cannot define matter so that it shall add to our knowledge at all, or that it shall give us a consistent explanation of the phenomena around us. How are we to account—by that mere abstraction, matter—for persistence of type or for the order of the laws according to which matter is altered into the various forms. We find throughout all a ceaseless living motion, a perpetual flux, and we can never formulate it by the assertion of an abstract identity and materiality. If we regard material phenomena as comprising all the circumstances to which man is related, the assertion of materiality is a barren abstraction that adds nothing; if we believe that there are phenomena which have no material side, the explanation is insufficient. Matter there undoubtedly

No material hypothesis can explain the phenomena

## SECTION 3.

is in all material phenomena ; but, in itself, it is incapable of furnishing a clue to the forms in which we see it. We must look elsewhere for that. We must recognise an Idea which gives the order and continuity which we find in Nature. It expresses itself through the medium of the crass matter, and imposes the uniformity there. Not by the study of material phenomena, but by perceiving the Thought that pervades them can we arrive at a conception of the Universe as more than a chaos of passing sensations. When we know the World as a system of Thought, it becomes intelligible to us. All phenomena are material expressions of eternal ideas ; and it is as such that they have permanence and coherence. It is as related to God that the World becomes intelligible to Man : since it is dependent on Him it can be known by a thinking being.

which are the expressions of eternal Thought.

Such is the relation of Man to the World of phenomena : on one side a thinking being, on the other the material expressions of Eternal Thought : and it is for the most part by means of these phenomena, as perceived by our minds, that we can re-think the thoughts of the Thinking Principle—that Man is related to God. It is true indeed that there is another claim which is made to depict the relation in which Man stands to God and for that matter to the World. Religion tells of One who has created intelligent beings in His own image, and material

How the Human Intelligent is related to this Thinking Principle

as considered from the religious



phenomena also, and thus she claims to cover the same ground as Philosophy. And yet the styles of treatment are so different as to mark out their separate spheres with some distinctness. Philosophy works by pure thinking ; Religion aims at satisfying the whole nature of Man, not merely his thinking faculty : there must be something which can arouse the feelings and stimulate the inclinations so as to embrace the whole spirit of Man ; in fact there must be a figurate conception of the self conscious Thinking Principle such as is afforded by Christianity. Religion proclaims a Spirit bearing witness to spirits, and satisfying, not the cravings of the reason which is common to all men, but the subjective needs of each. Religion is separated from Philosophy because she presents truth in a form in which it may directly influence the feelings and active powers of man, rather than the intellectual.

But if (as stated above) the relation of Man to God is to be perceived through phenomena, it is not less true that for Philosophy as well as for Religion we should recognise a direct connection between the human intelligent and the Thinking Principle. We must learn to see that the gulf is but a narrow one. There is "that of which the designation as 'mind,' as 'human,' as 'personal,' is of secondary importance, "but which is eternal, self-determined, and thinks,"\*

and from the  
philosophical  
point of view.

\* *Green's Hume, Intro., § 346.*

## SECTION 3.

which has developed itself and created an orderly system of phenomena, and which is active in man so that he can apprehend this order. Constant as this action is, it may seem more strikingly evident to some minds if we point to the sudden inspirations of genius which have no definite antecedents in external phenomena, and of which one instance occurs in the system of Descartes.

The common subject matter as regarded by History.

§ 4. Such are the universal relations of the human intelligent—to Eternal Thinking, and to an intelligible system : and starting with these it will not be hard to pass to the somewhat different point of view from which he is regarded by the Historian. The human being has at first only the capacity for apprehending the orderly system ; but does not actually grasp it. He only feels separate sensations and hardly finds in them an order at all : scarcely the common property of being related to self. He has no consciousness of self as different from other phenomena. Some of the tribes of Africa are still living this life of mere sensation into which thought has not entered at all. But the mind is awakened from this state. It feels a need for reflecting on the objects, and from that time there is a possibility of knowledge. The mind looks back on its various experiences and arranges them. It finds an order in the appearances of the sun and of the moon : and thus a foundation is given to Astronomy. In all

Man becomes conscious of order in several sets of phenomena,

the various studies there must be an isolation of particular sets of phenomena, and the real difficulty in the advance is the previous classification. The separation of a certain set of experiences, and the study of them by themselves is the process by which the human mind attains to a knowledge of the idea which is there expressed. If the grouping has been erroneous, the results may be satisfactory for the time, but they will not be true representations of the idea, because they are not derived from its full expression. The advance of knowledge therefore has ever taken these steps: the human mind finds a certain thought expressed in a certain set of phenomena: but the classification has not been quite correct; some important items were omitted, or some confusing ones were inserted, and the thought which they rouse in the human mind is not an adequate representation of the idea which moulded them. By farther reflection on experience, and by a better exercise of the thinking power this may be corrected, and the various sciences become exact. The objective truth has been the same all along; the expression has been there, but the human mind has failed in its attempts to grasp it: and yet these failures have not been worthless, they have been partial reproductions of the idea, while their inadequacy has prompted men to seek a complete explanation. For those who propounded them they were satisfactory explana-

## SECTION 4.

tions ; to those who corrected them they were necessary helps to the attaining of a true view. True for the time, they became steps towards complete truth.

and in the whole,

So far for the way in which the human mind has attained to the knowledge of particular sets of phenomena. But it desires something more than this ; it seeks to find a unity in the things around it : to find a common principle guiding them all : to know Man in his relation to all things, not merely in his relations to the stars or the sun. There must be the same sort of process here too. A first attempt which satisfies the author is soon seen to be utterly inadequate, a second is born from a sense of the inadequacy of the first ; it refutes the first and yet in its turn is carried forth to be buried. So they pass, each system giving a partial view of the Idea from a partial review of its expression, each adding something, because springing from a truer observation and a better reflection. And thus it must ever be : the human mind recognising the thought which is expressed in matter, but never recognising it quite completely : summing up and uniting the various parts of its knowledge into one whole, but never summing it quite accurately : always giving a stimulus to farther observation to add to our empirical knowledge and to farther reflection to harmonise it. Each philosophy, each description of Man in his

by various attempts,

universal relations has been the best summary of these relations so far as known, but has been proved inadequate in the face of advancing knowledge. Each has paved the way for a full exhibition of truth to come ; each has been a necessary step in the development of truth—satisfactory for the time ; and important for all time, both as conveying a phase of truth and as forming a “stepping-stone to higher things.”

It is the more important that this should be fully understood because there is a common taunt against Philosophy founded on the grave opposition which exists between different metaphysical systems. They seem to cancel each other out and to leave nothing behind : we must remember that the same thing is to a great extent true of empirical sciences and that the fact that it is so much more obviously the case in Philosophy occurs because the object of study is so much more complicated.

which contradict each other.

But in noticing this growth we must not neglect another side of Man's nature. He is not only receptive as we have seen him in gathering up the ideas into a system, he is active as well. He possesses a portion of the developing power of the Thinking Principle. He can not only receive what is expressed without, he can impress his own thoughts on the external. When he is consciously devoted to expressing the idea in whatever he does and cannot

Man's activity.

## SECTION 4.

be drawn away from so doing by particular excitements he is possessed of moral freedom, and the popular morality is an attempt to formularise the sort of action which he would perform under any given circumstances : while the State is the expression of that popular morality. When on the other hand he is attempting to impress any particular ideal, on any particular matter, he is engaged in the pursuit of Art. It is in the case of Art that we seem most plainly to have the direct action of the Thinking Principle on the human mind—no longer expressing itself on matter to be received by the mind, but inspiring the individual and using him as an agency to impress itself on matter, for other minds to see.

We have deduced these relations from things as they are around us, as Philosophy does : we have seen how History delineates the same truths as projected in time, and thus have obtained a double view of the relations of each man to his surroundings, in other words of the influences which bear upon him, and which are all the outcome of one great Thinking Principle. This manifests itself alike in the system of Nature, in the apprehension of Man, and in the active expression of his thought in morality or in art.

Connection of  
two sides.

We have depicted the relation between the content of Philosophy and that of History, between Eternal Truth and succession in time, and we find a recon-

ciliation possible when we look at *History as disclosing the progressive manifestation of the Eternal Truth.*

SECTION 4.

But how are each of the systems of philosophy related to this Truth? They have succeeded each other and refuted one another: have they no farther value than disproved scientific hypotheses which have had their day? We have attempted to find the relation of Truth to the course of the world: we must also know the relation of each system to Truth, before we can attack the question of its connection with any particular period of time and the events which were passing then.

§ 5. The subject matter of Philosophy has been sufficiently delineated: and we have seen a marked difference between Philosophy and the empirical sciences; they each deal with one set of phenomena: they are purely abstract. It is only when they become restricted within some purely arbitrary limits for the sake of study, that we get the definite results of exact science. If we compare two different articles as to colour alone, we can pronounce distinctly on the shade. The Understanding detects agreement or disagreement in regard to one quality, and the sciences which are framed by applying the categories of the Understanding to phenomena can only deal with these phenomena in this or that aspect. But the subject matter of Philosophy is not Man in relation to the sun, or Man in relation to the food he

Contrast of  
Philosophy and  
empirical  
sciences as to  
their objects

## SECTION 5.

requires for sustenance, but Man in all his relations, universally : it is concrete, not abstract ; it unites contrary attributes in itself. Man is a thinker,—universal,—but governed by feelings and external circumstances,—particularised. He is free, but necessitated. We find the same in every concrete object ; in every flower there is a unity embracing many particular qualities. The Understanding recognises this as a fact, and recognises its own inability to penetrate into the nature of the thing in itself. It can pronounce whether the concrete object has this or that abstract quality, but it can give no account of the thing as a whole : and therefore it is that we must not look to the logic of the Understanding for canons to guide us when we deal with a concrete whole—with Man in all his relations. Above all we must not apply the rule of excluded middle in this sphere, and argue from the affirmation of one quality to the exclusion of its opposite ; for if the object we are studying is in its very nature a union of incompatibles, it is evident that such an argument would lead us far from the truth.

and in their  
progress.

When these very great differences are fairly pointed out, no confusion need arise from comparing the progress of Philosophy and the progress of empirical sciences. Men have felt impelled to endeavour to solve the problem of existence, as they are also impelled to determine the relations of the earth and



the sun. They have made one effort after another as time has gone on. They were not always aware of the difficulty of the task. One phase of the concrete object of their investigation was more prominent to one set of minds, another was more prominent to another: and thus as time has gone on various thinkers have contributed various partial views of the concrete whole.

There are two reasons why these explanations must be very different at various times. One is common to the progress of Philosophy and of sciences. As was noticed above, astronomy advanced by a series of hypotheses which were sufficient in their time for the phenomena as observed, but were insufficient when further observation had brought new facts to light. So, too, the facts with regard to Man vary. His empirical knowledge, his morality, his political institutions, his art, his devotion, all the particular relations are constantly changing and developing as the Idea utters itself more completely to him or through him. And so it is that the explanations which satisfy one period are insufficient for another: because there has been a growth in the facts which are to be embraced. New corrections, new modifications, new applications, must be introduced, and sometimes they are of such an important character as to change the whole science: and even when the broad principles have been laid down, the

## SECTION 5.

Exploded  
hypotheses, and  
refuted systems

process continues, with the effect of altering the details. Even in the empirical sciences the unsatisfactory hypotheses have been of some importance, as being steps which led to the true. They have all this value in Philosophy, but they have a much more important function as well. For in as much as the sciences deal with abstractions, we can pronounce that some given hypothesis is an exact explanation of certain classified phenomena: and we can also assert that the various preliminary and exploded hypotheses (though satisfactory to the people who maintained them and accordant with the facts they had observed) were not in accordance with the phenomena actually taking place. They were untrue. But we can never assert this roundly of any system of philosophy. Each grasps a phase of the whole: it may be an unimportant phase, but it is an aspect of the concrete object, and as such it contains a truth which is important for all time. The mistake which has been made by the various thinkers has been that of confusing what was only a partial view for a complete one. In each there has been an element of truth, a phase of the concrete: in each there has been an element of untruth, a mistaking that phase for the whole.

We saw that the Thinking Principle manifested in many ways, and that men have ever sought to give an explanation of these expressions of the Idea.

Each age has contributed a phase of truth or has amassed experience for other ages to explain. The part given by each age is valuable not only as a landmark, to show how far we have travelled, but as one of the wheels which have borne us along. It was necessary that each system should come to clear the way for other thinkers, and also to give utterance to a thought which should be true and of value for all time. In the empirical sciences each false hypothesis becomes utterly worthless: in Philosophy a refuted system still maintains its place. The Understanding reigns in the empirical sciences, it comes forward to pronounce its abstract judgment—the system is not true, therefore false. If we take the same method, we shall get an utterly false view of the history of Philosophy, as if it were a succession of systems of opinions following one another in time, refuting one another, and then passing away without result. But Philosophy is the study of a whole; each of these systems has been an attempted delineation of that whole; each of them is of far higher importance for us than they would be if they merely aroused a passing curiosity as to what was thought of the matter in this or that particular age. The history of the empirical sciences is only a barren account of false abstractions, which have been in vogue at one time or another: but the history of Philosophy enables us to review the various phases of truth which have been prominent to differ-

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which all contain  
phases of truth.

## SECTION 5.

ent minds ; phases which are only phases (and therefore false), which may differ in importance, but all of which are true, since they depict a portion of reality which has been neglected at other times.

These systems  
succeed one  
another in time  
but do not

§ 6. Such is the relation of the systems to Philosophy, but how do they stand towards one another ? This is worth considering, for a neglect of a proper understanding of these difficulties has had the result that might have been expected on the histories of Philosophy in common use. If we apply the abstract conceptions "true," "false," to various systems, we can never rightly understand their connection with one another.

We may of course give up the endeavour to do this and content ourselves with an elaborate exposition of opinions as they occur in chronological order. They are all opinions about Man. We may put them all down as they come in order of time, and may perhaps imagine that we have been engaged on work that can be of use. But such mere chronicling is certainly not History.

merely destroy  
one another

On the other hand we may start by comparing these systems with each other and find that each proves the other is false : that every system has an element of falsity. We may devote our time to exhibiting the falsity of each, and we shall reach at the last a conclusion as to the vanity of Philosophy altogether. Thus Mr. Lewes has written two volumes

to justify philosophical scepticism from the History of Philosophy itself.

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Or again we may commence with the supposition of an element of truth in all the systems. They are true, and all equally related to objective reality ; but they went too far. Let us then pick and choose among this mass of opinions and see how far we can make a combination which shall be satisfactory to ourselves. This is the position of eclecticism and its representative Mr. Morell. Now in neither the one case nor the other do we get a true order : we find no progress : only a series of systems, all missing the truth, as sceptics say,—all finding it, as eclectics maintain, but without a connecting unity, or traceable order of development. One English historian has indeed come much nearer the truth. In the late Professor Maurice's *History of Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy* there is abundant recognition of the fact that all philosophies are phases of the truth and are all necessary to the representation of the concrete whole. But he had a slightly distorted view of the object of Philosophy which tinged his representation of individual systems, and he gave too great prominence to figured conceptions of the relation of Man to the Thinking Principle. When allowance is made for this, a more true delineation of the relation of the various opposing systems to the one self-developing

or merely  
support one  
another.

## SECTION 6.

Truth, and thus to each other, is found in this than in other works.

But there is a farther question which must still occupy us ; are all these phases equally important sides of the Truth, and if not, how are we to distinguish among them ?

To judge of their relative importance, we must classify them.

§ 7. In classifying and judging of the relative value of the various systems we must be guided by the same principles as are required in the study of any other phenomena. We must bring a conception of some sort or other with us (it may be only tentatively) in order to colligate the facts.\* they do not carry their own explanation with them so that any eye can see it. It is becoming more and more generally recognised in physical research, that we require more than a mere collection of facts, and that the heaping together of information is comparatively useless. We want facts bearing on some one point,—facts which will elucidate a preconceived conception,—and the concatenation of disconnected observations is as nearly as possible valueless. If this is so in the empirical sciences, it is still more the case with Philosophy. Each of the various systems conveys a more or less important phase of truth. It is not by merely writing them down in chronological order, or

\* *Whewell*, *Novum Organum Renovatum*, chap. v.

by considering the noise they made at the time they were published, that we can find the order that reigns in them, or tell how closely these subjective opinions were related to objective truth.

Mere external facts do not of themselves reveal the universal element, or phase of truth of which any system has got hold, still less do they shew which of these phases is of greater importance. It may indeed be thought that the system which conveys the most important phase of truth will be the most potent influence : and that by summing up the effects of each in time, by considering how long each lasted, and how far each spread, we should have a means of telling which was the most powerful influence and the more important phase of truth. This might be the true state of the case ; but even if it were, would it be possible for us to arrive at a valuable result by this road ? Must we number the years during which the Thomists and the Scotists disputed ? Is not the very length of time which was spent in these discussions a proof of the barrenness of the age rather than one of the importance of the points raised ? Or we may pass from this purely external test and attempt to arrive at a result by the width of the range of its influence. But what criteria have we for determining this ? How far any system can be said to extend must depend on the view we take of its central thought : every disciple has some small

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divergence from his master, and mere external fact would never avail for a classification even into schools. We cannot find the proofs of any influence on succeeding thought, unless we bring with us the conceptions which shall arrange the matter. Each object conveys an expression of the Idea, and we arrange these expressions into sciences according to the pre-conception which is brought by the formative power of the mind. Each system conveys a phase of the Truth, and we must arrange these phases in the history of Philosophy according to preconceptions which are brought by the formative power of the mind.

Various principles of classification.

We may if we like take an arbitrary method of classification, according to some external character. In one age one problem has been prominent, and men have been deeply engaged in one particular line of research. They have studied external nature, or themselves, or they have sought to solve a more general problem of existence. M. Cousin has divided philosophies into schools, according to a principle which makes the object of knowledge the most prominent fact. He has been followed in this by Mr. Morell, and thus we get a series of schools developing themselves on parallel lines. On the other hand, Mr. Lewes arranges the systems in epochs according to the method of treatment which was common in each. The one goes entirely by results, the other by the form of the process which leads to these results.



These two plans of classification must of course give us very different views of the value of the several systems. An improvement in the method applied is sometimes not so fruitful in new results as might be expected ; or there may be an attainment of very new results without any conscious attention to method. The two will doubtless be mutually dependent on one another, but they will not advance hand in hand. We want some arrangement by which we may be able to include them both. It thus appears that neither of those plans will help us much in determining the relative importance of the phases presented. There is a gulf, which cannot be so easily bridged, between arbitrarily classified opinions and objective truth. The simplest way will be to go straight at the question at issue. Let us take the highest conception of truth we have, and review the various systems according to the relation which they bear to it. We have to impose some conception to get our classification. It will be best to impose that of Thought directly rather than to substitute a temporary and provisional one for classificatory purposes merely. In so doing we shall include the advantages of each of the two plans mentioned above ; we shall recognise any valuable improvement in method, which has served as a step to present methods, or any valuable contribution to present results. Both will have their place, because both have a relation to the present

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development of Thought. With the course of that development detected *sub specie aeternitatis* by mere analysis, we shall have a frame ready on which to display the various stages that men have passed through in coming to this point of progress. The moments of the development of the Notion will give the best arrangement of the phases of truth which have been depicted in various systems.

This then must be our clue for the study of the history of Philosophy. Instead of taking the phenomena, and seeing if they can of themselves bear witness to the greater importance of some phase, we must begin by imposing the conception of Thought, and thus obtaining the result at which we were aiming directly, and without reference to any intermediate criterion, such as length of duration, object of research or method of treatment. In following out the relation to present conceptions of truth, we light upon a more easily accessible path than any round about one would prove.

External connection in time cannot be deduced from internal one of Thought

§ 8. Though the moments of the Notion will enable us to detect the central idea in each system and to judge of the vividness with which each depicted some necessary phase of truth, we shall be greatly mistaken if we expect that they can do more than this. They cannot display the connection in time between different systems. The changes of thought in a play do not depend on the merely

external circumstances which serve to excuse them. When Bottom and his friends are going to rehearse their play, there was a necessity of thought that they should leave the work-a-day world of institutions and crafts where their prosaic natures could best find place, and that they should be subjected to the dominion of capricious imagination. But the external connection lies in their desire to escape the prying curiosity of their neighbours.\* The external connection could not be deduced from the necessity of thought. It is just so in the case of the history of Philosophy: the relative importance of each phase may be deduced—but not the external connection which subsists between the phases. This occurs in time, and cannot be explained as parallel to a development which occurs apart from time.

In fact we must not confuse the order of self-expression by the Idea, with the order in which these expressions have been grasped and systematised by men. The one gives us the phases of truth as expressed—in a logical order of thought—the other the phases of truth as understood in a chronological sequence of time. We cannot assert the identity of these two. To do so would involve the most violent assumptions. For there are two factors at work in the construction of each system. 1st a formative

in the history of  
Philosophy,

\* *D. J. Snider. Journal Spec. Phil. viii, 165.*

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power of mind—the direct action of the Thinking Principle. 2nd a certain material—the indirect expressions of the Idea. Before we can assert a complete dependence of the phases as recognised on the moments as constituting them, we must suppose that these two factors are always constant. We must have a perfectly orderly progress in time in all sciences, art, institutions, &c.,—the particular circumstances of Man, by reflecting on which he obtains his systems. Then besides this, we must have a constant progress in human intellect, so that it can grasp the higher development of the Idea with as much completeness as it did the lower. Both the matter which is systematised and the formative energy which systematises it must be advanced equally, or we cannot expect a regular development of the philosophical systems in precise accordance with the moments of the notion. If any one could suppose that these conditions were ever found, he need only be asked to look at the world around, to see how utterly worthless such assumptions are. The stage of progress in all arts and sciences lies before us, every man receives certain dim impressions in connection with them, and feels in a dim way how he would like to see them fitted together, till at length comes one or another who possesses a full measure of the Spirit of his Time, and formulates the truth for which his neighbours are striving, and which they can recognise

more especially  
in its later  
stages.

when he states it. The formative activity of mind is so different among different individuals similarly situated, that we cannot predicate any regularity of succession.

While then we find that the Moments of the Notion are substantive of the phases of philosophical thought, we must never regard them as forming a basis from which we can deduce the external connection between different systems. And a reason may occur why it should be less possible to trace the connection between later systems and the more concrete Moments than it is to find correspondences to the more abstract forms of the Notion. The deeper the Moment of development, the less likely is it that any one mind should grasp its full content. It may be that it is in the thoughts of two or three thinkers of the time that the complete phase is attained. One and another thinker goes to work at the same time: they have slightly different matter before them, and they work on it with different views and different powers: but each helps the other and completes the other, so as to compose what we call a school. It is rather in the complete school than in the writings of the individual that we find the true phase. Only then in the great movements of philosophy can we expect to get assistance from a comparison of the systems with the Moments of the Notion.

I have hitherto spoken only of the course of  
*f*

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 Nor can Locality  
 be so deduced.

Philosophy as affected by time—the external connection which subsists along with the internal progress is not to be deduced from the transitions of Thought. The same is true with regard to space. Philosophy has travelled from country to country as well as from century to century. The spirit of one nation has adapted it for supplying some important step, the spirit of another has suited it for a reaction and for carrying on a new phase of truth. Philosophy has travelled from the east to reach its first development in Greece. In France and England it was directed towards a new path of progress, and in Germany it has made a start upon it. The spirit of each nation is adapted for contributing one side of the truth: and we can no more deduce external circumstances in space from the phase that is presented, than external connection in time. At the same time it does not follow that because we are unable to deduce the national circumstances from the philosophy, the philosophy is merely a sum of the national circumstances. We cannot analyse it all into effects of climate and soil. It is all very well to point out that the insular position and inducements to seafaring have given that enterprising and self-reliant character to the English mind which expresses itself in English institutions and in the marked individualism of English philosophy. But which is cause? which effect? How far was it the capabilities of the

invaders which made the island a desirable residence for them? National character has selected the circumstances of climate and soil, and these in turn have stereotyped the national character. The philosophy is the outcome of the national spirit, not of the mere circumstances.

Thus in broad outline we may trace the course of the development of Thought. At each particular time one Moment was being recognised, and was being gathered into systems of a particular phase. There was a necessity of Thought that each should come before farther progress could be made—there was an external conjunction of circumstances in space and time which made it possible for the phase to be recognised then. Indirect action of the Thinking Principle in impressing itself on things had prepared certain objects which the human intelligent was ready to receive, and which the mind of one nation could mould into the philosophy of one school. If we could neglect these external circumstances we should find the Moments of the Notion clearly projected in time; but since we must take these circumstances into account, they are blurred and disfigured so that we can only recognise them dimly.

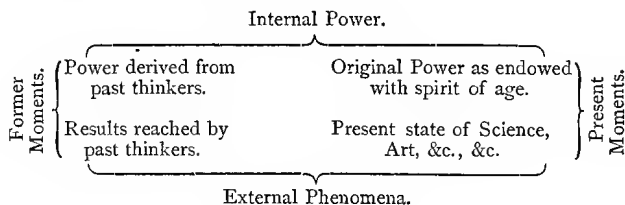
Each separate system then is dependent on the expressions of the Idea which it finds around it, and from which it gathers some phase of the Truth which it imperfectly represents. Former systems have given

External and  
internal  
connection

SECTION 8.

of any system  
with former ones,

antiquated solutions of the problem of existence, the new thinker gets a direct impulse from them ; and the life of his times, the state of the sciences, of morality, of religion is the matter on which he goes to work. His system reproduces a phase of the Idea as seen through external facts ; it corresponds to a Moment of the Notion, but not directly ; it is conditioned on all sides thus,—1, by the Moment of the Notion which is to be expressed, and which is found in the circumstances around, as well as in the formative energy of the mind : 2, by the past expressions of other Moments from which the thinker is repelled, or with which he seeks reconciliation. Combining the two we get this statement :—



Of these each system is the result : and it is plain that each of the four factors has a connection with the development of the Idea, while it is also a phenomenon in time. Since our knowledge of the relation between the two is not perfect, we must work from both sides if we would know each system rightly : must consider it not only in relation to the Notion but to empirical facts, and still more, not only in relation to empirical facts, but to the Notion as well.



We have now reached the solution of the difficulty with which we started. We know the connection of Philosophy with the events in time which History records, and the relation of each system to the whole. We see the double relation of each of them to the Eternal Truth, since each utters a fresh phase, and each takes up new matters that bear its impress. If we can thus express in general terms the relation of one system to others, we have found a criterion by which to judge of the kind and amount of influence which Descartes exercised on his successors. This general answer has been merely stated, and it requires a few more words of explanation before we pass to the particular problems.

§ 9. We find the two factors of internal-formative-power, and external-matter-to-be-worked-upon coming into play in the construction of each system. The effect which the study of other systems has on the thinking power of the mind seems a subject into which it is almost hopeless to enquire. Doubtless general mental activity is increased by reading this or that particular book, and individuals can point to the authors who have had most influence in this way on themselves: but it is hardly an influence which can be detected by an outsider. In any case where the mental activity is greatly stimulated by a system, it will probably also manifest itself in a similarity in method or results, and it is simpler to take account of the influence in this definite shape.

exhibited  
detail.

## SECTION 9.

While admitting then the fact of an influence of past thinkers on the development of the thinking power, it is not an influence which we need consider any farther, as it is too indefinite : dependence can best be detected in the other condition—the matter out of which systems are formed : the results reached by past thinkers and present phenomena of life are the two parts of it.

There are three different ways in which the system of one philosopher may affect others : it may first of all convey what seems to him a tolerably complete explanation. All he will desire to do will be to understand it and to amplify the details—to carry it more out into life. This first influence is that of the founder of a school on his successors : it is the conveying an acceptable explanation : it has a positive effect on the successors. A second sort of influence is that of defining the problem to be solved. The later thinker cannot accept the conclusions of the first, but he finds from his pages what the real problem at issue is : as *e. g.* Kant derived a starting point from the philosophy of Hume. An internal connection will subsist between two systems either because they are both concerned with the same phase of truth, or because one forms a point of transition to a new phase exhibited in the other. Besides this, there may be an external similarity between two writers in the way of isolated thoughts and opinions. Such are the isolated criticisms which one man, following

some line of thought, throws out on the system of another with which he entirely disagrees—disagrees so far as not even to feel the precise grounds of antagonism. We have then—

1. Positive influence—conveying results to a thinker who grasps the same phase.
2. Negative influence—stating or suggesting problem and making a transition to a new phase.
3. Isolated influences—even occurring where no general dependence exists between the systems.

The first two may be described as internal, the third as external connection.

We must not forget, however, that the Idea manifests itself in other forms as well as philosophical systems: in the condition of society—the progress of empirical science, the political development, the art, the religion of the time. The proper subject of this Essay is rather the effect of thinkers on thinkers, but additional evidence for its conclusions might be drawn from such influences. For we have seen that a certain Moment of the development of the Idea is the foundation of each system, that it acts directly on the mind, that it is impressed on externals. We must beware how far we look on an individual writer as the source of thoughts which were really impressed on every fact of the age. Every similarity need not betoken an influence, for there may be an original recognition of the thought by both minds. Its ultimate source is the Idea, but where we find some phase of thought occurring in many circumstances

Temptation to  
over-rate  
individual  
influence.

## SECTION 9.

or many contemporaries' writings, we need not lay so much stress on the influence of any one thinker who recognised it. There may have been a dependence on him, but we cannot assert positively that there was.

## Summary.

§ 10. The Moments of the Notion give us the clue by which we can recognise the central principle of each system, its value as a phase of truth, and its internal connection with systems which exhibit other phases. The external agreements or disagreements are rather of literary than philosophical interest.

In accordance with this view of the nature of the influence of one system on others, we shall proceed first of all to a very rapid survey of the development of Thought so as to find a guiding principle in the study of each system,—the phase of Truth which colours it as a whole. We shall then be in a position to examine the various particular problems. To know the extent of the advance which Descartes made, we must know the state of philosophy before his time: this will be the first task. The influence of Descartes on particular systems will then be examined, both by means of direct evidence and occasional criticism of alleged resemblances in instances where the effect has been more probably produced by other agencies.

THE INFLUENCE OF DESCARTES  
ON  
METAPHYSICAL SPECULATION IN ENGLAND.

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I.

INTERNAL CONNECTION OF VARIOUS SYSTEMS.

[*J. E. Erdmann. Versuch, &c., I, 99-152. G. W. F. Hegel. Encyclopedia. Werke VII, Ab. ii, 42-262.*]

§ 11. It may seem strange to begin the discussion with this difficult problem which might come more suitably as the conclusion of the whole matter, but we must have at least a tentative hypothesis as to the connection of the systems, in order to treat the question of their mutual dependence scientifically. We may possibly succeed in avoiding errors into which Fischer seems to have fallen from neglecting to make a preliminary investigation such as that on which we propose to enter. He has looked too exclusively at external dependence, and has completely severed English and Continental philosophy. On the other hand there is a danger of being too ready to force the various systems to fit a preconceived schema: an internal connection

SECTION 11.

Need of investigation.

Fischer's and

Erdmann's opposite errors.

## SECTION 11.

has been asserted as existing between thinkers who shew no traces of external dependence. This may of course be the case; the circumstances of the age may lead two authors to the same conclusions without any collusion on their part, but it is most unlikely that this will occur when the starting points of the two thinkers and their external environment are wholly different. We must test the internal connection by external dependence, and Erdmann\* appears to err in regard to the position which he ascribes to Berkeley. The new phase of Truth may guide the thinker in his system, but it can only be recognised by one who has already made past systems, and the phases they embody, his own. With this caution as to the dangers which seem to lie on either side, we may proceed to attempt a general delineation of the course of modern philosophy.

§ 12. In so doing, we may be much assisted by Erdmann's endeavour to obtain a conception which shall serve as a guiding principle. This he considers to be more imperatively required in a treatise which only deals with a part of philosophy, and cannot therefore present the new epoch as the outcome of the old; though it seems to me only less necessary

\* *J. E. Erdmann. Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie, II, 210.*

for the sake of continuing our investigations, than for that of commencing them aright. The ruling principle which he detects may be briefly described as Protestantism, or negation with an implied affirmation. He carefully exhibits the dialectic development and illustrates it from the history of religious opinion at the time of the Reformation; but it may suffice to trace it in the course of thought. "The Spirit—as purely protesting—repudiates what we call Actual: that which it maintains as the only valid existence, is its own being—the Rational: and so we get the principles in this form:

"1. The Actual does not exist, for only the Rational does:

"2. The Actual exists:

"and the synthesis of the two lies in this, that the Actual is, but only because it is Rational" (p. 110). The starting point lies in the denial of all but the Rational, the goal is reached when we discover that the Actual is not merely mechanically connected with the Rational, but transfused with it so as to form a concrete unity: the Actual is Rational and the Rational is Actual.\* And yet the progress from the starting point to the goal is not to be found in a mere series of formal

Protestantism  
is characteristic  
of all modern  
systems,

\* Vide supra, p. xiii.

## SECTION 12.

which each  
contain the two  
sides,

but according  
to different  
Principles.

Conception  
criticised.

reactions from one side to the other, as Rixner among others seems to have thought. Erdmann points out that each of the modern systems has the two moments in itself, though Idealists accentuate the one and Realists the other: thinking and extension, ego and non-ego, ideal and real, spirit and nature—such are the moments as they appear in every system, but with different degrees of importance attached to them, so that they are continually being represented in different relations to one another. The various descriptions of the relation subsisting between them gives us the Principle which underlies each system and is found as its outcome.

While this seems to me a most admirable summary of the characteristics of modern philosophy, I cannot regard it as altogether satisfactory for the purpose of giving us a bird's-eye view of its course. Erdmann describes what is common to all modern systems, but we must know what is peculiar to each in order to trace the progress from one to another. We require a guiding principle which brings with itself the thought of development; and a very little farther consideration will enable us to pass from the above-mentioned conception to a clearer view. The philosophy of modern times is the philosophy of Spirit—of Mind infusing Matter, or Matter



infused by Mind—since the two sides occur in every system: the progress harmonises with the moments of the development of Spirit. If there were need, it might be possible to verify this description historically by tracing Philosophy from its rise in Greece with the dominance of the forms of Being, Becoming, &c., then through the dark ages where Thought is bound in Institutions, to the modern time when we first meet with the realm of self-conscious Spirit. We should thus reach the present starting point and find that we were provided with the same guide.

§ 13. We know what help may be expected from the present stage of the inquiry, and have also found the starting point: modern philosophy will correspond to the moments of the development of the Notion as subjective Spirit. But the phrase modern philosophy must not be understood in the narrow sense in which we are often accustomed to use it: it must include (as in Ueberweg's History) all philosophy since the first awakening of Spirit. There was in comparatively early times a sense of repulsion against the authoritative dogma of the Church, and the external morality of the orders: the beginnings of this can be traced far back in the history of the institutions which it was destined to

Moments of  
subjective  
Spirit.

## SECTION 13.

overthrow. The first signs of the new spirit are to be found in Mahomedan Spain, and we must briefly glance at the course of thought from thence in order to get the broad divisions. For this Hegel has himself given several hints, and the pages referred to above teem with suggestions which are most helpful in regard to the various philosophies.

The Soul

The principal forms of the subjective Spirit are three in number, the Soul, Consciousness, and Spirit-as-such. There is nothing corresponding to the last in the period of philosophy we are considering, and we may consequently confine our attention entirely to the earlier moments. First of all, we find the Soul "still involved in Nature and sunken in its embodiment" (p. 43): it is the "ideality of the matter in which it has its existence," or the Natural Soul which is not yet known as existing by itself. It is only by "negation of its embodiment that the Soul raises itself to pure ideal identity with self and becomes Consciousness—an ego." Here we have one point clear and distinct; we recognise the "protestantism of Spirit" which was achieved in the doubting of Descartes, till at length he came to find certainty in Consciousness. This gives us the broad divisions into praecartesian philosophies of the Soul and postcartesian of Consciousness.

awakens to  
Consciousness.

Praecartesian thought can be readily represented as following the lines we would expect: we see the long series of additions to the philosophy of the Natural Soul in all the unprogressive efforts of the Astrologists and Alchemists: we find it individualised in the philosophy of Telesius and Campanella, where it appears as the Feeling Soul: we have it still farther as Actual Soul in any such philosophy as that of Hobbes', where the first glimmerings of consciousness begin; but where the physiological and psychological elements are all mingled confusedly. The problems which Hegel treats throughout these sections are closely allied to favourite discussions in the corresponding philosophies.

What more nearly concerns us is the system of Descartes, and its effects. There is greater clearness in dealing with the moments of Consciousness: and it is here that we first get a principle of certainty—"I and my being are inseparably bound together" (p. 250): there is a certainty of self—the stage which Descartes reached. But as yet this is only "subjective certainty" and has not attained its full form: certainty is not a sort of property which "is related to the ego, but it is its very nature, just as Freedom "is the nature of the will: but at this stage "there is only subjective freedom or choice

SECTION 13.

Natural Soul.

Feeling Soul.

Actual Soul.

Consciousness gives

a principle of certainty,

## SECTION 13.

“and mere subjective certainty too: the ego  
“is only certain of itself.”

and shows us  
the new  
problem.

From this position we can easily see the problem which had to be solved in the farther development of Thought—it is to pass from subjective certainty to truth (p. 254). What parts of this process were represented by each of the subsequent philosophies?

The duality of  
Consciousness.

Now that we have entered on the philosophy of Consciousness we must remember that we have passed from a phase of Universality (the Soul) to one of separation, where we find a constant duality which is present in each system. The nature of the duality as it appears in the simplest form of Consciousness brings out the sort of process which we may expect. For just as “light manifests not only “itself but the darkness, so the ego too manifests its other.” It is as this other becomes more definite that the ego itself is better known: we must look for change in the objects on which the light shines: and the farther progress of philosophy was to come through the studying of the objects which are related to the ego (p. 253).

Sensuous  
Consciousness:

The earliest form is Sensuous Consciousness. In this we have “the richest filling but the “poorest thought:” for there is “no determination of the object at all, except as “merely being; and as opposed to me, as one

“individual to another.” This is the place of the greater part of the philosophy with which we shall have to deal. We find that Locke, Berkeley and Hume all look merely at the element of Sensuous Consciousness; and that each reduces it to a smaller and smaller fragment, till it is known at last as mere “being” that “comes casually into consciousness and then fades away” (p. 259). Some of Hegel’s remarks here are singularly apposite to historical events which we shall have to notice. He tells us that Religion at this stage can only represent the infinite and necessary as finite and contingent. God is, and is without us, and He possesses properties which can be received by sense perception. Such was the position of the English Deists and their opponents: no wonder that in an age when such theology was paramount, there should be much need of protests from Shaftesbury and More against an “enthusiasm” which “boasted of thrilling assurances of the life “of the world to come” (p. 260).

SECTION 13.

its religious  
bearing

There is another side of Sensuous Consciousness which is not unrepresented in the history of Philosophy: Malebranche and others gave all their attention to the ego, not to the object related to it; and their philosophy was consequently barren in results. They knew the

and subjective  
side.

## SECTION 13.

ego as [thinking] being and opposed to [extended] being, but by staring at the light they could not see farther into the darkness: it remained an abstract opposition to the last, till Spinoza indeed resolved everything into Consciousness, but not on the true method of making Consciousness its own object and thus rising to Self-consciousness, but by the destruction of self altogether. "By the change of "the object we get a change in the definition "of the ego:" Hume explained away the object and left no place for the ego: Spinoza, discarding the filling of sensuous consciousness and taking the mere formal ego, found it change in his hands into a universal, which, while neither object nor subject, was not yet the truth of both.

## Perception

We need not be at a loss to find the steps in the next stage of the progress. It begins in Leibnitz, with whom "the sensation has "become something," and "a manifold of "relations." The object as known with such relations is no longer an object of Sensuous Consciousness but of Perception (p. 260). The philosophy of Leibnitz was concerned for the most part with the object, even as Locke's was. He did not succeed in formulating the sort of ego which was required to be related to such an object: that was

the problem which Kant set himself, and his too is a philosophy of Perception. In perception we know objects as connected together and related to one another: this is the position alike of Kant and of the common sense of mankind: there is no longer immediate feeling; the reality of things is proved, but only upon certain presuppositions, and the attempt to bolster up these, leads us to the Infinite Progress on every system of this type. There is no absolute necessity either in Kant's analysis or in Reid's induction, and neither can be considered final in philosophy (p. 262).

and its  
inadequacy.

A tabular view of these results may render them somewhat clearer.

SOUL. (Praecartesian.)	{	Natural Soul. (Alchemists.)
		Feeling Soul. (Telesius.)
		Actual Soul. (Hobbes.)
CONSCIOUSNESS. (Postcartesian.)	{	Sensuous Consciousness. ((Locke, Berkeley, Hume.) (Descartes.)
		Perception. ((Leibnitz.) ((Reid,) (Kant.)

The value of the arrangement will be justified if we shall find that there is evidence of external relationship between systems which

## SECTION 13.

have been said to possess an internal connection, that the preliminary view enables us to get a clearer grasp of the central principle of each system, above all that it helps us to detect with greater certainty the influence of Descartes upon his successors.



## II.

### PRAECARTESIAN PHILOSOPHY.

§ 14. The consideration of the development of the moments of the Notion and the corresponding systems has led us to ascribe a very prominent position to Descartes, as the thinker through whom the transition from the Soul to Consciousness was effected. It will be necessary to verify this by turning to the sphere of fact, and endeavouring to sketch præcartesian philosophy in Europe and in England, so that we may have a standard by which to estimate the influence of Descartes. If we know the meagre results that had been previously obtained we can better judge of the extent of the advance he made in discovering a principle of certainty; and when we contrast the barrenness of each speculation before his time, with those that succeeded him, we may be able to appreciate the service which he rendered in clearing the statement of the philosophical problem.\*

We shall therefore rapidly traverse some of the ground which we viewed in the last section, and begin by considering the gradual disruption of scholasticism and the rise of the philosophy of the Natural Soul.

SECTION 14.

Verification of preceding arrangement.

Philosophy of Natural Soul.

\* Vide supra, pp. 7, 8.

[G. W. F. Hegel. Vorlesungen, &amp;c. Werke XV, 132-161.]

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§ 15. In the Introduction an attempt has been made to explain the ground of that very close connection which subsists between Religion and Philosophy,\* and which was most noticeable in the middle ages: but it is worth while to glance at the actual connection between the course of Christianity and the development of thought.

Christianity

The relation of Man to the Absolute is *par excellence* the problem of life, and that problem has found a solution in Christianity. God is a Spirit, and Man may rise to perfect reconciliation with this Absolute by the renunciation of those natural wishes and feelings which are the offspring of the flesh but opposed to the spirit. In Christ we have the perfect exemplification of this self-sacrifice, and the actual accomplishment of this reconciliation in the sphere of time. By a similar course of conduct—a similar self-sacrifice and renunciation of natural impulse—it is possible for man's spirit to attain to union with the absolute Spirit. This was at first depicted only to the feelings; piety will always have a strongly emotional element, and in the first centuries the emotional side of Religion greatly predominated. It was not till the third century that the Alexandrine fathers began to

was argumentatively defended by Alexandrine fathers against

\* V. *supra*, p. xx.

exhibit truths, which had been accepted as intuitions, in the form of conceptions for the intellect to grasp. But even here there was no attempt to prove the doctrines scientifically: Tertullian could even glory in the impossibility of so doing: they only tried to justify the belief in the appearance of the God-man as an historical fact. The early christians had to oppose Arians whose conception of an abstract identity and unity in God would not allow them to admit the incarnation of the divine Spirit. The same fathers also came in contact with Gnostics who denied the presence of the wisdom of God, or the Logos, in one individual man. Their discussions about the nature of God and so forth, always take the form of disputes about an historical fact. This is the first connection between Christianity and Philosophy.

Arians

and Gnostics.

After the truth which was accepted by feeling had been defined by historical discussions, another step lay before it: it was actualised, and presented itself in an external form. Before it could be grasped by the Germanic peoples it had to undergo this transformation, so as to be presented to them in a form in which it could be intuited. Not now again in an individual life but in an external organization.\* It was thus that

It was next externalised in an organization

\* *Hegel Werke* XV, 116.

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Christianity became externalised so as to pervade all relations; till at length it passed over into mere externality, when the continual presence of Christ with his church was recognised only as presence in a wafer on the altar, or through the head of the ecclesiastical organization.

and its dogmas  
defined for the  
Understanding.

It was under this regime that the second form of christian philosophy appeared: no longer defending the historical fact which was the object of the religious intuition, but defining the notions which were enforced by the authority of the Church. We have the Understanding exercised on problems which were presented from without; there is no free play of thought: only of thought in this or that particular direction as called for by the needs of the times. It was an age of discussing and defining, and therefore it was a time when the logic of the Understanding was developed to its highest extent. But there was comparatively little room for new activity in this direction: the work had been very thoroughly done already by Aristotle. The doctrines of the Organon were ready to the hands of the schoolmen, and found acceptance from the church. This was the first of his treatises which received such recognition, for there was a good deal of doubt about showing approbation of the work

of a heathen which had come to christians through a mahomedan channel.

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There was another direction in which the age was adapted to accept the philosophy of Aristotle. All the truths which they knew had external representations. The kingdom of heaven was actually exhibited in the organization of the church: the sacrifice of Christ was actualised on the altar.\* Still it was not here in space and time that these things had their reality. They looked for a better life after death and a fuller apprehension of these truths. Here, then, was the need of some philosophical doctrine; and the idea of an intelligible world of real existences pervading the actual one, was just what was required to satisfy it. This too was found in the *Metaphysics* of Aristotle.

Adoption of  
Aristotle's  
*Metaphysics*

In these two ways the philosophy of Aristotle obtained its position as the christian philosophy. When it was so far accepted the *Physics* followed readily enough, and thus the thought of the day was satisfied by the resuscitation of the theories which had originated in a very different age. Not that this was effected without a struggle: it was only gradually that Aristotle's own treatises were admitted, even though text books which were

and *Physics*

\* *Bryce's Holy Roman Empire*, 90-99.

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 by  
 Scholasticism:

universally used were only reproductions of his opinions by industrious monks.<sup>32</sup> The scholastic philosophy culminated in the definition of what was actualised in the Church; it showed itself in the perfect harmony of Religion and Philosophy, the complete reconciliation of Understanding and Faith, and identification of their results.

which was  
 destroyed by  
 the

It would be almost impossible to trace out all the circumstances which tended to upset this state of things: for all the political changes which broke up the Roman Empire into nationalities; all the social movements which gave rise to free citizen rights; all the religious feeling which was dissatisfied with the actual form of christianity and the vices it concealed had something to do with the revolution that was coming. There was, however, one movement rising among the schoolmen which had not a little to do with breaking the bonds by which thought was confined. When William of Occam disseminated the doctrines of Nominalism he was taking the first step in the destruction of the barren scholasticism which had fallen in ruins when Bacon and Descartes gave new impulses to the thought of the 17th century.

For formal logic had been the great de-

\* *De Lancy*. De variâ Aristotelis fortunâ, quoted by *Bouillier*, *La Revolution cartesienne*, pp. 7, 8.

partment of scholastic excellence, and the investigation of the niceties of formal logic and grammar opened the way for its fall. The so-called "modern logic" was probably of Byzantine origin, but its high repute in the West was due to Peter of Spain. It concerned the relation of terms to thoughts, and announced the doctrine of *suppositio* as explaining the relation which existed between the two. Terms were not exactly identical with thoughts, but they might be supposed to be so, and used as if the term adequately represented the thought. Logic thus came to be a kind of arithmetic which dealt with terms as so many counters; a mode of viewing the science which has been adopted by Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury in his *Computatio sive Logica*. This was a conception which was easily grasped and widely adopted, and was ready to the hands of William of Occam when he desired to express the nominalistic doctrines which were already re-appearing. He maintained that the universal stood in the same relation to the reality as the term did to the universal, and that truth expressed in terms was a bad copy of a bad copy of the original. As all human science (and theology with the rest) is necessarily expressed in the form of propositions and by means of terms, we get the basis of a very

SECTION 15.

Nominalism of  
William of  
Occam,

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who recognised  
two kinds of  
truth.

thoroughgoing philosophical scepticism.\* It was of very little moment that Occam accepted truths by Faith to which he denied a scientific basis of certainty. The important step was taken, and the fact was recognised that what was true for Religion need not be true for the Understanding. We have the implicit denial of the phrase which is the key note of scholastic thought,—Religious and philosophical truth are one.

The rupture was effected; it is not hard to distinguish the various lines which were taken by different individuals. They may be traced among his countrymen in almost all the ages that have elapsed since the great English Schoolman flourished. Some may grasp firmly by intuition what they reject as beyond the Understanding, and following this line pass over into mysticism. Others regarding the Understanding as the source of errors, are driven back on the senses and find a resting place in empiricism. The scoto-oxonian philosophy is related alike to Father Newman's and Mr. H. Spencer's.

Classical  
Aristoteleanism

There was yet another phase of Aristotelean philosophy current in these days. The revival of learning had a great effect in widening the separation between theology

\* British Quarterly Review, LVI, p. 12-13.



and Philosophy: for it gave men another interest in study besides the purely theological one. The great men of Greece or Rome were set up as authorities rather than the Church by the half-emancipated thinkers of the time, and the study of the writings of Aristotle in the original brought to light many opinions which could hardly be called christian. We thus find a classical Aristoteleanism which repudiated the authority of the Church in Philosophy while admitting it in matters of Faith (and thus verged on mysticism). It was in Italy that the best known representatives of this mode of thought arose, such as Pomponatus, who accepted (by faith) the truths of religion; and Vanini, who only repudiated them in his later writings;\* though the general tendency of this school (unlike the revived neo-Platonic one) was anti-theological.

This was not the character of the English Aristoteleanism which seems to have maintained its place at Oxford up to the time of the Commonwealth, and to have been sufficiently popular to occasion the publishing of a pocket manual of 'Peripatetical Institutions,'† wherein the author deduces all the qualities of bodies (primary and secondary) from the notion of Quantity, and rounds his periods with the

\* *Bouillier*. *La Revolution cartesienne*, pp. 22-38.

† By *Thomas White*, Lond., 1656.

## SECTION 15.

sentence, "For Nature and Aristotle have  
 "given us these notions of hot and cold"  
 (p. 50.) Sir Kenelm Digby was the best  
 known man of this school, but except for the  
 strong light in which his writings show us  
 the greatness of the revolution effected by  
 Bacon and Descartes, they are of compara-  
 tively little interest. The combined appeal  
 to Nature and Aristotle is the last trace of  
 that scholastic period which was occupied  
 with defining and stating opinions as they  
 were received cut and dried from some ac-  
 cepted authority. That of Aristotle seems to  
 have been considered not altogether satis-  
 factory; Protestantism was not complete, and  
 the Oxford Aristoteleans bolstered up their  
 conclusions by appeals not to the decisions of  
 the Church, but to the first chapter of Genesis.  
 The preface to another work of White's  
 contains the following sentences—"For it  
 "evidently is the highest pitch of philosophy  
 "to wait on and be subservient to the Tradi-  
 "tions derived from God. \* \* It seemed  
 "to me a more express scale of Theological  
 "Approbation could not be desired than that  
 "the institutions should carry a torch before  
 "the Mysteries of Genesis; and, from those so  
 "discovered, receive themselves with advan-  
 "tage the glory and splendour of Authority."

where Genesis  
 and Aristotle  
 were made to  
 support one  
 another.

[*K. Fischer*. Geschichte der neueren Philosophie, I, 81-117. Francis Bacon und seine Nachfolger, c. 1. *F. Ueberweg*. Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie, 111, 5-35. *P. A. Lange*. Geschichte des Materialismus, I, 143-204.]

§ 16. In looking at the varying fortunes of Aristotle in relation to orthodox christian philosophy, we have been led to trace the destruction of scholasticism. We have seen the different lines which were opened on the breaking up of the dead uniformity of opinion which reigned in the middle ages. Besides this negative work a positive basis had to be laid for the new culture. One thought came into prominence in every direction. According as the revival of learning brought one or another ancient philosophy into vogue, the doctrine of a universal soul pervading nature received an Aristotelean or a Platonic dress. The neglect of the historical genesis of this element renders Fischer's valuable introductions incomplete, for it is extremely interesting to observe whence this fundamental thought of the age was derived.

It had originated among the Spanish Arabs. The dominant article in their creed was that of the unity of God; there was one God ruling all nature; and the tenacity with which they maintained this, united them with the Jews and Nestorians who alike protested against the reverence for saints and the Athanasianism of Latin christianity. Among the Jews and

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The doctrine of  
a Natural Soul

was made  
prominent  
by the  
Mahomedans  
and other  
Monotheists,

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Nestorians had been preserved elements of ancient and of oriental learning; and the combining of these fragments with a strong monotheism,\* gave rise to the thought of God being related to the World, as the human soul is to the human body. We have the conception of a Natural Soul pervading the whole universe. The importance of this belief for the developing of thought can hardly be overestimated. It served as the basis of the idea of uniformity in nature—the very foundation of all science. Physical phenomena were no longer supposed to be subject to the capricious interference of innumerable saints and angels, but were governed by one intelligent principle, as a body is governed by the soul; and therefore they occurred in a regular way. The alchemists were carried away by an hypothesis which was incapable of proof or disproof. Occult influences might possibly be at work and could be speculated about to any extent; but their existence could never be proved, nor for that matter disproved; herein lay the fatal weakness of their science, which was however an immense advance on all that had preceded. Even the extravagances of astrology have a justification: the influence of some of their so-called planets (the sun and moon) being evi-

and became the  
scientific basis  
of Alchemy  
and Astrology.

\* *Lange*, p. 149.

dent, the occult influence of others (Mercury, Jupiter, &c.) was a natural suggestion. This was followed out as eagerly as if it had been proved to be a fact. These influences affected human beings, like all other parts of nature: if then we can tell the celestial influences to which a man will be exposed in the future, we can predict his fortunes exactly:<sup>3</sup> the theory was based on a scientific conception of nature as a whole. Thus the belief in a Natural Soul was the foundation of all empirical science, since this was the first widely received form of the doctrine of uniformity in nature. This central idea of the Arabian philosophy was taken up by the new Aristoteleans who followed the classical texts instead of scholastic resumés. They were inclined however to look on the pervading principle as a physical one from which the human soul was quite distinct; whereas the Arabians regarded the human soul as an emanation of the universal one. It is needless to point out that the importance given to an active physical principle as distinct from the soul—the seat of religious truth—is connected with the doctrine of the two truths, philosophical and religious, which was adverted to above, as marked in Pomponatus and others of this school of classical, as opposed to scholastic, Aristoteleans.

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It was  
modified by  
Aristoteleanism

\* *Lecky's History of Rationalism*, I, 90.

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by Platonism,

There was another side to this doctrine besides that which was concerned in tracing out the causal connection which reigned among phenomena: it was precisely the one which the new Aristoteleans rejected. Since the human soul is an emanation of the divine soul, the highest aim for the man must be to draw nearer to this God. It was round this aspiration that all the elements of Cabbalistic lore which were treasured by the Jews had clustered, and the revived Platonism, which was rather a revived neo-Platonism, soon found an affinity with it. The result of this curious combination is most singular: its weird incomprehensibility seems to be concentrated in the pages of Boehme. Mysticism of a sort had served as a refuge from the scepticism of Occam, and the heritage of thought which had come from Spain, coupled with the newly found writings of Plotinus gave a positive impulse towards this theosophy.

and is traceable  
among the  
Italian  
Philosophers,

The revived Platonism had its centre in the Academy at Florence, the revived Aristoteleanism at Padua; there was another school started at Naples, and its founder claimed to be an adherent of a still older philosophy; Ionic speculations had more attraction for Telesius than those of any later author. He had firmly grasped the conception of a unity in nature and he tried to explain all

Telesius

phenomena from two formal but physical principles—Heat and Cold. In the course of his investigations the phenomena of mental life presented themselves, and they too were reduced so as to harmonise with his doctrines. The animal soul is distinguished from the rational one, but the generation and action of both is explained as physical: the former has its seat in the bark of trees and the bloodless parts of animal structures.\*

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There was yet one other philosophy which was resuscitated, and in turn gave its colour to the Naturalism of the day. The atomism of Democritus exercised a great fascination over the mind of Guidano Bruno, who has been drawn into marked prominence lately from the fact that his speculations are in many cases similar to some that have been recently broached. But even in this modern outcome of the Arabian impulse we find much that reminds us of the mystical and theosophic elements which were combined with it. The elementary parts are monads with psychical relations, not mere atoms with purely mechanical ones. The soul is a monad and imperishable; God is the monad of monads. There is a parallelism between the external appearance of many systems which hold

and Bruno.

\* *Ellis' Introduction to Bacon's Philosoph. Works, p. 22.*

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very different places in the development of Thought. History never repeats itself; but there is an instructive parallel between the monads of Bruno and those of Leibnitz. There is a resemblance, but a difference too, for in the interval Descartes had superseded Naturalism with a philosophy of Consciousness.

Atomic philosophy was widely disseminated in England.

This revival of atomism however deserves special notice, inasmuch as it was this side of ancient speculation which proved most attractive in England. Some of the influences at which I have hinted were probably unimportant here; though we must not conclude this too hastily when we remember that even a theosophist like Bombastes Paracelsus was sufficiently known to leave his name as a word in our language, and that his long sword figures in popular literature.\* But in regard to the atomists we can allege far more convincing evidence: book after book was issued which shewed that the author was imbued with this mode of thought. Bacon vouchsafes them his commendation: Hobbes is full of their spirit: Charlton translates them: Glanville denounces Mechanical Atheists, and in almost all the writings of that period we find a considerable acquaintance with the works

\* *R. Browning. Paracelsus (notes).*



of these authors. Bruno's visit to England may partly account for the wide dissemination of his favourite doctrines here.

But besides this occasion, there was another reason for the rapid spread of such theories. The course of Philosophy had as it were run backwards. Aristotle had been tried and rejected: Plato was suggestive but unsatisfactory: all that was left was to have recourse to particular investigations and physical enquiries. This had been done by Democritus, and he was a patron whom Bacon was glad to claim in spite of his contempt for antiquity. Yet after all there was but little real connection between the ancient atomists and the modern empiricists: the former had discussed the constitution of things by atoms which were metaphysically defined; the latter were rather concerned with particles which gave rise to our sensations.

[*Montaigne's Essays.*]

§ 17. One other author deserves a passing notice at all events, from the immense hold which he had upon his own and subsequent ages. Albeit his claim to distinction is rather that of a literary man than of a philosopher, the germs of thought with which his writing teems fructified in the minds of many of his admirers. Montaigne was the true type of a

Montaigne's  
scepticism

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had much  
influence in  
many quarters,

and may be  
compared  
with that of  
Descartes.

man whose wide reading of many incompatible systems has led him into philosophical scepticism; he had perused the greater part of ancient literature while a boy, for his precocity was almost similar to that of the younger Mill. His high culture was such that over an opponent like Pascal he exercised considerable power, and he had a good deal to do with freeing Bayle and La Mothe le Vayer from the domain of dogmatism, while Lamettrie's constant use of him may be proved from his works.\* It is no cause for wonder then that he carried great weight with other readers, and that we find anticipations of Descartes here and there in his writings: but only of the negative part of Descartes' work. Montaigne sets forth the delights of the Pyrrhonian ataraxy, and seemed to find in scepticism a sufficient rest for his soul. He was not earnest enough to escape from this by hard efforts to find an example of certainty and a criterion by which to judge of truth: yet, curiously enough, he stumbled on precisely the train of thought which led to Descartes' discovery. "The ignorance that knows itself, that judges and condemns itself, is not total ignorance, which to be, it must be ignorant of itself."† It was left for Descartes to rear a positive

\* *Lange*, p. 356.

† Apology for Raimond Sebond.

structure on the fact of the want of total ignorance, and this was the nearest approach which Montaigne made. He came to doubt of all dogmatic systems hitherto expounded, and to acquiesce in a state of suspended judgment, but he wanted the moral earnestness to pursue the enquiry to the limit where doubt passed over into certainty. A similar place seems to have been held by Charron, a very different man who was as distinguished for piety as Montaigne was by cheerful pleasure in the world where he found himself.

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Charron.

[*K. Fischer*. Francis Bacon, und seine Nachfolger, 2nd ed. *Ellis*. Introduction to Spedding's Edition of Bacon's Works.]

§ 18. It might, perhaps, have been possible to obtain an insight into the state of thought before Descartes, by a careful study of the position of Bacon, and this would have been almost sufficient for an investigation of the influence of Descartes on empiricism. But there are other sides of English Thought which must not be altogether neglected, in Glanville, Cudworth, More, and Norris. It seemed better therefore to endeavour to exhibit the condition of intellectual life on the more general plan, by means of a brief historical sketch. At the same time, it is interesting to discover that the many-sided mind of Bacon was open to influences of all sorts, and to find

Bacon reflects all the principal thoughts of his age,

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in his writings traces of the doctrine of a universal soul, of the thought of individual objects as endowed with "perception";\* and even occasionally of Aristotelean scraps, like the doctrine of the Four Causes,† as well as occasional references to Democritus.‡

and is full of  
Naturalism.

Besides, the form of his essays is not unlike those of Montaigne, so that nearly all the phases of thought to which we have alluded leave a trace in the mind of Bacon. At the same time there can be no doubt of the leading idea which runs through the whole: it is ✓ Naturalism, the thought of one principle pervading nature. The form of this Naturalism to which he was most closely attached was that of Telesius, "the best of the novellists." He looked for physical explanations and secondary causes, while not precisely defining the relation which he imagined them to hold to the intelligent principle and final causes which he certainly recognised. If Bruno neglected the distinction between psychical and physical, it is not always clearly drawn by Bacon.

His relation to  
Descartes.

Bacon's interest for us does not lie so much in his being an English representative of ✓ Naturalism, as in the fact that Descartes and he are looked upon by many as the twin

\* *Ellis*. Introduction, sec. 15. † *Ibid.* p. 32. ‡ *Ibid.* sec. 15.

founders of modern thought. Bacon is represented as the prince of all empiricists, and the philosophy from Bacon to Hume as one *continuum*: while Spinoza, Leibnitz, and others were the successors of Descartes alone. Fischer's method of treatment makes this view very pronounced: and it will demand our careful consideration, for if it were correct, the influence of Descartes on English thought would be almost inappreciable. Evidently the point at issue is the connection between Locke and Bacon and Locke and Descartes respectively: we must know this author's debt to Bacon if we would estimate the influence of Descartes. This may I think be more thoroughly investigated as each of the detailed questions arises, but a general sketch of the position of Bacon is necessary at this point.

General sketch  
of his system.

He was deeply impressed with the physical wants of his fellow creatures, and struck with the immense benefits which had come from discovery. The mariner's compass and the printing press seemed to him the greatest promoters of human well-being, and the problem before him was to find a way for obtaining similar conquests over the realm of nature. Success had been slow in the past because the plan of the campaign had been mistaken. We must first of all understand Nature — a limited system, pervaded by

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divine powers—and thus learn to rule her. Knowledge of Nature will give rise to Power over Nature. Knowledge of Nature is to be got by the systematic study of Nature. Our first effort must be to put ourselves in a position of pure receptivity, and we must clear our minds of all our pre-conceived notions (*idola*) so as to interrogate Nature as we find her. We must, besides, do so attentively, not satisfied with examining mere concrete objects which are the combinations of many qualities. If we will only take the separate qualities as they offer themselves to us and regard them as an alphabet of nature, we may direct our attention to the mechanical causes which produce them. These are to be found by a careful induction, and exclusion of accidental accompaniments. This method is certain and feasible by all: its certainty rests on the proper use of *exclusiva*: while the investigations are assisted by prerogative instances.

Its incompleteness

This philosophy then is only interested in the relation of Man to the external world, and only with one side of that relation; with the possibility of knowing enough of Nature's ways to utilise her for human good. Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury could not rest satisfied with such a one-sided investigation, and looked with some asperity on the thinker

who had thus limited the field. Starting, not from Bacon, but from the heritage of fragments of many systems which had come down to both alike, he supplied an empirical philosophy of startling consistency, and one that dealt with those moral, political and religious questions which Bacon left on one side, not because he wished to shirk them, but because they did not seem to him to be matter for true scientific study.

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If Bacon's conception of the sphere of philosophy was too narrow, or at any rate if it was so insufficiently worked out as to leave much room for a more thorough-going system, it was also at fault in not pursuing its enquiries sufficiently deeply. Bacon was satisfied with an alphabet of nature\* which was gathered almost at random from mere sensuous impression,—with ideas as found in the adult man; but the question as to the origin of this knowledge and the nature of mind yet remained to be dealt with. Bacon only tells us that we must get rid of all predisposing ideas and present a receptive mind to Nature. Whatever the amount of Locke's dependence on Bacon may be, he certainly supplements his deficiencies by trying to show how knowledge has arisen in a mind such as the former assumed.

and want of thoroughness.

\* *Ellis*. Introduction, p. 28.

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Contemporary  
influence of his  
philosophy,

on empirical  
science

At the same time looking merely at the external evidence, we must find it difficult to assign Bacon much influence on future writers. Hobbes does not appear to have esteemed him very highly, and there is reason to believe that his writings were not generally read at Cambridge till Descartes too had become known to the public. There was such a complete neglect of Bacon's philosophy among his immediate successors that it seems impossible to look to him as the source of the mental activity which distinguished England somewhat later. The long dispute as to the real value of his work for the purpose of scientific research seems to lead to the admission that he pointed men to a better road than any they had consciously pursued. They had been busy framing theories: he adjured them to verify their theories by methodical study. The Italian Philosophers had confused the physical and the psychical; Telesius explains the rational soul by Heat and Cold; Bruno looks on the universe as composed of monads, each endowed with a soul. Bacon did not define the limits of the two spheres or "reconcile science and religion;" but he admitted the existence of both, and drew attention to that particular sphere where scientific observation would be rewarded.

\* *J. Tulloch*. *Christian Philosophy in XVII Century*, ii, 15.



Admitting the existence of final causes he proclaimed that secondary ones were better worth empirical study: he announced distinctly what contemporaries who were more successful in practical science had altogether failed to see. It is extremely difficult to say in what way this bare assertion, of the utility of studying physical antecedents methodically, could have led to any advance in philosophy, whatever it may have done in science. The blanks in his system which were filled up by Hobbes and Locke were not the only ones he left: their efforts could hardly have been prompted by a want felt in what was otherwise complete. He did not define the problems for them: nor would he have answered them as they did. The path which Bacon pointed towards was somewhat like the one pursued by Harvey and Boyle, and he may deserve credit for describing it. But he himself came to see that empiricism alone would never lead to a harmony of all truth, and, as far as philosophy was concerned, his system was but "a virgin dedicated to the gods."

SECTION 18.  
and on  
philosophy.

[*A. Lechler. Geschichte der englischen Deismus. Lord Herbert of Cherbury. De Veritate. Ed. 1633.*]

§ 19. There is one other English Philosophy that must be mentioned in order to give

Lord Herbert  
of Cherbury.

## SECTION 19.

a clear view of praecartesian thought in England: it is that of Lord Herbert of Cherbury. He was a writer whose influence on subsequent thought was immense, and he may be regarded as the founder of the school of English Deists which culminated in Shaftesbury and Bolingbroke. In him too we find the source of isolated remarks of Locke's, though the influence seems to be merely an external one, for it is confined to scattered passages and does not leave an impress on the principle of the whole. Lord Herbert was another of those English philosophers who were first of all men of the world and of action, and whose thinking was undertaken rather for their own private satisfaction than from having made a business of study. Indeed he tells us that he was in considerable doubt as to publishing his treatise, *De Veritate*, and only did so in consequence of receiving what he considered a sign of divine approval.

His problem  
leads to

A single sentence explains very clearly the problem to which he addressed himself in this treatise. "*Neque omnia scire posse neque nihil deprehendimus sed quaedam.*" He had come in contact on one side with violent dogmatisms which had manifested themselves in bitter persecutions: how could he decide between the conflicting factions? Again, Montaigne had found no possibility of know-

ledge anywhere; Lord Herbert was repelled by this scepticism, but how could he tell what he might accept as true? From every side the question of jesting Pilate was forced upon him, and he tried to grapple with it thoughtfully.

There is much that is extremely interesting in the kinds of truth which he detects and analyses,—the harmony of an object with itself, of its appearance with itself, and of our conception with the appearance. Last of all we have the truths of the intellect, the common notions which are valid when the particulars are in right relation to one another. These common notions correspond to every kind of existence and are found as faculties which may be developed by experience. They are innate ideas in the microcosm, by means of which true knowledge of the macrocosm becomes possible. This gives us an indication of the plane of thought on which the whole system is founded. There is a thorough unity between the external and internal—a unity imposed by the Creator of microcosm and macrocosm alike: but this is to be apprehended truly by analysing our experience till we find a perfect congruence between the common notions and reality. Here, as in Bacon, we have a thorough belief in one truth to be traced through all spheres of knowledge:

the analysis of  
the kinds of  
truth.

Compared with  
Bacon

## SECTION 19.

and Kant.

but Bacon hoped to find it in the matter that is given, Herbert in the products of the mind that receives. With him the divine light of the mind, with all its faculties, and all its common notions which may be applied to various branches of study, is the source of truth; and much of the phraseology he uses about it is almost Kantian.\*

The common notions exist in every sensible man, and by their means his mind (*tanquam coelitus imbuta*)† may discern the things that lie before it. He repudiates the wearisome appeal to experience; for unless we are possessed of some of these notions we could neither observe nor experiment. Each common notion has a corresponding faculty; and these are very numerous, including, among others, one for each of the Aristotelean categories, and one for each separate sense. He arranges these as *Instinctus Naturalis*, *Sensus Internus*, *Sensus Externus*, and *Discursus*.‡ It is in the treatment of *Instinctus Naturalis* that we find his standpoint most clearly delineated; it deals with the Analogy (a word used in a strict mathematical sense) between God and Man; and it has *Beatitudo aeterna* for its object. Through it we have “revelation” in the general sense of the word; and by posses-

Religious  
views

\* *Lechler*, pp. 38 ff.    † *De Veritate*, p. 27.    ‡ *Ibid.* p. 57.

sing this, men are separated from the brutes. Special revelations may also occur, but are only to be received on due preparation, and have a very much lessened value for any but the original recipient.\*

SECTION 19.

His whole system forms a curious parallel to Descartes, and a curious contrast. He attacks the same problem, under the same pressure, he arrives at some similar answers, for he seems to find the highest certainty in what is clear to the Understanding: but he has no method: he writes about truth rather than exerts himself to seek it out thoroughly in a methodic manner. The likeness to Descartes is most striking in the line they draw between men and brutes: in nothing are they more apart than in regard to their use of the teleological view of the Universe. The conception of the world as a divinely constructed machine, gave to the Newtons and Boyles a decided ground for supposing the existence of a maker of the machine; this idea is worked out by Herbert with the help of the illustration of a watch, which was destined to become so great a favourite among succeeding rationalists.

Compared with Descartes,

We have gone the round of all the types of thought which were then in vogue, and we have

to whom we must now pass.

\* De Veritate, p. 244.

## SECTION 19.

found none that left a definite philosophical problem to be solved, or a definite philosophical statement which was more than a bare assertion and could be the foundation of a school of thought. Kenelm Digby and other dogmatists there were, but their time was past; Bacon exhorted men to discard such studies in favour of empirical research; and no impulse came from him. Lord Herbert could only look round in this chaos and ask, What is truth? In the turmoil of contending factions there were few who waited for the answer, but some recognised it when it came.

### III.

#### DESCARTES.

[*K. Fischer. Descartes und seine Schule, 2nd Ed.: Descartes Œuvres (Cousin's Edition): Method, &c., Translated Edition, 1852.*]

§ 20. We may now endeavour to depict the prominent features of the philosophy whose influence we desire to trace, and this will be best introduced by our reverting for a moment to the frequently drawn parallel between Bacon and Descartes. They are often looked on as twin founders of modern philosophy,—as the two thinkers who thoroughly freed themselves from the trammels of scholasticism, and began to work out the problems of life for themselves.

The resemblance is striking, but superficial. Both desired to get more certain knowledge of Man and the world around him, both were dissatisfied with the learning of the day, both determined to rear it on a more satisfactory basis. But Bacon was dissatisfied with the unpractical nature of the results of study rather than with anything else: he doubted if it was true, because he was sure it was not useful, and therefore he was satisfied when he got a means for accumulating useful information in a systematic way: he aimed at the

SECTION 20.

Descartes and  
Bacon :

their superficial  
resemblance,

## SECTION 17.

reform of the physical sciences. The world was there for us to understand: we have but to take it as we find it, and not disturb it with preconceived notions. Descartes' dissatisfaction was much deeper. He felt that the teaching of the schools did not convince him, and he desired to find out, if possible, why it did not, and then to see if philosophical knowledge could be put in a form that should be convincing. The aim of the two men is quite different; Bacon desires knowledge in order that man's physical wants may be better supplied: Descartes seeks for truth which shall satisfy the cravings of his own heart, though he does not altogether neglect the other advantages.\* This difference in their dispositions might be illustrated from their lives no less than from their philosophies; in the last it is very pronounced, and the superficial resemblance is probably not due to more than the close similarity of their surroundings: their constructive philosophies are absolutely distinct.

but real  
difference in  
their aims

and in their  
systems;

Bacon cannot analyse knowledge into elements. The various sensuous impressions are perfectly simple so far as he sees; nature impresses them on the mind, and the mind must receive them as they come; but it does

\* *Fischer's Descartes*, i, p. 156.



not occur to him that there is any other difficulty, or that the sensation in an unprejudiced mind could be open to doubt at all. Let us get these undistorted sensations, we shall then have knowledge of nature and power over nature.

Descartes, on the other hand, feels strongly the distinction between his own thinking power and the convictions it gives him, and the reports that are brought to him by others; the farther question occurs, why are the reports of my senses to be trusted? The systems of philosophy do not satisfy me, am I justified in letting my senses do so either? Here we have the recognition of mind as something distinct from its impressions; we find a permanent ego, not a mere flux of sensations which have nothing in common but that they are received from without. It is the recognition of mind as distinguished from its impressions that marks the difference between Descartes and Bacon. Bacon's philosophy did not rise above sensation, Descartes recognised mind as distinct from its sensations. Self culture was his aim in life, and the recognition of self in knowledge was his contribution to the progress of Philosophy.

for Descartes' is a philosophy of Consciousness.

In fact, as was asserted above, his is the first philosophy of Consciousness: he sees the duality in our knowledge, something received

## SECTION 20.

and something receiving: he finds these elements in every act of his own mind, and he desires a criterion by which to judge of their combined results. By analysing the difference between these two we have verified the statement that the two embody different moments of development, even in spite of their superficial similarities.

§ 21. Having thus delineated the internal principle which works through the whole system it may not be unprofitable to notice the external connection between his philosophy and the past. And here again his life comes to be a key to his philosophy. We cannot indeed trace out the various forms of ancient and mediæval philosophy with which he became acquainted at La Flèche, but we know that his attainments were of the highest, and doubtless his reading was pretty wide. We have not the same proof of this as in the case of Bacon who was willing to accept any scraps of truth which might be hidden in Aristotle himself: some of the impressions might chance to be correct even if the greater part is distorted. But with Descartes it is not so, the distortion for him lies nearer home. His dissatisfaction is too thorough to allow of his picking and choosing from the past. Everything must be worked out anew. In his determined search for truth he repu-

The influence  
of his  
philosophical  
studies

of mysticism,

diated the bye-gone philosophies and the teachers of the present: but we see also that his mind was open to another influence which failed to satisfy him. He spent some time in endeavouring to discover the doctrines of a secret mystical sect, thus proving that the mysticism which had sprung from the revived Platonism was weighed and found wanting. To one who was so fully conscious of his individuality there could be no relief in doctrines which tend to the sinking of that individuality altogether.

Scepticism is a turn of thought which he may have inherited from Montaigne: and in his case we see that scepticism biographically portrayed. It would have been possible to predict that no old system could satisfy the new doubt, indeed it was just the unsatisfactoriness of the systems that gave rise to the doubts: but his patient efforts to rest in them have made this still more certain. of scepticism,

The mathematical teaching which he had received was another influence that came strongly into play. In this one case there was an instance of that immediate knowledge for which he craved; and the force of the reasoning contrasted strongly with the inconclusiveness of philosophical arguments. From the certainty given in special cases by the intuition of space we can deduce many facts: of mathematical training,

## SECTION 21.

he sought for an immediate judgment which can give us a similar starting point, for till he found it there could be no true certainty in any conclusion at all.

and of  
modern life,

That he was keenly alive to the discoveries of the time, both astronomical and physiological, we know, but it seems doubtful if these could help him in his deep researches. Other influences might: the protestant Reformation was a vigorous assertion of individual self-consciousness in matters of religion; and Shakespeare at least, if no one else, had attained to the purest conception of morality before he could sketch the characters of free, self-determined men and women. We have the Spirit of the Age manifesting itself in these various forms: it was left for Descartes to gather up the truth and express it in the sphere of philosophical thought. How far he may have been helped to it by these manifestations of the Idea, we can hardly even guess, but there is no evidence of his getting assistance from them: and indeed the strong self-consciousness of Descartes is manifested in regard to all these external influences. He derives no opinions from others, hardly even any suggestions; what he does get he absorbs and makes part of himself. Authoritative or revealed opinions are not to be accepted as true; but they arouse in him an ideal of truth which

must have  
affected his  
mind, but  
cannot in most  
instances be  
definitely  
traced in his  
writings.

reigns in his life. His scepticism is no mass of negative opinions, it is a critical habit of thought. Even mathematical results are discarded, but the orderly method of study which mathematicians adopt is to be steadily pursued. Reverting to the schema (Intro. sec. 9), we may assert power derived from past thinkers, and original powers working on the actual state of science, &c., to have been the influences that produced the philosophy of Descartes. In this case the indebtedness is not proved by his borrowing results, and we cannot distinctly name the sources to which the development of his powers was due.

The occasion of his writing\* is not hard to seek: he had travelled much, and was a man of European reputation before he had given any philosophical writings to the world. The news had got abroad that he had come to very remarkable conclusions and was about to give them to the world: and in order to save himself from the weight of a reputation which he did not deserve, he published the *Discourse on Method* as a sort of personal explanation which might make his position clear. Even then the motive for writing may be seen to harmonise closely with the central idea which animates his work: it is undertaken merely

The occasion  
of his writing

\* Discourse III, p. 73.

## SECTION 21.

to put himself right in the eyes of the world, not with the ostensible purpose of convincing others. Descartes had too firm a faith in truth to care whether it triumphed before or after his death.

and the design  
of his treatise,

§ 22. In passing from these preliminaries to consider the philosophy of Descartes itself, we must still keep this central idea before us, we shall find that it illuminates all the details and arrangement of the system, as well as the external surroundings of the author. He is conscious of self: and from the clear attainment of that consciousness he looks back on the way he has travelled and describes it to others. It may be best to follow him in this, and begin by considering the statement which first gave satisfaction to himself, without keeping strictly to any one of the treatises in which he developed it. "*Cogito ergo sum*" has been again and again subjected to mistaken criticism, from supposing that it was meant to be a proof which would satisfy the Understanding. We can translate it into a syllogistic shape, and ask after the proof of its premises if we like, or can prove that Descartes concludes affirmatively from a universal negative, and thus violates all logical rules: \* but all in vain. Descartes does not for a moment suppose that he can convince

"*Cogito ergo sum*,"

\* Principles I, 10. Fischer, p. 475.

others of his philosophy by writing about it: \* this is the great difficulty under which he labours: he only says, "If you will follow the same course of thought that I have followed, you will [I believe] come to the same conclusions; but you must think it through each for yourselves, and not hope to understand it by reading round it." The phrase is given as an example of a mental condition which is absolutely free from the possibility of doubt—the immediate knowledge of its own state by the mind; but such knowledge it is impossible to describe, nor can its validity be proved without a manifest paralogism, examples of which may be culled from the pages of Sir William Hamilton.

SECTION 22.

is not a demonstration, but an example of certainty

The statement is not open to the doubts which flow from the aberrations of the senses, or the indifferentism of will, as the instances given by Gassendi are: † but if it is once clearly felt, its truth cannot be doubted. My mind is conscious of this intellectual state: in any case of the stream of intellectual life distinguishing its passing states, we get an example of an immediate and indubitable knowledge of what exists. The force of this truth can only be shown by contrasting it with the various other reports which had

greater than than that of sense knowledge,

\* Discourse I, p. 47.

† Fischer, p. 499.

## SECTION 22.

come to him on the authority of tradition or his senses.\* The senses constantly deceive us, and the mind falls into paralogisms, and thus the demonstrations of mathematics are open to doubt. The phenomena of dreams seemed to him to give an additional measure of uncertainty to ordinary life, and there could be no absolute certainty in revelation, as everything might be arranged by a malignant being, so as to deceive us. One might be inclined to conclude that knowledge was impossible, and that there existed nothing for us to know, if there were not such a thing as immediate knowledge of self—acquaintance with something that is. All this gives us an insight into the depth of the research of Descartes as compared with that of Bacon. Bacon takes ordinary knowing, and tells us how it is to be applied; Descartes asks, How is it possible that we can know at all? is there anything that we can really know? and he finds the answer already given,—in his Consciousness knowledge and existence are in immediate contact.

and which shows the characteristics of certain truth,

When he has got this example of undoubted knowledge, his next effort is to detect its characteristics. What makes it differ from other things which men have accounted know-

\* Principles I, 8-13.



ledge, but of which he had come to doubt? Is there a criterion by which he may test knowledge and see if it will ring? It must be clear and distinct. And here again we find an appeal made not to the Understanding but to the individual Consciousness. He has not obtained a mere notion which can be defined, but something which is entirely present to Consciousness. In this first awakening the standpoint is very different from that of the English philosophies that followed. The most certain truths of Descartes are not presentations of sensible objects with unintelligible modes, and secondary qualities: they must be immediately present, and therefore clear; and intuited with all their properties also clear, and therefore distinct.

which are  
always clear  
and distinct.

The consciousness of my own mind as really existing, is more clear than that of my embodied self; and this being so, I reach a certainty of my existence which is not dependent on the presence of my body or conditions of time or place; these may pass, while the self which is more certain than any of them remains.

He has found that knowledge is possible, and has got a criterion by which he can test it. The path which he pursued was marked out for him by the example of mathematics. There we have a means of explaining all quantitative relations from a knowledge of

## SECTION 22.

pure quantity, provided we can express them in the right terms. He desires to explain "the knowable" from his acquaintance with true knowledge, and one principal difficulty is to reduce the matter of his study to right terms,\*—to have a classified series in which each step shall be the ground for the next.

The so-called proofs of the existence of God

§ 23. The often repeated and often refuted proofs of the existence of God have in some cases been misunderstood from a want of regard to the real character of Descartes' whole system. Here, too, there is the assertion of immediate knowledge of an infinite Being as given directly by his Consciousness. It is perfectly clear and distinct to him. His "proofs" are really intended to put his readers on the method of seeing whether it be not perfectly clear to them also, and trains of thought are suggested which each is to follow for himself. None of these were regarded as a proof by itself: if they had been, what need of farther witness? If the *a posteriori* arguments sufficed, why should he appeal to Anselm's besides? He has a perfectly clear idea and the proofs are adopted as a means of exhibiting that idea. No one of them is capable of demonstrating it in its completeness: and if we would judge of their value

direct others to a train of thought,

but are not intended as demonstrations

\* Fischer, 297, &c. Regles pour la direction, IV, VI, VII.

we must take them together. It therefore appears to me an error to say of any separate one, as Cousin does, that it is the statement of the immediate particular inferences from my finitude to the existence of Perfection: that is rather one side of the concrete whole which is clearly felt by Descartes, and it is a side which can be exhibited in a syllogistic form. Either the idea of God is caused by external sensations, or by abstraction from my imperfections, or by a Perfect Being: but it cannot be caused as sensible perceptions are, it is different in kind: nor is it due to myself since the more perfect cannot be derived from the less perfect: therefore it must be due to a real Perfectness. But still the supposition is possible that these perfections may have existed separately in various beings and been constructed by my Understanding: so a second proof follows: my very existence proves there is some one beyond, who made me, as I would not have made myself imperfect. True, but how do I know that the author of my being is not himself imperfect? And these difficulties Descartes can only avoid by adding his third proof and analysing his clear and distinct idea. He has proved Perfection on one side, he has proved the reality of an Existence on the other, and he maintains that for his consciousness the two are identical.

## SECTION 23.

His idea of Perfection is not an abstraction, because it involves Existence in its very nature. The Existence beyond him is perfect, for the two thoughts, though they may be expounded separately, are indissoluble for his Consciousness.

as Anselm's  
was.

And herein lies the distinction between his proof and that of Anselm. Anselm's argument is from the definition of God to His existence, Descartes rests on his own intuition of God. Though it is impossible to establish the validity of this intuition by argument, it is equally impossible to refute it by taking the case of a "hundred dollars,"\* or any other such conception. This objection does hold against the schoolman's proof, but not against Descartes' assertion of his intuition, for the three statements are interdependent and cannot be fairly separated. They may be met by a flat denial that there is such an intuition in another mind (the course Gassendi adopted),† but in no way disproved. No argument can refute an assertion which is incapable of logical proof.

The character of these proofs will be brought out more clearly in comparing them with Locke's. The next point to be considered is the importance of this idea in his

\* *Kant*. Kritik of Pure Reason, (Bohn,) p. 368.

† *Erdmann*. Grundriss, II, p. 15.

philosophy, and we now find Descartes hastening to the construction of a system of the World rather than confining his attention to clear and distinct truths. The Perfect Being must be truthful, and therefore my senses give true reports as to the existence of external matter. Here we have a second species of certainty deduced from the first. My clear intuition gives the proof of God's existence, His existence gives validity to my sensations, and they testify to matter as really existing.

SECTION 23.  
The validity of sense knowledge is deduced

There is first my own existence and the criterion it gives: then God's existence established by this criterion and the validity of the senses (and matter) proved by an appeal to His truthfulness. There is no circle here, but there are the elements of much inconsistency. We have the certainty of internal intuition opposed by the deduced validity of sense-knowledge: there is a dual criterion. Then the result of the clear and distinct testimony of the internal perception (mind) is opposed as an entirely separate substance to that which is given by the clear and distinct testimony of external senses (matter.) There is duality of substance; and to this must be added the assertion that neither of these is a true substance, since both are dependent on God.

and leads to confusion in Descartes

We can see here how all sorts of views may

SECTION 23.  
 and conflict  
 among his  
 successors.

be reached by following out one or other of these sides of this philosophy of Consciousness. Spinozism is almost explicit in the last phrase: on the other hand we can take the opposition of self and objective existence, and look at material things as directly dependent on God, the one Objective, with Berkeley: or asserting my individual dependence on God, oppose God and Matter: or we can accentuate the first immediate judgment, and assert the individuality of substances with Leibnitz: or we can hold fast by the validity of the senses with Locke. The germs of these contradictory tendencies are all found in Descartes, and will be exemplified below. It were a needless task for my present purpose to attempt to delineate the kind of reconciliation which he attempted. It may suffice to state very briefly the special doctrines which were prominent in his writings and make his relation to his successors more clear.

"Extension"  
 and  
 "Thinking"  
 opsn three  
 problems,

§ 24. First of all comes the asserted existence of two attributes which are "clearly" given—extension and thinking: they certainly have nothing in common,—since the ideas of the substances from which they are derived are of different degrees of clearness in Consciousness,—and it may be doubted whether they could be considered as established in mutual opposition if we contented ourselves

with the first criterion which Descartes announced. However, he considered that these two attributes could only be thought as existing in opposition to one another, and divided the doctrines into those which treat of extended substance, the nature of the soul, and the mutual relation of soul and body.

SECTION 24.

The first point is considered in the second part of the *Principles*, where the divisibility of matter, and the nature of motion are all deduced from the attribute of Extension, and a consistent system of the material universe is thus drawn out, in which everything is explained on mathematical and mechanical principles. The denial of the existence of atoms and the assertion of infinite divisibility are the principal doctrines which he deduces from this notion.

as to extended  
substance,

Again, it may be doubtful whether Descartes' clear and distinct thinking can, in considering the nature of Spirit, adequately distinguish the Universal Spirit from the Individual Thinker. He has an immediate but cannot get a notional apprehension: they seem to have a common attribute, while the human Spirit is only distinguished by modes, and changing relations to other existences. (*Principles*, I, 56.) In both of them the thinking is carried on by ideas, but in the

as to the two  
thinking  
substances

## SECTION 24.

human mind some of these are fictitious, some adventitious, some innate:\* the innate are rather capacities of thinking than anything else, and the truth or falsehood of the others depend on the way in which they are related to the will, and whether it determines to affirm or deny them. It is in this that the possibility of error lies, for we may affirm existence of an idea which is hastily and imperfectly formed, or is merely the creature of our imagination. And so it is here, that Descartes endeavours to form a distinction between the human mind and the divine. Will is the cause of error in us, but not in Him, since all truth depends on His will. Because He wills it, the thing is; as it is, so must we will to affirm it if we would avoid error. The will is mere free choice, but in the human being it may be formed by habit to rise from this mere indifferentism into a perfect conformity with what the divine will affirms, and therefore to a better freedom.†

and as to Soul  
and Body,  
and the cause  
of error.

The relation of soul and body cannot accordingly be a union, but is a merely mechanical connection. They are too utterly different to be really conjoined otherwise. The animal part is mere body, and can be thoroughly explained on the physical prin-

\* Meditations, III, p. 38. See also note.

+ Erdmann. Grundriss, II, p. 24: v. supra p. 8.



ciples which suffice for the material universe. The animal soul is merely material and mechanical, and does not really perceive, nor is it capable of thinking. The rational soul is implanted in a living mechanism. It cannot infuse dead organisms, therefore when the works of the human machine stop, the rational soul leaves; and this is the explanation of death.

But not only is the rational soul thus dependent on the mechanism, it is affected by it. The only organ of the brain which is not bilateral is the seat of the junction of soul and body,—the point of contact with an unextended substance! Through this connection it is possible for the body to rouse passions in the soul which interfere with the free play of the will in its pursuit of truth; sense perceptions are mere mechanical movements of the animal body, which the soul of man receives passively; internal perceptions are mere thinking, which the animals cannot share; emotions are movements of the thinking substance, and thus cast a light on the nature of the connection of soul and body.\*

Here is a curious outcome of the idealistic method of Descartes. He commenced by asserting the sole reality of the Thinking

\* *Fischer*, ch. ix.

## SECTION 24.

Principle: he proceeds to arguments which leave but little room for its existence. The common Understanding, at all events, finds a ground for the existence of an immaterial part in man only in the fact of intelligence, and perceives no such great difference between internal and external perception as to regard them as the outcome of two utterly opposed substances. If the body be mere mechanism, as Descartes argued under the fascination of Harvey's discoveries, and if sensation be mere mechanism, is not all other mental exercise the product of this mechanism too? If Bacon relegated the belief in the soul to the realm of "faith," Descartes' consistency attenuated the rational soul till there was little left for faith to grasp.

#### IV.

### THE CONTEMPORARIES OF DESCARTES.

[*K. Fischer.* Bacon, pp. 517—544. *A. Lange.* Materialismus I, 234—248.]

§ 25. Thomas Hobbes comes first among the English contemporaries of Descartes; like Bacon and others he was a man of the world as much as a student. The direction of his thoughts was determined rather by the circumstances of his life and the general atmosphere of the times, than by the writings of any one master.

SECTION 25.

Thomas  
Hobbes was  
much affected  
by

The effect of his education is very manifest in many parts of his books. He was for some time at Magdalen Hall, and devoted himself much to the study of logic there. Attention was called above to the influence of nominalism, as expounded by Occam; and this had certainly taken a very firm hold on the mind of Hobbes. In his *Elements of Philosophy* he deals at some length with logic, and by no means shews the contempt which Bacon had for the syllogistic form. In fact whatever he thought of the Politics of Aristotle, he has no objection to following him largely in his treatment of the foundations of science. Still the differences are

the study of  
Logic,

## SECTION 25.

great: the want of a doctrine of universals separates him entirely from the schoolmen, and the value which he attributes to words, as mere signs arbitrarily imposed which can be applied to a greater or less number of things, gives a strong contrast to the conceptualism which was so dominant in their time. And yet his preference for deduction as the method of investigation shews how strongly his mind had been influenced by the clearness and accuracy of such demonstrations. In fact it would be a work of some difficulty to tell how far he departed from his teachers or only expressed an extreme nominalism, which was already in vogue.

but not greatly  
by intercourse  
with Bacon,

His intercourse with Bacon must have had some considerable influence on his mind, though it seems quite a mistake to regard his philosophy as a mere extension of the Baconian, in a new direction. The way in which Fischer treats the connection between the two appears to me somewhat misleading and superficial. It is easy to say that Hobbes felt the want in Bacon of a properly expounded political philosophy, and that he endeavoured to carry out the Baconian idea of bringing this also within the range of rational science. Nor does much light arise from comparing the facts that the politics of Aristotle were a bugbear to Hobbes, and the rest of his philo-

sophy to Bacon. This is at most a mere analogy, and cannot be said to prove any dependence at all. The naturalism which attempted to explain all external and internal phenomena on the same sort of principles was a tendency of the day. Bacon was the best English representative of it, but it was shared by many of the Italian philosophers, to name no others; and this is almost the only leading idea of his philosophy which could be dependent on Bacon. We know the general character too of the ethics of the English Chancellor, and can guess at the probable nature of his political philosophy—good and evil exist in the world to be gathered by individual minds and made into a science, as other facts are collected; and the knowledge of these facts will be of particular use to us, as all other knowledge is more or less. This is entirely different from a legally imposed morality which has its origin in individual fear: and it cannot be fairly maintained that Hobbes followed out the lines which Bacon laid down, or did anything to fill up the gaps in his system.

as is shown by  
divergences in  
ethics

The departure from the Baconian method, and method. too, is extremely striking: we are to analyse till we get principles, and then to apply these deductively until we obtain explanations of the phenomena we find in the world, by seeing

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their dependence on their causes. Lange\* does not scruple to say that there is here a conscious preference for the method of Descartes over that of Bacon. It certainly is a closer approximation to the former than to the latter, and gives a still further reason for protesting against the opinion that Hobbes was a developer of the Baconian philosophy. Indeed if that had any influence on his mind it was probably one of repulsion. Bacon had not accepted those great discoveries of the age which Hobbes valued truly, he had failed in adding much by any of his own investigations, he had barely attempted to give any doctrine of civil philosophy, and what he did give was inapplicable to the difficulties of the day. Hobbes was imbued with one Baconian idea, that knowledge was to be "for one end—" the good of man," and finding the Baconian philosophy did little for the immediate good of man, we can hardly conceive his following it out, but rather seeking to begin anew for himself.

The method which he pursued then was based not on a theory as to how discoveries might be made, but from consideration of the way in which they had been made. The detection of a principle by analysis and sub-

\* *Lange*, I, p. 240.

sequent deduction from it, was the plan he followed: and from his recognition of this as the true plan of studying social philosophy he may claim a high rank. Whether later writers regard the physiology of the human organism or the development of the human mind as the more important factor in man's character, we find them very generally pursuing their social studies on this method; and the principal weakness of Hobbes' system was the narrow views of human nature from which he deduced results of almost geometrical\* exactness.

Hobbes' acquaintance with Gassendi and the mathematical studies in which he engaged at Paris are constantly coming before us in his writings, and it was his prominence in this department of study that brought him into contact with Descartes. Mathematical papers had passed between them before the earliest philosophical works of the Frenchman were sent to Hobbes to review, and before he had himself published anything but the *Thucydides*.

Influence of  
mathematical  
reading.

As has been already said the scientific discoveries of his day were fully and joyfully accepted by Hobbes: and they, more than anything else, influenced the character of his

of the  
discoveries

\* *Mill. Logic*, vi, 8.

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system. Harvey's in particular seemed to show that the human organism could be explained on mechanical principles, and if so, was there not a link found between internal and external philosophy? If the human being is mechanical, the results of the action of this mechanical being may be deduced from an attentive study of him, and civil philosophy will be possible for the first time.

and of social  
circumstances  
of the age.

The general disturbance which was rending England in pieces during the greater part of his life certainly made a strong impression on his mind, and produced the marked leaning towards an absolute monarchy as giving the greatest hope for the maintenance of order.

So far for the external surroundings of Hobbes' philosophy: it is singularly difficult to trace any great influence to any one known individual. The method which he derived partly from Oxford nominalists, and partly from a consideration of the recent discoveries, is the only definite positive help he had. The naturalism which he displayed was floating in the air, and occurs in every writer of the day. He was no mere amplifier of other men's opinions, but one who formed a philosophy for himself by looking at the facts before him. He too felt an original impulse, and without conscious reference to either one or other, he systematised the



phase of thought which mediated between Bacon and Descartes.

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§ 26. In Bacon an order is recognised in something external: the human being is purely receptive; and his philosophy expends its energies in the endeavour to describe the best plan for grasping the external order by degrees. This was unsatisfactory to Hobbes, who wishes to find a common characteristic in the universe from which his philosophy may start; and he finds it in motion, for this is universally present in sensible phenomena. He limits the problem to these sensible things and then finds one universal form of sensation—motion, which gives a sufficient basis for his reasoning. Nor is this all: he finds motion in the human being also, physical sensations conjoined with mental changes. Here is the link he wanted to connect the external and internal: it is all given by intelligent physical sensation. This supplies the form according to which everything external is apprehended, and from its content everything internal is developed.

Motion serves as the central principles, in which the

physical and psychical are blended.

The marked feature in the system is the want of clear consciousness: there is no definite recognition of an external and an internal. We might ask what is the cause of the motions in man, and what their result? but Hobbes finds no interest in separating

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these questions or analysing further: for him sensation is motion, partly occurring so that we recognise it, partly so that we do not, but always motion.

Bacon considered merely the external phenomena we feel: Hobbes has approached nearer the modern problem by looking at the feelings aroused: Descartes brought it into clear light by detecting the existence of a permanent ego among the fleeting feelings.

Descartes had risen above this view.

Bodily sensations along with their mental correlatives, (not sensations known as mine and investigated as such,) give the central principle in this philosophy: and though Descartes, starting from the same platform reached an infinitely higher truth, it is not impossible that in his course of doubting he halted for a time at the place where Hobbes remained. The whole of the system which follows on the establishment of the validity of sense has a very close resemblance to Hobbes,\* and it has an air of being dragged in ready made, which would almost suggest its having been partially thought out by itself. Whether this be so or not, there is much in his writing which would lie near to the English author's hand, and the doctrine of passions as motions of the soul might be especially suggestive.

\* Cf. also the incidental remarks on language which he states and discards. *Medit.* p. 32.

There was a necessary phase from mere Naturalism to Consciousness through which Thought had to pass, and it is one which is left for us in the masterly system of Hobbes. Sensation marks out the province to be studied; sensations are marked by words and computed in thinking: then definitions are constructed from which a world of sensations is deduced. On the sensation of fear is based the whole system of morality and religion. His theory of the will as in complete subjection to the last desire is a still further instance of the attempt to carry out in its completeness a philosophy based on blind sensation. Into the details of that system it seems needless to enter, its basis in psychology is all that concerns us: sensation was motion, and this involved a material basis; so that a materialism was implied in the confused fundamental idea, rather than supported by his system.

Hobbes derived an accurate power of defining and demonstrating from his logical and mathematical studies (in which he was connected with Descartes) and he found systems of naturalism in vogue, which looked on the Universe as explicable on one set of principles. His original power was manifested in expressing these phenomena in terms of sensation, since he found in this a form

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This runs  
through the  
whole system.

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under which all impressions were received, and a factor from which all character was derived. How far he was helped in the details of his system by the writings of one who had already refuted it, we can hardly say distinctly, though we must notice the evidence that favours the supposition.

Similarities  
between  
Hobbes and  
Descartes in  
their

§ 27. In the following paragraphs no pretence will be made of proving either conscious or unconscious dependence of Hobbes on Descartes; there was a current of common thought which may have influenced both: still the passages pointed out below are ones where it seems extremely probable that the chronologically later writer was influenced by the earlier one.

introductions  
to their systems

This is most marked in comparing the preface to the *Principles*, which Descartes wrote in the form of a letter to the translator in 1647, with the preface and earlier chapters of Hobbes' *Elements of Philosophy*, published in 1655. The two harmonise most closely in the general tone, as addressed to ordinary readers, in the recommendations of logic and mathematics (the former being more dwelt upon by Hobbes, the latter by Descartes); and in the divisions of philosophy there is also a strong correspondence: especially in the relative positions of natural philosophy, physiology and ethics.

The utility and scope of Philosophy is discussed by both in a similar way, and there is a very strong resemblance between the sentences in which they each explain that Religion lies beyond the province of Philosophy, since such knowledge “comes by divine grace in “an instant, and as it were by some sense “supernatural.”\*

Still further in the treatment of error as originating in sense, we have similarities with many passages of Descartes, and the description of falsity which occurs from our negligence in affirming or denying, is about as close a copy of Descartes’ doctrine of error as could be made by one who denied the free choice and indifferentism of will on which he based it.†

treatment of error

Hobbes’ universal principle of motion is stated by Descartes in his *Principles*, and the ordinary sense of the term with which the latter is satisfied is very similar to the Englishman’s definition, “Motion is the privation of “one place and the acquisition of another.”‡ “Motion is the action by which a body passes “from one place to another.”§

definition of motion, &c.

The chapter on sense and animal motion, as well as that on the passions|| has much resemblance to Descartes’ remarks¶ on the same

\* *Hobbes (Molesworth’s Edition) I, 11; Principles, p. 96.*  
 † *Hobbes, I, 56; Descartes, Method, p. 56.* ‡ *Hobbes I, p. 70.*  
 § *Principles, p. 164.* || *Leviathan, I, c. 6.* ¶ *Medit. p. 86.*

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and the will.

subject: but it is, in all probability, only the common culture of the time in both cases. There is one other point which brings out somewhat clearly the resemblance and divergence of the two systems, and which may therefore be stated here. It is the doctrine of the will. The notion of our will as absolute indifference is common to the two: there is a "liberty of doing or omitting,"\* but this is put an end to by deliberation. And so it is with Descartes also: the indifferentism ceases when we are carried away by one passion or another. With Hobbes this is final: after deliberation there is no more liberty or indifference: the first inclination or endeavour has become an act of willing. So far the two are identical; but Descartes sees that there is a step beyond this: that the mind can refuse the incitements of passion and rise to a higher freedom when it is determined by a "very clear thought."† Here we have the conception of self-determining Reason, and freedom in the highest sense is for the moment asserted by Descartes, though not maintained by his successors. For the proof of this there must be something else than mere sensation; we must have self-conscious thought to realise it, and the philosophy of unconscious sensation has no place for

\* *Hobbes* III, p. 48.+ *Descartes*. *Meditations*, p. 58.

any freedom but indifference overcome by this or that passion. It is hardly too much to say that there is no main feature of Hobbes' system which does not bear a strong resemblance to Descartes, wherever the point at issue has been discussed by both; of course the civil philosophy, and the "State of Nature" have nothing corresponding to them in Descartes.

It remains for us to touch on the correspondence which occurred about the *Meditations*: though this hardly brings out any new or interesting point with regard to either system. The English Philosopher most certainly shows at a disadvantage in the tone in which he criticises the writings of Descartes: and the materialistic tendency which underlies his sensationalism is strongly accentuated. He remarks\* that this doubting is not at all new, and that Descartes should not be credited with much originality in his treatise,† to which Descartes responds that he is not careful about originality, and that he is justified in doubting in order to try and find a basis of certainty, as a doctor is in studying disease for the sake of endeavouring to find a

Their  
correspondence

\* *Descartes. Oeuvres (Cousin) I, p. 466 ff.*

† He calls attention to the universal scepticism professed by some of the Greeks: but there is just as much absence of mere originality in the positive part of Descartes' system, for he had been anticipated by Augustine, Occam, and Campanella. *Ueberweg. Grundriss, iii, 52.*

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remedy. The accusation next urged is that he substantiates a mere action of the mind and argues from there being intellection, to his being an intelligence: and the substantiation of the action of taking a walk is introduced to point the absurdity: but Descartes argues forcibly that there is no true parallel. The only other point raised which is worth attention, is one as to the nature of the thinking principle. Hobbes argues that the truth of *Cogito ergo sum* merely arises from the impossibility of conceiving any act without its subject, a thinking without a thinking being, or for that matter walking without a walking being: but from all analogy of other known human actions, it would seem that a thing that thinks is material, "*car les sujets de tous les actes semblent etre seulement entendus sous une raison corporelle ou sous une raison de matiere.*" The answer lies in a distinction between mere body and a metaphysical substance. But such controversies as these seem seldom to give rise to satisfactory results, or to have much influence on the opinions of the correspondents. The relation between the two has been already discovered in their respective writings. Hobbes expounded a system above which Descartes had already risen, but in his statement he was in all probability considerably helped by the author who had passed



beyond his premisses and discarded his conclusions.

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[*Erdmann. Grundriss, ii, p. 76.*]

§ 28. Erdmann gives an interesting account of the natural course of reaction from Descartes to the realistic systems which followed, and which were principally developed in England and France. The sceptics and mystics of this period maintained the opinion that the human reason needs help in order to reach the discovery of truth. Though Glanville and More might assert that this help was to be obtained from God, the popular mind was more easily fascinated by a philosophy which derived it from the external world.

Joseph  
Glanville's  
depreciation of  
human  
faculties

So far as Glanville had any influence on the development of English philosophy, it was in this direction—of depreciating human reason and thus aiding the very opponents whom he endeavoured to refute by a process which rendered his own position more difficult. He depreciates human knowledge, while he rests his positive argument on the certainty of mathematical knowledge, of 'Divine Principles,' and of causality.\* Intellectual truths are arbitrarily selected and opposed to all

\* *Scopsis Scientifica* (1665), pp. 145 and 182.

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other knowledge which is said to be quite uncertain: but the question why these should be excepted comes with considerable force.

was a polemic,

His principal work is written with the double view of exposing the Aristoteleans like Digby, and exhibiting the uncertainty of our knowledge since it is derived from the senses. From the various defects in our senses and from other causes of error, he tries to prove that the conception of the world as a self-guided machine is not justified by the conditions of human knowledge: and in this he has special reference to the followers of Hobbes.

full of praise of  
Descartes,

The influence of Descartes is extremely marked throughout the treatise, and his name appears on almost every page, with the highest commendation. Cartesian philosophy is to be known till the end of time, and it furnishes the only exception to the general condemnation which the author pronounces in the *Apology for Philosophy*: for (since Descartes) it would seem that all philosophy is not to be branded with the apostolic epithet of "vain," even as some women may be exempt from that of "silly." Possibly, too, Glanville's exception of divine and mathematical principles from the general uncertainty would have been justified on Cartesian grounds—as clear and distinct to the Under-

standing: and he may have considered that the deduction of the validity of the senses was not satisfactory. But the treatise being a polemic and not a positive attempt to establish popular opinions on a firm basis, does not explain the author's position on this point. It was also no part of his plan to criticise Descartes, for his work is written for the general public, not for the students of continental philosophy; and he explains that the Method is extremely good but quite impracticable for ordinary people: "it requiring such [a free, sedate, and intent minde as "may be is no where found but among the "Platonick Ideals."\* Still in spite of all his admiration, he points out clearly the weaknesses in the system. The "striking of "divers filaments on the Brain"† does not give him much help in understanding sensation, nor do the "Spirits demanding re-entrance "into the Brain," help him about memory. The explanations of the continuity of matter are equally unsatisfactory, and the old difficulties about motion are re-stated and shown to be still unsolved. Other references occur: the mind "impressed like wax by Education"‡ is here mentioned, and there is a curious Cartesian statement, about light existing apart

but with some criticisms;

\* *Scepis Scientifica*, p. 56. † *Ib.*, p. 22. ‡ *Ib.*, p. 95.

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from the sun and stars, which serves as an illustration of our ignorance of the efficiency of secondary causes.

it paved the way for

For the general course of Philosophy the work of Glanville is quite unimportant: but it is the only English specimen of a one-sided Cartesianism. It was written definitely in an orthodox interest, and yet marks a step in the progress which English thought was taking towards the scepticism of Hume.

[*J. Tulloch. Rational Theology in the Seventeenth Century, II.*]

the Cambridge Platonists who form a strong contrast to Descartes,

§ 29. The work of Glanville consisted in the depreciation of human intellect; and that of the Cambridge Platonists supplemented it, by finding the source of truth in an Eternal Mind, existing apart from the human one. Their speculations were rather as to the objective basis of truth than as to the subjective criterion of certainty: and their position can therefore be readily contrasted with that of Descartes. They found the necessity of an intelligence beyond us: he found certainty in the intelligence in us: they could not pass from eternal and immutable morality to morality in man: he could not find an objective basis for what was subjectively clear and distinct: many years were to pass before the two could be reconciled, and men could

recognise an objective Thinking Principle which is present in the individual.

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At that time the two were set in their greatest possible antagonism: the Cambridge Platonists desired to prove a spiritual world which pervaded the visible one: and they desired to find traces of it in all phenomena. The Cartesian was satisfied with finding the immediate proof of spiritual existence in his own clear consciousness, and had no need of farther witness. Thus we find, that while both maintained an intelligent principle—it was evidenced for the Platonist by a soul of the world, but for the Cartesian by his individual thinking consciousness.

From this starting point we see how the various minor antagonisms sprang up. The idea of a purely mechanical explanation of the physical world was wholly repudiated by the Platonist; it was the direct denial of the soul in the world, and of the evidence for spiritual existence. Again, the hard and fast line which the Cartesian drew between spirit and matter was most repugnant to the Platonist; for if spirit were so utterly incomparable with matter, how could there be a conception of it as capable of influencing matter? On these two points then, a controversy sprang up—the mechanical explanation of the world, and the nature of the soul.

in their  
explanation of  
the world

and of the  
nature of the  
soul.

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Neo-Platonic  
Naturalism

It is easy to see the position which must be assigned to this school: it is still the philosophy of a Natural Soul, and is singularly destitute of any recognition of Consciousness: and while Bacon represents the atomistic form of that doctrine, Cudworth and More are as closely related to the neo-Platonic. With the latter especially, Marsilius Ficinus had great influence, and it was probably through such writers that his attention was directed to Plotinus. We can thus trace the links by which the Cambridge thinkers were connected with the Florentine Academy. The leading idea of their philosophy was certainly prae-cartesian and could not be readily reconciled with the system of Descartes: but to follow out the marked influence which he exerted upon these men, we must consider the various members of the school separately.

Ralph  
Cudworth

Ralph Cudworth must be taken first as the most typical representative of the rest, and the only one whose work has, to some extent, survived. His clear and well-balanced mind was also less open to enthusiasm than More, and he does not seem to have been carried away by the strong assertion of intelligent existence which was given by Descartes, but to have seen clearly that, in the form in which it was put, it rendered no support to his own belief. At any rate the criticisms of Descartes

in the *Intellectual System* are purely antagonistic; and if Hobbes is the opponent at whom his attacks are principally aimed he does not regard the Cartesian philosophy with a very friendly eye: indeed its upholders "are not near so good theists as Anaxagoras."<sup>\*</sup>

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It is the first of the two points of attack which is more prominent in Cudworth's treatment: he has a lengthy classification of all possible sorts of atomism and atheism, and decides that Descartes was the reviver of the Pythagorean atomism which was by no means necessarily atheistic, in as much as it admitted intelligent existences: but the form in which Descartes presented it was to his mind very much more open to censure than the older philosophy had been, in as much as it removed the basis of theism while verbally upholding it.† It seemed to leave no room for final causes, nor for the "plastic nature" which is Cudworth's leading idea. In proving the existence of this, he dissents from the Cartesian explanation of many phenomena: more especially is this the case in regard to the formation of the foetus, the action of the heart,‡ and the theory that animals were mere machines.§ Indeed this last example serves a double purpose: it is not only an argument

attacks the mechanical explanation of the world

\* *R. Cudworth. Intellectual System, Lond., 1845, II, 54.*  
 † *Ib., I, 275.* ‡ *Ib., I, 221 and 248.* § *Ib., III, 419.*

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against the mechanical physiologists, since they cannot explain it, but it is used as an illustration of unconscious spiritual action, and therefore tells in favour of the supposition of an indwelling spirit or indwelling spirits, which are active but not capable of conscious thought.

and criticises  
the doubting  
of Descartes.

There is one curious case where Cudworth appears as the defender of common consciousness against Descartes: he repudiates the initial scepticism of Descartes, and challenges him to shew that there can be any certainty for those who regard the Deity as an arbitrary power; it will also be impossible to prove the goodness of God\* if our senses can deceive us when they are rightly used. With all his erudition Cudworth failed to see that even as there can only be one reason for a right action, so there can only be one ground of certainty. He had not thought through the *Method* and *Meditations*, but only read about the thinking of Descartes; and thus he missed the distinction on which the whole question turned.

Cudworth may be taken as representing the general position of this school towards the Cartesian philosophy: but there had been a considerable change of opinion in the minds of some other members of it, as may be seen

\* R. Cudworth. Intellectual System, III, 31,



from the writings of More, who at first expressed the very highest admiration for the philosophy, but gradually altered his opinion. The steps of this change are traced in Principal Tulloch's extremely interesting work: but there is some slight difficulty in seeing how such ardent enthusiasm was aroused at first. It can only be explained from considering the course of More's own personal convictions.

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Henry More's  
scepticism

He appears to have fallen into a sceptical frame of mind during his undergraduate days, but rather as to the reality of his own existence, than as to a divine intelligence. His doubting is somewhat parallel to Descartes', and he never neglects the recognised duties of morality; but he does not face his difficulties as the French thinker did, and the position which he finally reaches is by no means a firm one. It is the mere outcome of feeling; the fruit of the opinion which pervades all theosophic writings from the Fourth Gospel downwards, that those who would "know of the doctrine" must do the divine will. This identification of moral purity and intellectual attainment is another of the thoughts which are common to the Florentines and the Cambridge school; though the *Theologia Germanica*, which has been a favourite with so many different minds, was doubtless of influence in turning his thoughts in this

set at rest by  
means of  
mystical feeling

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somewhat like  
Boehme's.

direction. How far he was affected by other mystical writings of the same sort it is impossible to say. Ueberweg classes him as a follower of Boehme, though this seems too strong in the face of his own adverse judgment on the writings of this theosopher.\* By this moral resolution to purify his soul from vices he obtained a more satisfactory position and was freed by feeling—not by thought from the ἀπορία of “knowing not who nor what nor whence he was.” It seems not improbable that while he was in this state, he was attracted and delighted by Descartes’ speculations, which made his own existence

\* The tract is mentioned by Tulloch: I have not been able to see the work itself but only extracts from it, which were republished by J. W. Jäger, of Tübingen. The question whether Boehme was divinely inspired is at once answered in the negative, on the ground that if he had he could not have been guilty of such misinterpretations of parts of the Revelations as More conceived him to have made. He was rather to be regarded as an enthusiast than a maniac. More’s feeling probably was that he had exposed the truth to ridicule by the apparently absurd form in which he expressed it. More and Boehme both drank from the same source, Italian neo-Platonism; but the leanings of Boehme towards Alchemy may have been distasteful to More. But, besides this, the similarity of truth for all generations was also one of the principal doctrines of the Cambridge school, and was necessarily connected with their belief in an Intelligence who impressed ideas on the human mind: but, on the other hand, the central point of Boehme’s system was the doctrine of the Trinity, a belief which was certainly not of early origin: so that to make knowledge centre in this, was to deny true knowledge to many of the race. This was, according to More, the principal error of the Teutonic theosopher: though he was also at fault in not distinguishing between the mere coating of the Mosaic philosophy and the pith in which the truth lay. Like Cudworth, More was scarcely a sympathetic critic, and in all probability may have been considerably indebted to the shoemaker of Gorlitz. The system he condemned was to a great extent a figurate representation of his own doctrines; of the world as an exhalation of spirit, and of seven principles embodied in the stars and metals, by whose action the whole was carried on. More was occupied with the nature of Spirit in itself, not as expressing itself in the world, while the latter problem was of interest to Boehme.—*De Signaturâ Rerum*, c. 8, 9.

as perspicuous to his Understanding as it had previously been to feeling. It was in the first flush of this enthusiasm that More was constrained to write of Cartesianism as he did.

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But even in these days he saw a considerable difference between his own views and those of Descartes as to the nature of spirit: and on this point he expresses divergence at once. Spirit and matter are at the two poles of existence with Descartes, but for More they are intimately connected, since spirit permeates matter. Why should we deny extension of all spirit: indeed must not all spirit and all existence be extended though not all possessed of figure?<sup>\*</sup> At a later time, he suggested it might have a fourth dimension†,

Criticises  
Descartes on  
the nature of  
Spirit,

\* Letters to Descartes, &c., Works, Ed. 1662, p. 62 and 73.

† In the *Enchiridion Metaphysicon*. This is also shortly stated in a letter to John Norris, who is best known as the partial anticipator of Berkeley. Several of More's letters are appended to the second edition of Norris' *Theory of Love*, London, 1694. In the instance of a piece of wax an ell long, and afterwards reduced to the form of a globe, suppose no bigger than a nutmeg, "what seems lost in Longitude, it is compensated in Latitude and Profundity. So I say of the contraction of a created Spirit, suppose from a Seraphical Form, (for we must take some figure or other) of half a yard Diameter to a Sphere of a quarter, by a retraction of itself into as much as an *Ubi* (eight times less than before), for as much as nothing of its Substance is annihilated thereby, nothing of its dimensions is, but what seems to be lost in Longitude, Latitude and Profundity, is gained or compensated in *Essential Spissitude*, which is the *Fourth Dimension* I stand for, that it is in *Rerum Natura*, which, though it is more particularly belonging to the contraction of one and the same Spirit into itself, is also truly found when any Two Substances occupy the same *Ubi*: as suppose a Spirit occupied a *Cube* of Matter of such a *Side* or *Diameter*, The Spirit and the *Cube* have their proper Dimensions each of them in the same *Ubi*, and therefore are an instance of a real *essential Spissitude* in that *Ubi*. And if there were another Spirit in like manner occupying the same *Cube*, there would be a still greater *essential Spissitude*. And he that will not grant this essential *Spissitude*, he must either list himself with that ridiculous sect of the Nullibists (Cartesians), or that wretched sect of the Materialists or Atheists." p. 132.

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which he  
regards as  
extended.

by which Spirit was distinguished from impenetrable extended existences.

The change in tone may be noticed between his first letter to Descartes where he declares himself an ardent disciple,—his letter to Claudius Clesier, where he is somewhat colder, though still holding that this philosophy is a principal defence against atheism and only inferior to the platonic,—his letter to Cudworth, (*vir clarissimus*,) in which he repudiates the charge of atheism against Descartes,—and the epistle prefixed to the Dialogues, in which he is decidedly opposed to the spirit of the Philosophy. The grounds of this change can, I think, be clearly seen if we recollect that the central thought of More's system was that of a divine pervading soul: that he had never doubted of this, and that Descartes had merely given intellectual clearness to his perception of self. His first desire was to unite the two systems into one in which the Cartesian should supplement the Platonic philosophy, and be like the body to the soul. But it gradually dawned on him that no such harmony was possible: the mechanical theory which had repelled him in its application to animals was quite irreconcilable with belief in the continual action on matter of a pervading spirit, and the proof of the existence of spirit seemed to More to depend on the recognition of this

continued action as an external fact: it was on this account that he was so heartily at one with Glanville in the investigation of apparitions:\* though it was strange that an author who depreciated the testimony of the senses so much as the latter had done should consider that the reality of spiritual existence could only be evidenced by the phenomena of sense.

More acknowledges his dependence on Descartes in other places, *e.g.*, his treatment of the passions† was founded on it: but enough has been said to explain their relative positions, and minor agreements are of less importance than in cases where the enumeration of them serves as a help to delineating the general position. The influence of this group of writers on subsequent English thought is quite inappreciable. They sum up and complete the period of revival of the past, when the new feeling was awakening but had not yet been clearly apprehended. They still look to antiquity for light, and their writing is disfigured by wearisome digressions on by-gone controversies. Their lives were too much those of recluses to enable them to know how far they were from taking that leading place in English thought which More desired to attain. Some of their

Influence of  
the school.

\* More's Preface to *Glanville's Sadducismus Triumphatus*.

† Dedication to *Treatise on Immortality of Soul*.

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discussions were very mystical: Peter Sterry's *Discourse of the Freedom of the Will*\* has a greater affinity with the German Mystics than More exhibits: but he too missed the solution of the problem. Freedom is not to be found by a mere sinking of our own individuality into the Divine Being, but in the self-determining legislation of a Will that exists in every rational.

Bacon's new method had as yet borne but little fruit, for he had not clearly conceived what was the true object of philosophic study: no change was effected by him: the Cambridge Platonists could not inspire their countrymen with an interest in a philosophy that had had its day. It was from another source that the living impulse came. The study of Descartes became common in the Universities about the same time that that of Bacon did; but it was the French thinker who stirred the mind of Locke to the consideration of the Human Understanding.

\* London, 1675. In this appears the conception of Free Will which is most accordant with the other views of the School: though some of them may have considered that phenomenal freedom was a good additional proof of the reality of the spiritual world,—and Cudworth was also biassed by opposition to Hobbes. Norris's lines are worth comparing:—

“Free Will itself were better lost,  
“Than ever to revolt from thee again.”

—*Theory of Ideal World*, I, 174.

## V.

### JOHN LOCKE.

[*K. Fischer.* Bacon, pp. 545—693. *T. H. Green.* Introduction to Hume's Treatise on the Human Understanding, I.]

§ 30. The philosophy of Locke has been so obviously the dominant mode of thinking in this country, and has been consciously followed by such great English writers that it must be of special importance to endeavour to determine accurately the influence of Descartes on his mind: an error in regard to this would be an error in regard to his influence on the course of English speculation. The problem is one of extreme difficulty; for Locke harmonised so closely with the common culture of his time, and rose so little above it, that there is much difficulty in specifying definitely the quarter from which his ideas were drawn. Nor is this all: we find a certain amount of connection between Bacon and Locke and Hobbes and Locke, and there seems at first sight a considerable fitness in looking on the later writer as a mere development of an older vein of purely native thought. This line is adopted by Kuno Fischer: and if we look merely at the agreements between the two authors we shall find that he really makes a strong case.

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Relation of Locke to predecessors has been variously described.

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Alleged  
dependence on  
Bacon,

He points out that Locke follows out a problem which was hinted at, and left unanswered by Bacon: and we cannot now say (as was maintained in regard to Hobbes) that the problem is solved in a manner which Bacon would have repudiated, though he would have found some of the results of the *Essay* inconsistent with his own philosophy. "Bacon himself was chiefly interested in the question, How does experience arrive at invention? This enquiry stands at the foreground of his philosophy; the *Novum Organum* is devoted to it. In the background arises the question, How do we arrive at experience? How does experience result from the human mind?"\* Thus it appears that Bacon rendered the problem definite, or suggested it for Locke to solve. But besides this he had given some help towards answering it. The "*tabula rasa*" was a clear deduction from his adjurations to clear the mind of preconceived notions, even if he had given no more definite hints at it by speaking of an "*intellectus abrasus*" or of "*expurgata abrasa aequata mentis arena.*"† There is also a sort of agreement in the opinion that words are *par excellence* the source of errors, with Bacon's tirades against "*idola fori.*"‡

\* Fischer's Bacon (*Oxford*), p. 436. † Fischer, p. 546. ‡ *Ib.* p. 593.



The hints that are given as to the method of science are purely Baconian, and the coincidence even reaches to the illustrations,\* while the doctrine of "forms"† might have supplied many hints for the primary and secondary qualities.

It would not be difficult to allege the direct descent of Locke from Hobbes, on somewhat similar grounds. The latter had concluded that sensible qualities were in the mind, not in the thing:‡ this is a very different sensism, and we have a clear suggestion of the psychological problem in the *Essay*, while many of Locke's opinions, e.g. the suggestion that the soul might be material, harmonise far more closely with Hobbes than with Bacon.

On the other hand, Mr. G. H. Lewes finds a direct descent from Descartes. The author of the *Discourse* had laid great stress on innate ideas, and Locke takes up the question, Are there innate ideas? and examines it with all the light that negative instances and such appliances can throw on the subject. Here is a third starting point found for him, and it will not be difficult to bring forward a sufficient mass of direct divergences to show that Locke was consciously aiming at refuting Descartes.

\* *Fischer*, 627, *Ess.* 12, sec. 12.

† *Ellis*, *Intro.*, p. 43.

‡ *Lange*, p. 248.

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Other  
influences

Are we then to say that Locke was a follower of Bacon and Hobbes, but negatively influenced by Descartes? Broad statements of this sort are never critically accurate, and become almost ludicrous in view of the divergences between Locke and Bacon as to the bounds of science, and between Locke and the political and ethical system which was an inherent part of the philosophy of Hobbes: not to mention the almost total absence of traces of conscious dependence.

One may enumerate a perfect medley of possible external influences, besides those three which have been indicated. The scientific discoveries of Newton and Boyle could not have been unfruitful in his mind; the rational theologians of the seventeenth century may have had much influence on the deistic tendency he exhibits. But we must not forget that Locke's philosophy is a system: though by no means free from inconsistencies, it has an internal ground which governs the exposition of the whole. It would be absurd to regard his *Essay* as a mere store of shreds plucked at random from his neighbours, especially when his writings contain so few definite references to Bacon, Hobbes, or the others whom he is supposed to follow. We must look at the internal principle which underlies this philosophy; and

this will explain its relation to others more truly.

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§ 31. We are aware that Locke came into contact with Descartes, and we can find the true starting point of his Essay by considering the weakness of that system as it appeared to the English mind, *e.g.* to Hobbes. Descartes apparently was guided by mere internal subjective clearness: "whatever he could clearly "conceive was true:" this representation of his doctrine has been repeated even in our time.\* But it was obvious that to get at truth we must have something more fixed than mere subjective opinion: and much of subsequent philosophy is but a struggle to answer this question—What is the objective basis of truth? Locke sought an answer to this question and found it, as we might have expected, in the communication of the senses. This was almost necessarily the first suggestion that would occur: the validity of sense-knowledge had been maintained by Descartes, it was the one point on which Bacon, Hobbes, and Descartes could all agree, and therefore it was that the direct testimony of the senses, when pure and undistorted, came to be regarded as the fundamental truth. It was at this point that the mind was in perfect

Starting from a weakness in Descartes' system,

he found an objective basis for knowledge

in the immediate testimony of his senses.

\* *J. S. Mill. Logic, v, 3, sec. 3.*

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Application of  
this test to  
dreams and

harmony with reality; in sensuous opinion we have the only possible foundation of all true knowledge.

illustrations of  
his constant  
appeal to it.

An interesting illustration of this is found in Locke's treatment of the phenomena of dreams, which played such an important part in Descartes' doubt of the validity of his senses. Locke finds sufficient evidence as to whether the impressions of dreams are real or not, by appealing to the testimony of other senses: Descartes would have found no certainty in an accumulation of uncertain testimonies, and must find an absolute starting point in internal consciousness before his philosophy can take a positive direction. But with Locke the sense of touch may corroborate the sense of sight\* even if a comparison of two occasions of seeing† is not sufficient to establish the distinction. Many other cases might be brought forward where the same distinction occurs between the two writers. "The conformity between our simple ideas "and the existence of real things," not an internal intuition of the state of the mind,‡ is the primary element of certainty from which all other certainty is derived by Locke. The description of intuition as the knowledge that "the idea we receive from an external object

\* Ess. iv, 11, sec. 8.      + Ess. iv, 2, sec. 14.

† Ess. iv, 4, sec. 1.

“is in our minds,”\* is another instance of his bringing sensuous opinion into prominence as the criterion of certainty. But in no case is it more strongly exhibited than in the proof of his own existence, where Locke affirms that “in every act of sensation, reasoning, or “thinking we are conscious to ourselves of “our own being.”† The very order in which the appeal is summarised is characteristic of the difference between Locke and the author who repelled a similar statement when made by Gassendi.

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The truth of sensuous opinion is the central point of the philosophy of Locke. From this it starts in two parallel directions: it is psychological, and there is an endeavour to show how other mental phenomena have sprung from this element: again it is metaphysical, and must point out the amount of certainty that belongs to other kinds of knowledge. The two sides are strictly correlative. And this appears to be the solution of the controversy between Hartenstein and Fischer.‡ Indeed the double problem has presented itself to all writers on empirical psychology. How is the so-called necessity of any general truths to be treated or explained, when the true certainty is in particular cases of know-

The double problem which confronts him

\* Ess. iv, 2, sec. 14. † Ess. iv, 9, sec. 3. ‡ Fischer, 632-4.

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ledge? In fact, how is Thought to be derived from Sense? what is the process of this *generatio aequivoca*?

as the apologist  
for ordinary  
thinking,

Locke is morbidly anxious to give a good support to ordinary thinking: a better certainty than he had found in school metaphysics: he wants to put it all on one clear basis—that basis he finds in sensuous opinion. The next step is to prove that there is no knowledge which does not reach us in this way. He has no criterion for innate ideas, and if human knowledge is to be perfectly valid he must explain away all other elements besides the ones that are certain. Here is the psychological problem of the first book—and the most marked opposition to Descartes. Again, he must prove that the sensuous opinion is a sufficient germ from which to derive all other ideas: and this is the psychological problem of book II. The means of communicating knowledge, or knowledge as expressed in propositions must be next discussed, and the logical problem is the subject of book III. The certainty of the different kinds of knowledge, thus obtained and thus expressed, can only be treated in book IV: though this discussion is so long deferred, the object of the *Essay* is purely metaphysical; but from the nature of the answer which is given to the main question, the form that it takes is, for the

and the  
arrangement of  
his solution.

most part, psychological. Locke's question is not so much, What is the origin of knowledge?—as, How are other ideas connected with the only certain ones—sensuous opinions?

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From this point of view we can see that Locke did not devote himself to a mere mixing of the introspective method of Descartes with the same positive knowledge which satisfied Bacon, and still more that he was not impelled by a mere reaction against the doctrine of innate ideas. Whether he fully entered into the spirit of Descartes or not, he detected a weak point which was manifest in post-Cartesian philosophy. He passed beyond the system by looking for certainty, not in subjective intuition, but in objective reality—and that reality seemed to him to be given in sensuous opinion.

Locke's  
relation to  
Descartes

From this central position we can trace other divergences: Descartes established the validity of the senses, and had in consequence to accept their testimony without reserve—Locke was taught by the introspective method of Descartes to distinguish more readily into the elements of sense, and thus to surmount some of the difficulties which arise from a faith in our senses as God-directed witnesses of reality. By a more accurate psychological analysis too, he laid the foundation for the

and his  
divergence  
from him

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ethical teaching of Shaftesbury by which Hobbes was refuted.

and from Bacon.

From the same point of view we can see the true extent of his divergence from Bacon. The pervading thought of that system is naturalism,—one great truth pervades nature and is to be received into the human mind by all avenues. We are to rise from sense to higher and higher truths,—from physical sequences to teleology: all is one body of knowledge. But Locke must distinguish. It is only the foundation that is certain, the superstructure gets more and more flimsy the higher we build: it is further removed from sense. Revealed knowledge, which Bacon is willing to accept, is only of value for Locke in so far as it agrees with the knowledge of God which he finds out by searching in sensuous opinion.

The argument  
against Innate  
Ideas

§ 32. The first book of the *Essay* is the negative part, and is devoted to proving that there are no other sources from which knowledge can be derived than the ones he admits,—sensation and reflection, or external and internal sense. Throughout the whole of this discussion we see the influence of Descartes very strongly exhibited. He had laid stress on thinking consciousness as the characteristic of mind: and had maintained that truths must be in the mind all along, because they



are in the consciousness of the adult. His sharply defined dualism forced him to this conclusion: Locke meets him by asserting that these truths are not consciously present in certain minds, at certain times—they are not in consciousness and therefore not in the mind.

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The very form of his argument against the possibility of truths being “imprinted” on the mind recalls forcibly Descartes’ favourite image of impressing on wax:<sup>\*</sup> and in the whole controversy it is plain that Locke refutes Descartes with a weapon which he had himself furnished,—the recognition of conscious thinking as the essence of mind. If any truths are innate so must all others be, for they are all alike in consciousness: and since they are not consciously present in the minds of children and idiots, they cannot be in the mind at all. A farther reference to Descartes may be discovered in the remarks on the idea of God, with which he concludes. This was the one on which Descartes had more especially dwelt, and Locke feels that “if the idea of God cannot be proved innate no other can be supposed innate.”†

has a great deal of reference to Descartes,

If we were considering the effect of English philosophy on continental thinkers, this point

and had an influence on Leibnitz.

\* Essay i, 2, sec. 5; 3, sec. 23. *Descartes*. Med. p. 51.

† Ess. i, 4, sec. 8-17.

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would be an important one as shewing the side from which Leibnitz attacked Locke. He found a germ in the mind which was not in consciousness, but whose self-development gives rise to knowledge. Descartes said, Some of what is consciously known is innate: Locke, What is unknown under some circumstances cannot be innate: Leibnitz, What is innate may become known.\*

The argument against the constant activity of the mind.

A conscious reply to Cartesianism is, I think, also to be detected in the first chapter of the second book, in which the discussion on the nature of mind is continued. If the essence of mind, without which it cannot exist, is thinking, we shall expect to find it furnished with thoughts to start with; this Locke had denied in book I: but we should also expect to find thinking going on constantly, if it is the attribute of mind, as the Cartesians held. The instances of sleep which Locke alleges appear to be perfectly conclusive in regard to the precise point raised: conscious activity does not continue at times when the mind is not receiving new sensations, and thus an additional confirmation is given to the theory that the mind is dependent on sensation since it brings nothing with it, and is wholly inactive when not stimulated by new sensations. The

\* *Fischer's Leibnitz*: Geschichte II, 537—548.

hard and fast dualism which opposed animal life and thinking, as on opposite sides of the sphere of existence, must have been sorely puzzled to prove the presence of a thinking substance under conditions like these.

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§ 33. In the second book we come on the constructive part of his philosophy, where he endeavours to explain the manner in which human knowledge is derived from the element with which he starts. The success of the attempt is hardly of any very great interest with regard to the problem of the influence of Descartes; but a few words may be required to justify the opinion expressed above that Sensuous Consciousness is the dominant thought in the system.

In the process of forming ideas,

If we try to enter into the spirit of the philosophy we shall find that the present act of sensation is the fundamental necessity for the growth of ideas: most of them are brought into the mind by the examination of this, others may be obtained from internal sense instead, (ideas of sensation and reflection,) some few from internal sense alone. The Understanding discusses and re-arranges the materials thus supplied, but its part is meagre: Hobbes had looked on logic as computation, and Locke made the Understanding merely computational. It subtracts (abstracts) and adds

the Understanding merely computes

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(compounds) elements which are given by sense, and its chief function seems to be this arithmetical one. It contributes no new elements besides those involved in the data of sense;\* as perceiving, it is a mere receptivity which takes cognizance of "motions made in some parts of the body."

the primary  
sensuous  
elements

The definition of sensation with which Locke starts contains the germs of all his confusions. Sensation "is such an impression or motion made in some part of the body as produces some perception in the understanding."†

In this primary element we have implied (a) an external cause, (b) a perceptive mind, (c) a material accompaniment of the "idea." The two first are implied in any act of conscious sensation; the third is closely connected with the ordinary mechanical explanations of animal life which occur in Descartes, and of mental life after the manner of Hobbes: it has also the advantage of furnishing Locke with metaphors, by the help of which he could conceal the real difficulty of bridging over the gulf between motions in the bodily organs and perceptions in the mind. With the full energy of his attention concentrated on one sensation he thinks into it a reference

into which his  
mind first  
conveys ideas  
of relation  
which he  
pretends to  
gather from  
them.

\* See Appendix.

† Ess. ii, 1, sec. 23.

to a permanent self, and a reference to an external cause, and promptly concludes that by adding each of these elements to itself when it occurs again, he can aggregate complex ideas of greater or less abstruseness. But he does not analyse the sensation itself; that is regarded as ultimate: he takes acts of conscious sensation as fundamental elements which afford almost all the furniture of the mind while their own conditions are neglected. In sensation too, he finds the one certain element: but it is not necessary to look on single impressions which come and go as the only certain testimony to existence. The play of sensations by different senses is enough to keep up the current of conscious states; just as one sense confirms the evidence of others, so one may continue the testimony of others: and this life of conscious sensation gives the necessary repetition of similar elements which can be added into one or another aggregate, and called complex ideas.

It is beside our present purpose to criticise the process by which he believes that he can derive various ideas; but the fourth book brings out very strongly the central thought of the system in treating of the validity of knowledge. There is only one point where knowledge is valid, and there it is not know-

The sensuous  
element as  
alone valid.

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ledge at all as he defines it; for being an adequate representation of existence, not a mere agreement of ideas, it is a "very certain assurance which may pass for knowledge." Behind it lie the things which cause it, and whose real essences we never can know, (just because they are real,) but of which we form nominal essences by computing successive sensations and acquiring notional knowledge. But the more the mind works, the farther are we from the possibility of reaching actual truth; and general statements about physical phenomena are decidedly doubtful: till at length we rise to mathematical judgments where we have perfect knowledge, because the objects are never actual. Both from the psychological and metaphysical sides, conscious sensation is the centre of the system, and conscious sensation is a thought that could only arise in consequence of the labours of Descartes.

Descartes' may be compared with Locke's proof of the existence of a God,

§ 34. In no case is Locke's divergence from Descartes more marked than in his proof of the existence of God. There is throughout a conscious reference to Cartesianism; and in some passages he appears to rise to a conception of an Eternal Thinker which would be inconsistent with the general run of his system. Mr. Green\* has laid considerable

\* *Hume*. Introd. secs. 146—155.

stress on these Cartesian elements, and has by so doing translated Locke's argument into the one *a contingencia mundi*. I have been unable to see that this is the true interpretation of the Lockian proof. Both when read in the light of Locke's personal career and in that of the religious position which was assumed by his followers, it seems more satisfactory to regard this reasoning as almost typical of Locke's ordinary way of treating such problems. There was a certain conception in the ordinary consciousness of an Eternal Being—not a mere everlasting—and an Infinite Being—not merely everywhere present. It was a difficulty to show whence this conception was derived. He builds it up so far as he can out of the elements at his command; and having done his best, he assumes the difficulty has been overcome, and boldly uses language which would be appropriate of the God of ordinary consciousness, but is not applicable to the God whose nature has been discussed by Locke. From the very beginning of the *Essay* this difficulty was looming in the distance: the idea is not innate, as we learn in the first book, and in different passages we meet with hints as to the derivation of the idea, but the various points can be noted with sufficient clearness by a reference to the chapter in the fourth

such as is  
conceived by  
ordinary  
consciousness.

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book on our knowledge of the Existence of God. In considering the validity of the belief we find a practical summary of the method by which the belief is derived.

The belief is  
rested by  
Locke on

It depends on our knowledge of our own existence: and this again depends on sensations, such as the feeling of hunger or pain: for by reflection on our states of conscious sensation we abstract the idea of a conscious subject. In another passage\* we learn that examining any other existence will serve the purpose as well, and it seems that it is mere existence which is to be accounted for by a reference to a cause. Now this cause is the power to produce existence, like the power of fire to melt gold: that is to say, it is the efficient power of the antecedent condition rather than the ground which accounts for our existence.

our inability to  
conceive a first  
event:

We are then simply led to a regress from existence as at present known, existence of thought and existence of matter, to a first event—the creation of these—which must have involved the existence of some one to produce what is. It is purely negative, an inference to the existence of some one from our inability to conceive a first event: and round this proof of the existence of a Being

\* Ess. ii, 17, sec. 17.



before the world, he gathers characteristics of this Being drawn by consideration of the characteristics of His works. He must be a thinking Being, because we think: and though Locke labours to shew that it does not follow in the same way that he must be an extended Being, the proof is hardly satisfactory. In fact, Locke's whole mode of treatment of the word 'infinite,' shows that it would be natural for him to have adopted a purely materialistic theology. For we are told that infinite only refers to things that are quantitative:\* we cannot have infinite whiteness because there are no degrees of whiteness to add to one another; we can have an infinite idea of space because we can go on adding bits of space together. In any sense but this, the word is only figurative: and Locke seems to prefer the mere superlatives, most knowing and most powerful, as glozing over the difficulty he felt in making use of the other word.

We thus find that the idea of God is derived by reflection, that it is a complex idea made by adding infinity to various of our powers, and that its validity is established by the necessity for an absolute antecedent to all existence.†

It is needless to point out the weak points

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and be adds  
the attributes  
of thinking  
(but not of  
extension)

and of infinity.

The idea thus  
derived  
contrasted with  
ordinary belief

\* Ess. ii, 17, sec. 6.

† See Appendix, p. 184.

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here: that the idea thus explained does not coincide with the God of ordinary consciousness is evident. The indefinite multiplication of acts of knowing cannot legitimately give rise to the idea of an infinite knowing being—even if the separate acts could by themselves give rise to the knowledge of the human subject. The conception of God as an antecedent to all phenomena is as unthinkable as an infinite regress. From neither side do we get a true idea of a God who is infinite and eternal.

This is the end of Locke's attempt to explain how the mind was furnished with knowledge after allowing it no germs from which to develop it, but a sensuous consciousness in which the action of the mind could be traced, but from which he pretended to derive it. This proof is totally distinct from Descartes' statements of the ways by which the intuition of ordinary thought might be rendered clear. He had argued from the existence of an imperfect being to the existence of a perfect cause: from indubitable existence to its ground. Locke almost parodied the Cartesian doctrine when he argued from existence-in-general to an antecedent of existence, and with the help of his computing Understanding multiplied actual human powers into infinite divine ones.

After his criticism of innate ideas, he is

and with  
Descartes'  
proofs.

not at liberty to attach much weight to the existence of an idea of a perfect Being: or to the train of thought which Descartes followed out. But in the great difficulty into which he is thrown by the objection that he has proved matter and God co-eternal, he has recourse to it. His own mode of treatment serves him no longer, and the consciousness of spirit as eternal\* while matter is not, is put forward as the final argument. Here we have a definitely Cartesian element, and it may be difficult to decide whether this is introduced as a mere blind to public censure, by one who believed in the materiality of human minds, and, therefore, of the Universe; or, as I would prefer to think, as a way out of an unexpected difficulty, and without any consciousness that it involved an entire change of theory. I have heard the opinion mooted that in all this discussion, and in the various passages in which Locke refers to the existence of a Deity, he is merely forestalling the practice of the last leading representative of his school, and endeavouring by the manner of his writing to take away any grounds for invoking against him an *odium theologicum*. That there are suggestions of pure materialism in Locke, there can be no doubt; as of what

Was Locke sincere in these arguments?

\* Ess. iv, 10, sec. 18.

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future system are there not suggestions? but on the whole it seems to me that Locke was inclined to accept the God of ordinary consciousness (as given by revelation<sup>\*</sup>) and to try and show that he could justify the conception by sensation and reflection. In the chapter on Faith and Reason this position is pretty clearly brought out. Revealed truth is of great value, because apart from actuality, in the same way as moral and mathematical propositions are absolutely true. But for all practical purposes the light of reason and natural religion are sufficient; and no revelation is necessary. On the whole, however, Locke's treatise is evidential, for he seems to show that revealed religion can be substantiated by reason: though he is a friend from whom the orthodox may pray to be delivered, and is just at the point where the rationalistic apologist can hardly be distinguished from the rationalistic impugner of positive Christianity. The whole of the chapter bears a very close resemblance to Lord Herbert's writings, and the distinction is carefully drawn between the original revelation by which Paul heard unspeakable things, and the traditional of which reason must judge.

His rationalism  
and the English  
Deists.

His attempt leads directly to the school of

\* Third Letter to the Bishop of Worcester, *Ess. ii, 27 n.*

English deists who adhered to as much of the conception as could be substantiated for the Understanding, and repudiated historical Christianity. To the justifiers of historical Christianity from the light of nature the deists could only answer, Hast thou appealed unto Cæsar? unto Cæsar shalt thou go. The phases of English deism are admirably portrayed by Fischer, from the negative work of renouncing authority to the positive one of demonstrating the insufficiency of the *a posteriori* proofs from Miracles or Prophecies, in regard to the last of which they were greatly assisted by the desire of Whiston to make the facts become proofs of an orthodox theory, and his success in showing that they were not proofs as they stood.\*

§ 35. Locke's doctrine of the will is in perfect harmony with the rest of his philosophy. It reduces the mental faculties as before to merely computative ones, and makes the determination come from external impressions as reflected on. We are at liberty to act in accordance with the greatest uneasiness, as reflected on by our Understanding: we can act or not as we will and are therefore free, but we are not free to will. Error arises from miscalculation and inadvertency in reflecting

His doctrine of  
the will

\* Fischer's Bacon, 668 ff.

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and criticism of  
alleged  
indifferentism.

on the motives; the Hobbian doctrine is closely approached, though we have a sum of motives, not the last desire, determining the will. In sec. 76 (Ess. ii, 21) we have a direct reference to Cartesianism and a refutation of the theory of indifferentism of the will. Locke shows that there is no true freedom in an indifference which is antecedent to knowledge, and that it is really degrading liberty to place it in a state of darkness. The higher notion of rational freedom at which Descartes had arrived is not touched upon, while the weakness of the other view is exposed. The results of this Cartesian doctrine were indeed strange: one consequence of the degradation of human freedom to a mere indifference of choice was that Malebranche represented this liberty as a curse laid on man at the fall, not as the ground of hope for the restoration of his true nature. The sort of indifference which Locke allows as necessary to liberty does not perhaps throw much light on the controversy: my arm is indifferent and will move or not as I please: if it is paralysed or convulsively twitched, it is no longer indifferent, and therefore I am no longer free to move it. This may not show us the true nature of human liberty, but it is some help to have a refutation of indifferent choice; it is one step towards finding freedom in determination by rational motives.

There are a few other isolated passages where there is a criticism of Cartesian doctrines: *e. g.* II, 13, sec. 18, on the word substance. If the word substance is used in the same sense of God, the Ego, and Matter, may we not say that they are all modifications of one substance?—"a very harsh doctrine." Or if they do not possess a common nature, why should we give them the same name? If there are three ideas conveyed by the same word, it would be simpler to distinguish these ideas by having different names.

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The use of  
"substance".

The difference which he makes between clear and distinct\* is worth noticing, because it is so entirely different from the Cartesian one, while the same illustrations are used in explaining it. Clear ideas are with Locke those which are vivid to the imagination, as objects are clear to the senses; and distinct are those of which he has a notional comprehension, so as not to confuse them with others: Descartes had only used the illustration of sight to explain what he means by clearness in so far as it gives the idea of immediate presence: the object is clear to him, not because he can figure it, but because its immediate presence to his consciousness makes him certain of its existence. It is distinct,

"clear and  
distinct."\* *Ess.* II, 29, secs. 2, 4. *Princ.* I, 45. *Med.* III.

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not so much because he can define it, as because its qualities are also immediately present to his mind. What is a mere figure with Descartes is an explanation with Locke; and once more we find the senses as the arbiters of greatest clearness. Could Locke with his sensuous consciousness have had a clear idea of that which was the very type of clearness to Descartes—his own existence?

[*Lechler. Geschichte des englischen Deismus.*]

Clarke, &c. were connected with Locke, but not with continental Cartesians.

§ 36. Samuel Clarke and the other successors of Locke bear in many ways a decided resemblance to the continental successors of Descartes, and this has been pointed to as a case of dependence; but it appears to be extremely doubtful. They have a common parentage: they have all come under the influence of Descartes, but it reached Clarke through Locke: to Geulinx and Malebranche it came at first hand. And if we find them all working at the same problem,—the direction of the thinking Understanding to the solution of theological and moral questions,—we shall find that the answers which are given are extremely different, and that Clarke's is the mere outcome of the Lockian philosophy. He doubtless did differ considerably from Locke on some points—notably about the possible materiality of the soul—and from



Toland and others who were more decided followers of Locke; but it was the boast of the Boyle Lecturers that they refuted their adversaries with their own weapons, and these weapons had all been furnished from the armoury of Locke.

The two following sections will therefore be of a wholly negative character so far as the subject of this Essay is concerned. The various theological and ethical controversies will be briefly touched upon, and the general conclusion to which I have been led may be stated here,—the whole movement of English thought bore a direct relation to Locke and not to any continental writer. By considering the close connection between Locke's philosophy and these speculations, and by showing the divergences, both general and special, from continental writers, we may clearly see that any influence which Descartes exercised upon them could only have come through the one channel.

For our purpose, then, the deists and their opponents may all be placed in the same category: they all desired to judge of religious knowledge by the same tests which they applied to other knowledge. The two sides may be briefly summed up thus: the deists sought to show that religious truth was of the same character as other knowledge: their

The deists and  
their  
opponents.

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John Toland in  
his  
Christianity  
not  
mysterious

opponents believed that by means of other knowledge we could establish the special character of the revelation—that ordinary knowledge attested to the truth of revealed.

The first tendency appears in the writings of John Toland. His *Christianity not Mysterious* is designed partly to show that there are no hidden doctrines in Christianity, or that any which do occur are mere *Aberglaube* derived from various sources of error. Revelation gives facts which must be apprehended in just the same way as other facts are: it is not a group of allegories, but all “clear and “distinct.” We also find the assertion that there is much that is unknowable by us in the world around us, and that there is no more in Christianity than in anything else: there is much that is beyond reason, but nothing contrary to it. Just as we do not know the real essence of a tree, so we do not know the real essence of God. Even miracles offer no difficulty: they are explained, as they have been by many rationalists since, as happening according to laws of nature which are supernaturally influenced, just as knowledge of divine truth is given by ordinary faculties, supernaturally assisted.\*

follows Locke,

All of this seems to harmonise most closely

\* Lechler, 193.

with Locke, and the verbal resemblances are very frequent; the first chapters on the "Nature of Reason and the means of Persuasion" perfectly bristle with the phraseology of the *Essay*; his definition of an Idea,<sup>\*</sup> and of knowledge<sup>†</sup> may be cited in particular. There is, however, one passage where he differs considerably from Locke, and harmonises rather with Descartes and his French successors. It is in writing of the will—its liberty is to be found in indifferency, and it is a cause of thankfulness that God has given us a reason which can overcome this indifferency by its knowledge and render our best course no longer obscure.<sup>‡</sup>

Abraham Collins was a personal friend of Locke's, and his best known treatise has left a permanent mark on our language in the word Free-thinker. Some of his disciples were accused, and with justice, of following mere subjective fancy and not really seeking the truth which makes the mind free indeed. This was the line taken by Ibbot§ in his Boyle Lectures; he attempted by the free exercise of human reason to establish the validity of truths which Toland would have said to be beyond our unaided faculties. He thought that by reason we may judge that the reve-

as does Ibbot  
in his Boyle  
Lectures.

\* Christianity not Mysterious, p. 11.    † *Ib.* p. 13.    ‡ *Ib.* p. 22.  
§ Boyle Lectures, Sermon ii.

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lation is divine as we hear in these days that by private judgment we may decide the Church is infallible. In Ibbot we also find other thoughts which are characteristic of the whole school of Locke,—that Christ's teaching was simpler and more in accordance with reason than that of his disciples now. Neither the doctrine of the Trinity nor of the Resurrection are fundamental so far as the various human "explications" go: the Truth remains unshaken whether the opinions about it are right or wrong.\*

The soul  
"immortalised"

Another of the controversies which distinguished this self-styled "philosophical age" of English thought was as to the nature of the soul. Dodwell maintained that it was only "immortalised" by divine grace conveyed through apostolical succession: and Collins agreed with him, but not so much from a desire to magnify the office of an Anglican priest, as on the Lockian ground that the soul might be material.†

Clarke's "mathematical" demonstrations

From all this mass of controversy Clarke stands out markedly as the most striking figure. He attacked the most fundamental doubts by a thorough-going discussion which attempted to proceed with the force of a mathematical demonstration, by reducing all

\* *Ibbot*. Sermon v, p. 775. Ed. 1735.  
+ *Lechler*, p. 226.

other suppositions to seem absurd, and contradictory to admitted truths. A sentence of Ibbot's describes his position well:—"The general Grounds of Christianity cannot be doubted of, because Christianity stands upon such Propositions as are the plain Principles of Reason and Natural Religion which are already sufficiently established." The atheist is twitted with his ignorance of mathematics, and the licentious reproached with the unreasonableness of his life. Religious truths and ethical maxims are alike demonstrated from natural reason—all proved by following the method of Locke. The whole argument is a case of the transcendent use of the Understanding. Clarke fully admits that his conclusions are encountered by difficulties, but maintains that they need not on that account be rejected. The reality of the existence of a God is proved exactly as it is by Locke,\* from the necessity of an antecedent to the first event; and the impossibility of the material world being self-subsistent, is treated in a similar way.

The relation of this writer to Locke may be more clearly seen by contrasting him with Geulinx and Malebranche, who fill a somewhat similar place in continental thinking;

contrasted with  
the doctrines of  
Geulinx and  
Malebranche,

\* Boyle Lectures, 1675, p. 6 ff.

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they too demonstrate the existence of a God, but not in this case as the first of all causes, but as the only possible cause. Clarke thinks that to suppose there is no Being whose existence is necessary and of itself, is absurd and contradictory ; because of the necessity which arises in our minds owing to the analogy of secondary causes : on the other hand, Geulinx finds that the only possible cause of certain phenomena—the action of soul and body—must lie in a Being beyond us. Malebranche repudiates the whole idea of secondary causes and looks on God as the one efficient cause in the Universe. The alleged grounds for the existence of a God are as different as possible : Clarke's whole proof is really based on the analogy of secondary causes : and these the continental Cartesians deny. On the other hand, Clarke repudiates the argument from the idea of a Perfect Being to His existence, for it only proves His existence not impossible.\* He prefers to reason first to the existence of a Supreme Independent Cause and then to argue that the ideas we have of immensity, &c., represent His modes. He then proceeds, with a sneer at the “most impossible and ridiculous”† mechanical hypothesis of Descartes, to prove by means of the teleological argument, that

\* *Ib.*, p. 11.+ *Ib.*, p. 27.

the Supreme Cause is intelligent: and thus severs himself still further from the continental writers. The difference in the ethical doctrines which were maintained by these authors will be considered below.

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The position of Clarke is somewhat clearly marked in the earlier part of his controversy with Leibnitz. They differ as to the limits of mathematics and metaphysics, and Leibnitz cannot agree in the vaunted mathematical exactness of Clarke's arguments, since there is no quantitative relation under dispute.\* They agree in regarding the bare will of the Deity as an unsatisfactory basis of truth, in opposition to the Cartesians; but the metaphysical principle of sufficient reason is too vague for Clarke, who wishes to have the sufficient reason expressed in particular things, and must have a real space and time to express them in.† The other points of the controversy are somewhat personal, and throw but little light on the general position of Clarke.

and criticised  
by Leibnitz.

Various other writers of this period, who all exhibit the same general tendencies, might be mentioned, but one other example must suffice. Peter Browne is interesting from the fact that he shows a very marked divergence from Locke, while still considerably

Bp. Browne  
answers  
Toland,

\* *Leibnitz. Oeuvres II, p. 499.*  
† *Ibid., p. 504.*

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under his influence. He was a fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, until promoted to the bishopric of Cork. His episcopate is principally remarkable from the efforts he made to suppress the drinking of healths among the clergy, not on teetotal principles, but because the practice was a survival of blasphemous customs. He first came into notice as the author of a *Letter* on Toland's *Christianity not Mysterious*, which led to that work being publicly burned, and which certainly puts the orthodox side of the arguments on an entirely different footing from that adopted by the Boyle Lecturers, whose procedure he condemns.\* He denies that we have distinct ideas of spiritual truths since we only know them by analogy: and this, not in the strict mathematical sense maintained by Lord Herbert of Cherbury, but only as a sort of likeness, even though no proportion exist between the things compared. The truth of this analogy rests on divine authority, not on mere evidence; though evidence is required to prove the reality of the revelation.

criticises the  
Boyle  
Lecturers,

and shows a  
marked  
advance from  
Locke

Some years later he published a *Treatise on the Procedure, Extent, and Limits of the Human Understanding*: it is full of references to Locke, and shows a very marked

\* Ed. 1697, p. 64.



advance on his position in many ways. Browne agrees with him that the mind is a *tabula rasa* and has no innate ideas.\* The very imperfection of our knowledge of God is a proof of this, and there is no need for innate ideas since we have the means of acquiring truth. But from this point the divergence is marked: he carefully criticises the vague use of the word idea, and distinguishes the impression, idea, (representation for the imagination) and notion which cannot be represented. This is an extremely important step in advance, and the criticism of Locke's system, which he bases on these distinctions, is trenchant. Ideas of reflection he repudiates; they are notions given by a direct consciousness of the operations of our mind on sensible objects. At the same time, he has a strong feeling of the necessity of sensation to all true knowledge: purely intellectual ideas† he cannot away with: but was led to object to them rather from the dislike of enthusiasm which he shares with Shaftesbury, than from the distrust of the transcendent results which influenced Kant. Indeed, the whole investigation was undertaken in a practical religious interest: he endeavours to prove that while all our knowledge originates in our ideas (of

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in the use of  
the word idea.

\* Ed. 1697, p. 382 ff.

† *Ibid.*, p. 56, ff.

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sensation) we may have knowledge which goes beyond these ideas,\* though it cannot be clear and distinct. Our knowledge of spiritual truths is given to the Understanding by analogy† and our imaginations are helped by metaphors, which are wholly arbitrary.

The position of Browne is an extremely interesting one: and it might be interesting to follow out his criticisms of Locke, which are principally directed against the various complex ideas: especially against his derivation of the idea of power and of infinite. His divergence from Clarke in this topic of religious reasoning is shown by his distinguishing moral and mathematical reasoning: the former of which depends for its cogency on the assent of the will. And not only is his position of interest for former but with a view to future writers: he states very much the same problem as Kant in the very title of his book, though he was not in a position to start on the road to its true solution. Still his work was not unfruitful, for it exposed the confusions which worked in the word idea: and it seems not unlikely that he was the precursor of another bishop who wrote on the analogy between revealed religion and nature.

His position in relation to Locke, Clarke and Kant.

\* *Ibid.*, p. 86.

† *Ibid.*, p. 136.

Still he was distinctly a follower of Locke. There is, I believe, no direct continental influence at work: he gives us a careful criticism of Locke in a religious interest. He had read foreign writers, and the truth of sensation is indeed deduced from the goodness of God, but the theory of occasional causes is pronounced absurd:\* he maintains that the clearest knowledge is that given by sensation. There is a sort of irony in the changes which phrases undergo: to Descartes, his own existence is clear and distinct, just because it was not given by the senses and he was sure he could not be deceived: to Browne such notions are by no means clear, while ideas of the senses are, for they can be depicted in imagination.

§ 37. The ethical speculation of this century does not require very full treatment in connection with our subject, as it can hardly be called metaphysical: the doctrines which were enunciated did doubtless depend on this or that metaphysical theory, but they appear to be illustrations of its results rather than arguments in its support: the course of thought was determined by the direction assumed by mental philosophy, and the ethics of the time only reflect the tendencies which

The ethical theories of

\* *Ibid.* p. 62.

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that exhibits. Still the connection is sufficiently close to enable us to verify the statement that it was the philosophy of Locke that influenced these thinkers, and that the writings of Geulinx and Malebranche were almost entirely without effect, even though they are more closely concerned with ethical questions than is the *Essay*.

Samuel Clarke  
as to Eternal  
Fitness of  
Things.

To begin with Samuel Clarke; the consideration of his system shows that it is Lockian throughout; for he derives ethical maxims by a process of reflecting on phenomena. His system is easily summarised; he maintains that there are eternal fitnesses, or relations subsisting between things, and these are what they appear to be\* to intelligent beings: the actions of intelligent beings are constantly directed by this knowledge, unless they are depraved. The infinitely wise Supreme Cause, on the other hand, who knows all these fitnesses, can never will what is contrary to the relations of things: and thus the goodness of God is deduced from His wisdom in duly conducting the universe which He has made. His will judges rightly in accordance with the relations of things; but these relations, and not the bare will of the Deity, are the true foundation of ethics.

\* Cf. *Herbert's Truth of the Object and Truth of Appearances; Locke's Knowledge of Relations.*

Here we have again a definite difference from Geulinx. With him the will of the Deity is the source of goodness, and the human being became good by self-renunciation to the reasonable dictates of God out of love to Him; according to Malebranche, the human will is depraved, and freedom is the imperfection of our race. But for Clarke the freedom of will is rather a mark of man's perfection; the divine will is only a mere free choice between contraries, but it is guided by infinite reason, and therefore unable to contradict itself and the order of things that He has instituted. The sanction of non-contradiction is given to ethical maxims, for to will otherwise than God does would be for Him to contradict Himself—and human duty comes in, because men ought to be guided by the same reasons that determine God; when they are not, they set up their own self will and are guilty of the highest presumption possible. The passage concludes with what may be a direct reference to Geulinx\*—and a refutation of Hobbes in a few lines. These few instances may be enough to show that both in his general position and special treatment, Clarke was uninfluenced by continental Cartesians and followed throughout in

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He differs from  
Geulinx and  
Malebranche

and follows  
Locke.

\* Pp. 50 and 54.

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the steps of Locke, and this is particularly plain in his treatment of the will.

The same fact may be noticed about other writers of the period. According to Locke knowledge was derived from reflecting on external circumstances: but this doctrine might give a ground of support to the Hobbists who maintained that right and wrong were relative and had arisen from conventions; it was therefore Clarke's aim to prove that these relations were not conventional, but had their root in the inmost essence of created things.

Richard  
Cumberland  
and Laws of  
Nature with a  
sanction.

Cumberland is of interest as developing this still further. Ethical relations are laws of nature which are impressed on the mind by the external system of things.\* The end of this order is the happiness of all rational beings, which the Deity sets before Himself: and in human morality these laws of nature are enforced by natural sanctions, consisting of rewards and punishments which are attached to them by the Deity. He finds an objective morality in the laws of nature, as Clarke did in the fitness of things: but he holds that an external sanction is added by the Deity to influence human beings: it is by the addition of this that he gives his principal contribution to ethical thought.

\* *Cumberland. Laws of Nature. Prolegomena, sec. 13.*

The opinion of Shaftesbury as to the reality of the ethical relation\* was somewhat similar. Clarke finds his maxims in the relations of things perceived *by* man, Shaftesbury derives ethics from the nature of the relations which subsist *in* man. Knowledge of right and wrong is still to be obtained from the relations in which we find ourselves; but rather by reflection on what passes in ourselves than from anything else, and the faculty which thus discerns is a moral sense.†

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Earl of  
Shaftesbury,  
advanced on  
predecessors.

Besides this he has a much more satisfactory sanction than is possible for Clarke: the contradiction involved in willing the wrong is only patent to the Deity, and men ought to be guided as He is. But why? Shaftesbury finds the relation within and answers, Because they contradict themselves. By finding the relations within and not without the man, an entirely new direction is given to ethical research, and the psychology of Hobbes is for the first time refuted. And throughout the influence of Locke is patent: Shaftesbury looks into his mind to see the origin of ideas of right and wrong: he finds relations between his surroundings and himself, and he discovers these relations by reflection. The importance of his system is that the concep-

\* *Characteristics* (1714), ii, p. 20.  
+ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

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Hutcheson  
diverged very  
far from Locke,  
but still felt his  
influence.

tion of duty is derived from internal relations and this is supported by an internal sanction.

The idea of an internal sense is amplified to some extent by Hutcheson. He finds Locke perfectly satisfactory as far as the explanation of most ideas go, but he prefers to talk of an internal sense which receives the perceptions of harmony and beauty: it gives a different set of ideas from the ordinary senses and it is not due to the action of reflection, since longer meditating does not add to the perception of beauty, nor does this arise from calculation of interest. The relations which are perceived by this sense are imprinted on the constitutions of things by the Deity, and His nature may be seen by the wisdom and benevolence of His design. The argument might indeed appear to be distinctly opposed by Locke's system in as much as it seems to imply innate ideas of beauty. While admitting this diversity, and that "a Goth for instance is mistaken when from education he imagines the Architecture of his Country to be the most perfect,"\* Hutcheson maintains that this is only due to the difficulty of naming the divergencies which exist in the external senses, and that these are really as different in different individuals: he strongly repudiates

\* *Hutcheson's Inquiry*, 1729, p. 76.



the supposition that these internal senses require innate ideas, the moral sense is only a "determination to receive the simple ideas of "Approbation or Condemnation from actions "observed."<sup>\*</sup> And this approbation will be accorded or not in so far as these actions promote general happiness or the reverse.†

The above examples may suffice to show that as the course of English theological discussion was all conducted within the limits of Locke's school, so too these ethical systems at the beginning of the eighteenth century, were developed by men who had imbibed his doctrines, even when they appeared to lead to conclusions which he could not have consistently maintained. Locke maintained that ideas were derived from our surroundings: Clarke said from divinely constituted relations in things: Shaftesbury from divinely constituted relations in human beings, which contain their own sanction: Hutcheson from divinely constituted relations which are perceived by an internal sense. It is still the reflecting Understanding adding and subtracting and computing and compounding the elements given by sense—though there is a tendency to depart from this in the Scotch moralist as a similar tendency had been seen in the Irish

\* p. 128.

+ p. 183.

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theologian. Both find the complex ideas of Locke unsatisfactory, and while Hutcheson regards them psychologically and supplies new faculties for perceiving these ideas, Browne considers rather the degree of certainty attaching to such knowledge. The psychological and metaphysical progress keep side by side throughout the whole school.

## VI.

### GEORGE BERKELEY.

[*A. C. Fraser. Berkeley's Works, i, ii, iv.*]

§ 38. The task that remains in considering the influence of Descartes on other English philosophers is of a somewhat different kind from that which has engaged us hitherto. We are moving farther away from his immediate successors, and have already arrived at a region where his influence is very indirect. The extremely interesting questions which arise in regard to the philosophies of Berkeley and Hume are rather connected with the history of Philosophy in England than with the influence of continental writers. It is only because the impulse which started these investigations originated abroad, that an attempt must now be made to exhibit the position which was taken by Bishop Berkeley. This has been so much discussed recently in connection with the resuscitation of his philosophy, for which we are indebted to Professor Fraser, that it need not be long dwelt upon here.

Berkeley, like all other English philosophers from Locke to Reid, has a strong predilection for the common sense of mankind, and is

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Berkeley  
supports the  
common cause  
of mankind

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and his object  
in writing  
affects his  
treatment of  
the difficulties  
prejudicially

eagerly anxious to justify it. He is the upholder of Scripture and common sense against mathematical atheism, though there probably never was a self-styled champion who was more thoroughly ridiculed by the coxcombs whom he professed to serve. There can be no doubt that his purpose in writing was not the promulgation of a satisfactory system of truth, so much as that of giving a philosophical basis to certain opinions—perhaps rather, that of cutting away the philosophical support of opinions he disliked.

This fact in regard to Berkeley's object in writing is of importance, as it brings prominently forward the real difficulty in placing him: he endeavoured to make truth popular before rendering it thoroughly systematic. Much as we may admire the perfection of his style, and the beauty of his dialogues, we must regret that a man of such acumen did not address himself more closely to the harmonising and completing of his system, rather than giving it to the world in isolated fragments which are sometimes difficult to harmonise. As has been said, "the crucial question in regard to Berkeley is the determination of the nature of the fundamental element," which is the basis of all our knowledge: this is a difficulty as to the psychology of his system. By other thinkers

as he  
unconsciously  
modifies his  
views.

the same central thought has been retained consistently throughout, but in Berkeley we find a certain amount of modification as he advances. There is besides a metaphysical difficulty, for if we ask "what is the truth of these perceptions and ideas, as others have asked what is the truth in external objects, we shall find no answer attempted."\* Perhaps Berkeley may be best represented as having followed closely on the lines laid down by Locke. From sensuous opinion Locke endeavoured to build human knowledge on a sure basis. From a very similar element Berkeley proceeded to supply a basis for ordinary knowledge, scriptural truth, and mathematical science; while at the same time he proves that the materialistic views which were commonly maintained were devoid of a metaphysical justification.

Compared with  
Locke.

It is only by a careful study of the various fruits of Berkeley's earlier metaphysical labours that we can come to a conclusion as to the nature of the supposed element of all our knowledge; and this is rendered more difficult as the same point of view is not maintained throughout these various treatises. In particular, the *New Theory of Vision* appears to ascribe more independence to the ideas, than

\* *Hegel. Werke*, xv, 492.

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His earlier  
view

is accorded them in the *Principles* or *Theory Vindicated*; though this may be from an attempted accommodation to popular language\* of which he was partially conscious. The idea is “an immediate object of sense or “understanding,”† and is suggestive of other objects of sense, since it is “closely twisted, “blended, and incorporated together”‡ with them: this certainly seems to imply that these ideas are to some extent independent of other existences, and that they are partly active towards human minds as “suggestive.”§ This is more fully brought out by the proof that the objects of sight and touch are different, since the ideas are unlike.|| Such language implies an existence of objects independent of the ideas; but it may be a mere accommodation to the popular point of view for the sake of explaining away materiality, by denying the validity of the argument from one sense to the other. On the whole I should be inclined to say that the ideas were here the instruments of divine action on human minds—and that a *tertium quid* was involved as mediating between these two. The suggestions of this *tertium quid* are fixed by nature, are not liable to misinterpretation, and are by no means of human institution.¶||

\* *Theory Vindicated*, sec. 35.+ *New Theory*, sec. 45. † *Ibid.* sec. 51. § *Ibid.* sec. 136.|| *Ibid.* sec. 111 and 112. ¶ *Ibid.* sec. 144.

In the *Principles*, on the other hand, the point of view is considerably different. Here we find the ideas are wholly passive: it is absurd and unintelligible to make one idea the cause of another. In this second form of the theory, the "suggestion" appears to be occasioned by the idea, but to be made by divine action; and we find the world reduced to a series of occasions of direct divine interpositions, not to a group of instruments of divine action. The action of the divine mind becomes immediate, instead of mediate.

This alteration does not make much difference so far as the constructing of human knowledge from the element goes. The human mind is still as in Locke's system wholly passive, though the activity is not given by an external thing so much as through the idea by God (mediately or immediately). It is in what-is-given that the elements of knowledge are found, and nothing is contributed by the mind itself, which only perceives, and seems only to exist as it perceives; what-is-given is not a mere blind sensation, but a particularised sensation not conveying any reference to an external body, but still intellectualised (since formed by the categories,) and occasioning suggestions of other sensations. Berkeley should have de-

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was altered in  
the *Principles*  
in regard to the

nature of the  
mind and  
what-is-given.

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finer his idea as the object of sense and understanding. The intellectual elements are tolerably clear in some passages of the *New Theory*, e.g., sec. 43, where it seems that extension and motion are involved in—presumably from being “twisted together with”—the sensations of colour. We have then a definitely thought sensation, which is capable of being recalled in the imagination; but, besides all this, the idea contains farther intellectual elements from its possible relation to other sensations. This is brought out in the doctrine of universals, where the idea is described as particular (a representation in the imagination) but one that can be universalised. There is thus a separation of the mere individual sensation, and the thought-relation in which it stands to other sensations. Berkeley perceives that the relation of resemblance is not a feeling, though he does not yet observe that there is a certain amount of intellectual exertion in the constituting of any particular idea which can be represented in imagination.\* Even the partial admission of intellectual elements is an advance on the ambiguities of Locke. Browne could distinguish impression and idea: Berkeley distinguished representations in the imagination and notions which

\* *Green's Hume*, p. 148, ff.



were intellectual, so that the confusions which underlay the Lockian use of the word idea were beginning to be dispelled. And with this admission of intellectual elements which were not given in feeling, comes also the admission of a subject of which we have a notion, but no idea. That this was an afterthought on the part of Berkeley may be seen to some extent from Professor Fraser's edition of his works, where the emendations in the second edition of the *Principles* are marked. (secs. 138 and 142.) There is a polemic against abstract ideas from the first, but not a clear statement as to the ground of the possibility of universal notions, (sec. 122, *ff.*) such as occurs in the later edition.

In this sensation particularised and capable of application to other sensations by intelligence, we have an element from which our knowledge can be constructed. But how far is it real? Are not the representations of imagination or of dreaming precisely similar to these elements of knowledge? They are not kept quite apart by Berkeley, but the ground of distinction is found by drawing a line between ideas which are produced by our own activity, and ideas that are independent of our activity and therefore must be produced by an active intelligence beyond us. There is, it seems, a subjective test as to whether our

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His advance on  
Locke,

and on his own  
earlier views.

The validity of  
knowledge  
rests

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on a mere  
subjective test

ideas are produced by ourselves, or by God ; if they are produced by God they are true and part of an orderly system which continues whether we are percipients or not. At the same time when we come to attempt to discover what this test is, we find it by no means easy, and one passage where the continued existence of an object is made to follow from its being thought on by a human being, adds to the difficulty of the subject. If our power of imagining is the reason of our belief in continued existence, it may also suffice to be the ground of belief in actual existence, and the reality of all our imaginings will be established. And if this be so there is no ground for the supposition of a substantial spirit by whose activity reality is given to certain of the ideas we apprehend. Locke with his impact from bodies without, which imprinted ideas on our minds, and which could be verified by other senses, had a firm basis of reality for the simple ideas at all events, and for knowledge in so far as it was closely dependent on them. But with Berkeley reality is to be found in ideas produced by the producer of real ideas, and these are to be distinguished from merely subjective imaginations, though the latter are sufficient to testify to the continued existence of realities.

and less  
satisfactory  
than Locke's.

The weakness  
of his system.

Until the critical philosophy arose to ana-

lyse into its elements the sensation-brought-under-the-categories, which was a unit with Berkeley, there could be no clear recognition of the true objective in knowledge, only of sensations succeeding one another in a manner ordered by an arbitrary will: the “steadiness, order, and coherence” which, according to Berkeley, distinguishes the real from the unreal is itself dependent on an arbitrary choice. If there is no coherence in earthly things how shall we believe in it if we are told of it in heavenly things? Berkeley explains that the connexion of cause and effect, &c., which necessitates the supposition of a governing spirit, is arbitrary, lest the “mathematical atheist” should explain the universe by means of mere corporeal causes.\* In his fear of attaching too much importance to a perceived succession, he denied the validity of the intellectual relation, which he could not distinguish from it.

According to Berkeley the universe is dependent on the continual activity of a divine imagination which gives rise to a succession of ideas, passive in themselves, but which could be apprehended by our senses: besides this, there is the activity of the human mind, which can represent other combinations to itself.

\* Principles, sec. 60.

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Each of the divine ideas will be the occasion of suggesting other ideas to follow; and thus appears a world of successive feelings, and of physical relations which might be seen if only there were a  $\pi\acute{o}\nu$   $\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}$ . Such is the "spiritual empiricism" of Berkeley which paved the way for Hume, but which contained suggestions of the critical refutation of Hume, which the latter was clear-headed enough to avoid reproducing. These suggestions appear to me to be more frequent in *Siris* where there is a very decided development of the Berkeleyian philosophy, and all in the direction of attaching more importance to the intellectual elements in the idea. At first we found these included in the idea itself as divine instrument, then we found the idea rather the occasion of the divine suggestion of intellectual knowledge of relations. In *Siris* we find the means of this divine activity still farther specified: they are found in the Platonic Ideas which serve as active forces for the communication of this knowledge. They are not mere abstractions from things of sense, like Locke's complex ideas, nor are they innate ideas such as he protested against, but they are the intellectual elements by which the Mind of God sustains the universe, and communicates intellectual truth to the human mind which

Still further  
development  
in *Siris*.

touches His. Here the intellectual element has completely freed itself from mere feeling, but at the expense of emptying the latter of all truth, and reducing sensible things to a mere chaos in which there can be no science. Would this have been the opinion of the author of the *New Theory of Vision*, who found in ideas a clear knowledge of their objects and a suggestion of secondary objects too?

§ 39. Such being the modifications in Berkeley's central principle, we may proceed to consider the external influences which seem to have contributed to the formation and growth of his opinions; and this is less difficult in his case than in that of some other authors with whom we have had to deal, as he neither purposely conceals his authorities like Montaigne, nor is too proud to seem to depend on them like Browne.

The most important influence on Berkeley's mind at the time of his earlier treatises was that of Locke: this might be proved by merely glancing at his republished common-place book, if it were not plain from internal evidence alone. He finds that Locke is not consistent with himself, and that he admits elements as given, which are not really so. The ideas of the primary qualities are the first point of attack; and they, like others, must be reduced to mere feeling of a kind which can

We may easily trace the influence of

Locke, who is criticised carefully,

## SECTION 39.

be represented and reproduced by imagination; we must have no element but the individualised sensation. He protests against substantiating this, and against confusing feeling with felt body. The divergence is admirably brought out in the first dialogue between Hylas and Philonus,\* where Hylas assumes the position of Locke, and Philonus proceeds to refute it. This careful reduction of the element from what we commonly conceive to be given to consciousness, to an individualised feeling, is the first and most important step. It is in the dialogue that it is most clearly stated, but it had been present to the mind of Berkeley when he first expounded the *New Theory*. Individualised sensations of touch are not the same as individualised sensations of sight: that is, briefly put, the whole outcome of his earliest essay. While then he agrees with Locke in assuming the passivity of mind in sensation (for the activity of which he speaks is merely reproductive), he is more careful in limiting this to individualised feeling than his forerunner had been. It is this assumed passivity which places him distinctly among the followers of Locke; it is the greater care with which he analyses the element that is given, that separates him from those whom

\* Works, i, p. 279 ff.

we have classed as his school: for all the other divergences depend on this, especially the ever recurring one about "abstract ideas."

SECTION 39.

There is at least one passage in the *Essay* which probably gave him help in the working out of his doctrines. The theory of vision is suggested by Locke's phrases about the mind "framing to itself" an idea of a convex surface when it only perceives a plane one, and it is interesting to know that this anticipation was the result of farther thought on the part of Locke, though he did not carry out the idea into a thorough-going theory of "suggestion."\* As Berkeley himself refers to this passage in the *New Theory*, we may regard it as the definite link which connected the two systems. There do not seem to be any other passages which are worth quoting as clearing up the general relation between the two. His works teem with passages which show a conscious reference to Locke, and this is more particularly the case in the dialogues.

and who gave  
him  
suggestions:

Locke thus furnishes the starting point: Berkeley makes Locke more self-consistent and reduces all the elements to particular sensations; but by so doing he destroys the possibility of connecting them with one another; they are all separate and isolated; Locke

\* Ess. ii, 9, sec. 8, 9, 10.

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also of  
Malebranche,

found a connection in "body," but Berkeley destroyed this substratum, and found the connection in God: in coming to this conclusion he was probably helped by Malebranche. There are, as Prof. Fraser points out, meagre hints in the *Recherche* which may have helped towards the *Theory of Vision*, but it is only in the *Principles* and the dialogues that the influence of Malebranche is marked. And in them it is constant. More especially interesting is the passage in the second *Dialogue of Hylas and Philonus*\* where there is a definite statement and criticism of the theory of "some moderns," of seeing all things in God: Berkeley finds fault with it, inasmuch as it draws too much attention to the *things*, and gives them a substantiality apart from mind, though such existence could not be perceived in any way.† Still, in their assertion of absolute passivity in the things (or ideas), and in finding all activity and therefore all causality in Mind, Berkeley and Malebranche are closely allied. If we regard the *New Theory* as the Lockian period of Berkeley, we may regard this as the Malebranchian one: in his divergence from the English philosopher, however, he had divested the sensation of substantial elements more

\* Works I, p. 305.

† *Ibid.* I, p. 192.



completely than any Cartesian could ever do consistently with a hard and fast dualism: \* yet it had some active elements; it was suggestive. Now, with still farther consideration, and still deeper reading of Malebranche, he eliminates all traces of causality except on the part of the Active Spirit.

Siris is entirely cut off from the earlier of Plato, works in many ways, but in none more strikingly than in the character of the authors referred to: they are very numerous, but there is one leading spirit through them all, and the tone of the whole is Platonic. The particularised feelings are reduced to a minimum, the intellectual element which is above feeling is brought strongly forward, but in this last work there is little trace of any modern influence at all.

Berkeley was thus exposed to indirect and indirectly of Descartes. Cartesian influences both through Locke and Malebranche, but the traces of direct influence are only slight. There is a good deal of reference to the optical writings of Descartes in the *New Theory*, but there is very little to the philosophical, if we except one passage in the third dialogue, where Philonus ridicules his appeal to the veracity of God as giving a foundation to the truth of the senses. We

\* Works, I, p. 183.

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need not be surprised at this silence; the philosophy of Sensuous Consciousness had been developed in two opposite directions, and it was from these developments, not from the original form, that the greatest influence would naturally come.

Alleged  
connection  
with Leibnitz.

Erdmann has placed Berkeley in close connection with Leibnitz: but though there is an analogy between the individualism of Leibnitz and the particularism of Berkeley, the likeness ends here; they are on different planes of thought; and the difference is clear if we contrast the passivity and dependence of the Idea, with the activity and substantiality of the Monad. The points of agreement, which Professor Fraser has detected, are for the most part trivial, and we shall not be mistaken in denying any real influence on the growth of Berkeley's philosophy. Spinoza is referred to in the *Principles* and *Alciphron*, but only as a well known atheist.

John Norris  
had been a  
disciple of  
More's, and

§ 40. Mention has been made above of John Norris, as one of the younger men who came under the influence of More and the Cambridge Platonists: and few investigations throw more light on the thought of the time than comes from a comparison of Norris and Berkeley. In both there is a change of view, but Norris started in a school that was utterly

opposed to Locke, and landed in an idealism which was closely similar to the one which Berkeley developed out of Locke's system.

He appears at one time to have fully agreed with More in requiring phenomenal proof of spiritual existence, and in thinking that the possibility of such proof was accounted for, if we attributed a fourth dimension to spirit;<sup>\*</sup> but, as time went on, and he became acquainted with continental philosophy, he appears to have seen that this position is no longer tenable, and his later writings are little but a reproduction of the theories of Malebranche.

At the same time there are minor indications of his earlier reading which are found throughout his works: we meet with the theosophic doctrine that impurity is the cause of error, and there is a long discussion to prove that the Word was the exemplar, not the efficient cause of the World. The Platonism which he combines with the doctrines of Malebranche makes his writing resemble Siris more closely than any of Berkeley's other works.

the psychological difficulty does not trouble him.

We find however that the order of treatment which they adopt respectively is very different indeed. Norris does not investigate

\* Correspondence with *More*, appended to *Ideal Theory of Love*.

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the psychological problem as to the growth of ideas in the mind at all: and the reason of this is obvious: he does not think that the greatest amount of certainty is conveyed by separate acts of sensation, and therefore he is not concerned in any attempt to build knowledge out of sensations.

His delineation  
of the nature

There is an ideal word "which is intelligibly, "what this is sensibly:" it is the "eternal "exemplar and model of all created essence, "distinctly exhibitivè of all that is or ever "can be, and so the measure and standard, "not only of what actually is, but of the whole "possibility of being." This world is not subjected to our senses and is one we cannot help conceiving; and yet it does not exist only in our conceptions, for it is the immediate object of all our intellectual efforts and the very object that we speak about. There is much argument to prove that the ideal world was antecedent to the actual one: since the material world is thoughtfully created, there must have been an ideal one according to which it was executed.\* Just as figures must be conceived by men before being constructed, so too they must be before they can be conceived; that is to say, they must exist ideally in order that they may come to exist naturally.† The

and proof of the  
existence of an  
ideal world  
serves to

\* Theory of Ideal World, I, p. 26.

+ *Ib.*, I, p. 36.

exactness of geometrical demonstrations and the necessity of truths (such as that a relation of equality subsists between all right angles), are also alleged in favour of the belief in an ideal, as the very object that we speak about. This ideal world is in God, since truth is eternal and unchangeable and He has these ideas in Himself. While however "we see "all things in God," we see God "in Himself, and not by any idea distinct from Him, "or that is the effect of Him, it being impossible that God should be represented by "anything less than Himself:"\* and therefore Descartes was mistaken in supposing that the idea we have of God is one of His effects.

Having thus described the nature of this ideal world, he proceeds at some length to consider the degrees of certainty: "we have "the firmness of persuasion whereby we "assent to the truth of a thing"—this is "subjective" certainty, while "objective certainty is that state of the object which "affords just ground or foundation for such "a firmness or assent." Everything true has in itself this objective certainty; but in relation to us it is of different degrees "according "as it connotes withal the greater or less "reason or foundation of that Truth." It is

explain the metaphysical difficulty as to the certainty of knowledge.

\* *Ib.*, I, p. 44.

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in this connection that he comes to criticise the validity of the testimony of the senses, which seems good enough for the purposes of life, but requires correction by means of our reason; while the foundation of intelligible truth in relation to us is considerably better. The amount of testimony which we can receive from the senses is carefully gone into: they do not judge, they cannot therefore deceive us, or satisfy our minds, since intellectual action is requisite for this; and though we can argue "I have a sensation and therefore I am," we cannot say "I have a sensation and therefore the thing is."

His debt to various sources.

The very close agreement with Malebranche is plain throughout, while the influence of Locke is only shown by his name being occasionally introduced to point the antagonism: nor is there much sign of direct dependence on Descartes. Norris dwells at some length, however, on the opposition of thinking and extension,\* and points out that it does not depend on mere abstraction: and he carries out the principle so far as to maintain that animals are mere machines, yet he is greatly afraid of "encouraging any practices of cruelty upon the bodies of these creatures," "lest in the resolution of so abstruse a question

\* *Ibid.* II, 16.

“our reason should happen to deceive us.”\*

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This concluding point will serve to shew how far he had left the standpoint of Henry More.

Arthur Collier may be best understood when he is looked on as a follower of Norris: but it is in the negative argument against the validity of the senses that he is most interested: and indeed he goes a long way beyond the other author. Norris had denounced the denial of an external world as “arrant ‘scepticism’” for the testimony of the senses and of reason are compared as having greater or less degrees of objective certainty in relation to us: but Collier boldly pleads guilty to the charge.† He endeavours to prove that the world has no existence apart from mind,‡ and that the quasi-externality is due to the act of God;§ the argument takes for the most part the form of a *reductio ad absurdum*, and reminds one somewhat of Kant’s antinomies: one of his most trenchant criticisms is founded on the opinion that the admission of an “external” world leads directly to the conception of an extended God.

Arthur Collier  
contrasted with  
Norris and  
Berkeley.

The historical genesis of these theories is entirely different from that of Berkeley: the

\* Theory of Ideal World, II, p. 99.

† Collier’s *Clavis Universalis (Part)* p. 84.

‡ Collier’s system may be distinguished from Norris’s as dogmatical and not problematical Idealism—to adopt the terms which Kant uses in his Refutation. Kritik (Bohn) p. 166.

§ *Clavis Universalis*, p. 4.

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comparison with his is extremely interesting, but serves to bring out the reason why these authors exercised so little influence on one another.

Jonathan  
Edwards'  
fragmentary  
writings

There is one other writer of the same period who adopted very similar views; he is of greater importance, inasmuch as he was probably influenced by Berkeley and not an original investigator. Jonathan Edwards was educated at Yale, and came into close contact with Dr. Samuel Johnson, who was a disciple of Berkeley's, and corresponded frequently with him. Johnson was himself the author of a philosophical disquisition which is now very rare, but which is said to show a very close dependence on Berkeley.\* His pupil's metaphysical thoughts were not issued as a consecutive work, with the exception of the celebrated treatise on free will, but are only to be found in a few rough jottings which he is said to have made during his career, first as a student and then as a lecturer at Yale. They have been republished as an appendix to Mr. S. E. Dwight's *Memoir* (pp. cclxvi, ff.) and are extremely interesting. The most lengthy fragment is the outline of a work, *On the Mind*, which follows Locke's arrangement very closely, and in which the depen-

\* Works, IV, 174, ff.



dence of all knowledge on external ideas is so strongly insisted on that it hardly seems possible, at first sight, that he can have shared Berkeley's views as to the relative existence of the external world. At the same time, it becomes almost certain that he did, from one note, "to explain carefully what I mean by "external." Mr. Dwight considers the remaining fragments are later: in several of them the Berkeleyan theory of sensible things is very clearly stated, but the form in which it is presented is rather different. The idea to which attention is chiefly called is that of resistance (solidity) rather than extension.\* Berkeley found evidence of divine activity in the relation of ideas to *me*; Edwards followed him in this, but found it also in the relation of these ideas to one other.† The whole me-

harmonise closely with Berkeley, but

exhibit important differences also.

\* "If colour exists not out of the mind, then nothing belonging to body exists out of the mind but Resistance, and not that neither when nothing is actually resisted. Then there is nothing but the Power of Resistance. And, as Resistance is nothing else but the actual exertion of God's power, so the power can be nothing else but the constant Law or Method of that actual exertion."—Edwards's Works (1839), by *Dwight*, p. cclix.

† "Since all material existence is only idea, this question may be asked, In what sense may those things be said to exist, which are supposed and yet are in no actual idea of any Created mind? I answer they exist only in Uncreated idea. . . . But, it may be asked, How do those things exist, which have an actual existence, but of which no created mind is conscious? For instance, the furniture of this room when we are absent and the room is shut up and no created mind perceives it—How do these things exist? I answer, there has been in times past such a course and succession of existences, that these things must be supposed to make the series complete, according to Divine appointment of the order of things. And there will be innumerable things which will be out of joint, out of their constituted series without the supposition of these. For upon the supposition of these things are infinite numbers of things otherwise than they would be, if these were not by God thus supposed. . . . So that we may answer in short, that the existence

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chanical connection of phenomena was due to divine activity. The mechanical connection became the type, not the mere sign, of all true causation, and we find the divine mind itself represented as being determined in this way. The Universe becomes a mechanism with God working through it all; and we are landed in a system which is barely distinguishable in its results from that of Spinoza.\*

of these things is in God's supposing of them, in order to render complete the series of things (to speak more strictly, the series of ideas) according to his own settled order and the harmony of things which he has appointed."—*Ibid.*, cclx.

\* *Fraser's Berkeley*, IV, p. 182 n.

## VII.

### DAVID HUME.

[*Green's Hume*, I.]

§ 41. Against Hume it is impossible to urge the charge which was made against Berkeley of investigating philosophical problems in a special interest. Before all things he was critical, and was raised to a point of speculation from which he could afford to despise the conflicts of deists and rationalists. His position is beautifully characterised by his own sneer, "If my philosophy, therefore, makes no addition to the arguments for religion, I have at least the satisfaction to think it takes nothing from them, but that everything remains precisely as before."<sup>\*</sup>

SECTION 41.

Hume's  
attitude

Hume's problem may be easily compared with that which exercised Locke. The latter endeavoured to justify ordinary knowledge by showing how it grew out of what he supposed to be the primary element of all knowledge, in which certainty was to be found. Hume attempted to show how what-passes-for-knowledge had grown out of elements which are in themselves untrustworthy. The failure of

compared  
with Locke's

\* *Treatise*, p. 533.

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his system is a two-fold one, the derivation cannot be satisfactorily accomplished; and when completed, the results are not identical with knowledge as testified to by the common sense of mankind.

and  
Berkeley's.

As in Berkeley's, so in Hume's Works there is no direct connection with Descartes: and in Hume's there is no trace of that double connection (through Locke and through Malebranche) which was marked in the writings of the Irish bishop. For our purpose it will be sufficient to affiliate the leading ideas of his system on preceding English writers; and thus to show the steps by which the certainty of Descartes led to the scepticism of Hume.

The starting  
point

Locke in his revolt against a merely subjective criterion of certainty, had based all knowledge on what is given to the mind, and he had included the causal connection of independently existing things in what is given. Berkeley had denied that the belief in the independent existence of things was given,—it was a mere fiction of philosophers,—and the causal connection existing among them was dependent upon a spiritual being—it was not to be found among the things or given by them. Hume rejected the positive part of Berkeley's doctrine, and carried out his criticism more fully. He dwelt strictly on what-is-given; he found it consisted of separated,

successive impressions, which brought with them ideas of natural relations of identity and resemblance and degree, but that the other relations which were ascribed to them were the offspring of mere repetitions and tendencies to feign. He demonstrated once for all that the objective basis of truth is not to be found in what is given to the mind in the external or matter of sensation,—and he cleared the way for Kant to find it in what is given by the mind,—in the internal elements of each of those individual impressions which Hume’s scepticism did not touch. For the argument “*cogito ergo sum*” remained unshaken by his attack, but only in each separate moment of feeling; and the critical analysis of what passes in each separate moment discovered the certain elements in all our knowledge.

and outcome  
of his system

§ 42. Such being his position as a philosopher we may pass to look at the traces of the influence of his predecessors. The very method which he pursues is interesting as being purely English: he set himself to follow Bacon, and he carried this out consciously. Locke’s use of induction in the argument against innate ideas is noticeable, but it does not recur throughout the whole *Essay* as we find it in the *Treatise*. Hume endeavours “to render all our principles as universal as

Hume’s debt  
to Bacon,

## SECTION 42.

“possible, by tracing up our experiments to the utmost, and explaining all effects from the simplest and fewest causes.”\* His examination of the exceptional instances in which ideas may precede impressions is also noteworthy in this connection;† as are the proofs from “several new instances” of the effect which contiguity and resemblance have in augmenting the vivacity of a conception.‡

to Locke,

But if the manner of his investigation was principally Baconian, he also inherited much of the arrangement and style of treatment from Locke. The whole of the terminology is that which the *Essay* had rendered popular, and the discussions about simple and complex ideas, innate ideas, &c., indeed, the whole of the first part of the *Treatise* recalls it forcibly. This is a mere matter of course; and the passages where striking resemblances occur need not be referred to in detail.

and divergence  
from him.

The divergences of Hume from Locke are of greater interest: the most important of these is the criticism of the doctrine of abstract ideas§ in which Berkeley is closely followed. This is the most vigorous blow at the reality of knowledge. If general conceptions are always inaccurate, general propositions, and, not only physical science, but all other

\* *Treatise*, p. 308.

† *Ibid.* p. 410.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 315.

§ *Ibid.* p. 325 ff.

science are impossible. We find an extension of Berkeley's criticism on another point; the validity of the distinction between the primary and secondary ideas is disputed, and that prop to the reality of ordinary knowledge is triumphantly removed.\* The attempted derivation of the idea of cause is another point criticised,† and here again there is a wider gap created between the consistent follower of Locke and the common sense of mankind: Hunt's doctrine upon this subject was the most important, and most repellent part of his philosophy.

His debt to Berkeley has been practically described in mentioning his divergences from Locke; towards the positive structure which Berkeley's religious feeling prompted him to raise, Hume preserves a contemptuous silence; for him it was certainly unconvincing. There is a curious interest in contrasting the tone in which Berkeley and Hume write on points on which they agree, like infinite divisibility. It may be doubted whether there have ever been two men, so closely agreeing in many of their speculative opinions and so utterly differing in all other sides of their mental life. Berkeley had found that causation was an intelligible relation,—not one given by any

His relation to  
Berkeley

\* *Ibid.*, p. 511.

† *Ibid.*, p. 452.

## SECTION 42.

sense; and had therefore found an intelligible basis for it by assuming the existence of a Thinker; Hume could no longer explain this knowledge as something given, and was constrained to explain it away as being a mere fiction of the human consciousness.

and  
continental  
philosophers.

There are a sufficient number of references to show that Hume was well acquainted with the writings of continental philosophers. Malebranche is referred to as one of "those who have pretended to explain the secret force and energy of causes,"\* and the weak points of his system are trenchantly exposed in a few lines which show how clearly Hume perceived the closeness of the connection between these later Cartesians and Spinoza.† The interesting section on the Reasoning of Animals is a farther protest against Cartesian doctrines.

Nor has the charm of Descartes' own writing been entirely without influence. The seventh section of the fourth part of the *Treatise* is a sort of "preface as a postscript," which reminds one very strongly of the First Meditation. The words which were framed by one who had exposed the uncertainties of apparent knowledge were echoed by Hume in closing his assault upon real and pretended certainty alike.‡

\* *Ibid.*, p. 452. + *Ibid.*, p. 531. † *Fischer's Bacon*, p. 733.



§ 43. The ethical controversies which have been already described seem to reflect the mental philosophy of Locke. The opponents found a distinction of right and wrong asserted by ordinary consciousness, and on a psychological method they sought for a basis for the belief. Locke had seen that moral judgments were as far removed from sensuous consciousness as mathematical ones, and Clarke had treated the two in a somewhat similar manner, as relations: Shaftesbury had reduced the ethical judgment to a mere feeling, and Hutcheson suggested a sense which should be the faculty of this feeling. Some advance was made by these writers in regard to the sanction of the moral commands, even while they were reducing them to mere pathological likes and dislikes. Hume and Adam Smith accepted this result, and endeavoured to show they could construct something that would pass for ethical truth out of elements of feeling. The failure was as real though not so striking as in the attempt to show how what-passed-for-knowledge had arisen out of similar elements.

Hume's account of sympathy is far less satisfactory than Adam Smith's: in his *Treatise*, it is merely with the pleasure and pain of others that we sympathise, not with their motives or judgments; and this is the

SECTION 43.

Corresponding  
ethical  
problems,

as treated by  
Hume and  
Adam Smith's

## SECTION 43.

ground of our approbation or disapprobation. The later writer discriminates other kinds of sympathy, and is certainly extremely ingenious in accounting for many of the common phenomena of life,\* such as the desire of approbation,† and the sympathy which is lavished on the sufferings of the great.‡ He criticises Clarke§ and others for not giving us a precise measure of right and wrong, but his own system affords no true ground for considering right and wrong as objectively valid: and so the conception of duty as worth doing for its own sake is altogether beyond him.¶ Others had sought for a basis for the ethical distinctions which they recognised, he began with the element of feeling and could not rise to a true ethical judgment.

Ethical  
reaction.

It was noticed above that these controversies only reflected the changes that were taking place in philosophy, and did not follow them strictly, but at this point the ethical reaction preceded the corresponding period in mental philosophy. Bishop Butler recognised a rational element in the moral judgment; he did not expound it clearly, and he only based his argument on the testimony of common consciousness. But he holds a position which

\* *A. Smith. Theory of Moral Sentiment* (1808), pt. IV, 1, and pt. VIII, 3.

† *Ib.*, I, 270. ‡ *Ib.*, I, 131. § *Ib.*, II, 252. ¶ *Ib.*, I, 287, 307.

is very similar to that of Reid in mental philosophy, both with regard to the point from which he started, the nature of the truth he maintained, and the kind of proof he attempted. They are alike too in this,—that neither the validity of ordinary knowledge, nor the supremacy of reason was satisfactorily established by their efforts.

## VIII.

### CONCLUSION.

SECTION 44.

Reid's  
criticisms of  
Descartes from

§ 44. It was the boast of Reid that he had thrown aside the philosophy of Descartes. He was repelled by the results which Berkeley and Hume had reached "upon Cartesian principles." Scepticism was "inlaid" and "reared along with" this new way of ideas. In his conscious repugnance to preceding systems we may see that Reid was on the point of introducing a new phase of truth. He saw the inadequacy of the past attempts to solve the problem of existence and started on a new line of investigation, but with the old method which had been so fruitful in physical investigations. In spite of his avowed antagonism he could not entirely shake off the influence of Descartes. He could not go backward: all philosophy must be the philosophy of consciousness since that time. The criticism of Descartes is almost amusing in this respect: Reid regards the *cogito ergo sum* as an enthymeme,\* and ridicules any attempted demonstration of the self-evident validity of consciousness. As we

\* *Reid's Inquiry*, Hamilton's Edition, p. 100.

have seen, Descartes gave an instance, not a demonstration, and Reid's criticism only shows how truly Descartes had found the seat of certainty. The stones which Reid cast were fragments of the Cartesian system: in the very attacks which were made upon it we find the best evidence of the permanent value of this addition to our knowledge of truth.

It was unfortunate that the Scotch philosopher, who had such a clear perception of certainty, should be willing to build his system on the less satisfactory basis of testimony as to the common sense of mankind: we get at once into a sphere of probability in which no demonstration is possible. Reid hit upon the weakness of preceding systems,—their non-recognition of intellectual elements in knowledge, and the attempted reduction of all to mere feeling. He maintained as vigorously as Kant that the knowledge of extension, &c., was not given to the mind by phenomena; and he was, as Hamilton was shocked to find,<sup>\*</sup> within a hair-breadth of coming to the truth that it is given by the mind. But the common testimony of mankind can only be appealed to as illustrating results which have been already demonstrated by

a new position.

\* Inquiry, p. 128; see also Hamilton's note.

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science; Reid looked to it for the proof itself. He recognised the action of the mind in the apprehension of external phenomena, as is done in Kant's *Æsthetic*; and we have a philosophy of Perception rather than of Sensuous Consciousness.

Transition  
from English  
philosophy to  
Kant.

To establish this firmly we must have a better basis than external testimony: Descartes had doubted of one or another of his sensations, and had found certainty in none; Hume had maintained that the evidence was only of value for the passing moment; Reid was protesting that it was universally valid: and Kant showed why it was universally valid. There was a feeling in consciousness which bore witness to truth for Descartes, but which was only a fleeting impression for Hume: Kant's analysis could show what parts of it were permanent, and what parts were fleeting.

The different  
lines pursued  
by English and  
continental  
philosophy.

§ 45. Throughout the preceding investigation I have had occasion to remark the small amount of influence on English speculation which was exercised by the continental successors of Descartes. A few words will be sufficient to render the reason of this apparent: it has been hinted at already, above. (pp. 8, 9.) Descartes had detected the importance of consciousness: he had protested against all building of opinions till there was a basis on

which to build ; and he found this foundation in the clear and distinct utterances of consciousness. *Cogito ergo sum* was clear and distinct enough ; but Descartes built too hastily, and some of his conclusions hardly appeared to be justified by his test : so that Locke found a basis of certainty not in consciousness pure and simple, but in what is given to consciousness. English philosophy pursued the question, What is given to consciousness, and how does knowledge spring from it?—through many of the phases of the philosophy of Sensuous Consciousness. Continental philosophers, accepting the Cartesian criterion of truth, proceeded to search for a system of nature which should harmonise with the test, whatever it did with phenomena. In its last development it is purely mathematical in form, as any system was likely to be which paid more attention to the ego and the forms of sense than to the filling.

English Philosophy in its examination of the matter of sensation was continually finding less and less which could be put forward as the basis of knowledge, till at length in Hume we reach a denial of the possibility of knowledge based on the meagreness of impressions. In the course of this progress there was a stage where it was recognised that the communications of sense were so meagre that

Their nearest approximation to one another.

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knowledge *must* rest on another source : and at this point we have a close connection with those continental philosophers who neglected the filling of sense and found the truth in its form. One had introduced a Deity to supplement the testimony of sense impressions; the other required a Deity to add impressions of sense to the clear convictions of consciousness. Berkeley starting with impressions must have a divine Being to render them knowledge : Malebranche starting with clear convictions looks to a divine Being to render them actual.

Even then where the two series touch most closely, there is a decided divergence in the way in which very similar conclusions were reached : and we need not be surprised if the continental successors of Descartes had little effect on English speculations, though they started from very different points in the same system.

The outcome of  
Continental  
Cartesianism

From Descartes' time there must be in every system a recognition of thinking and of matter ; he exhibited a hard and fast contradiction between the two, and it is this antithesis which his followers strove to solve. Geulinx destroyed the difficulty caused by the succession of phenomena, by ascribing it to intelligent action on certain occasions. Malebranche went farther in a similar direction, and solved the difficulty of sensation by



describing this as due to the action of an intelligent being, who is neither extended as bodies are, nor a spirit as men are, but the ground of the existence of both. There is always the effort to formulate the Universe in such a way that it shall be clear to consciousness. And just as the empirical school had its proper outcome in Hume, who showed the meagreness of sense impression, so this other effort had its proper outcome in Spinoza, who exhibited the barrenness of a philosophy of the forms of sense. Hume and Spinoza are the two authors whose ways of thinking are most apart, and who crown the diverging series of successors of Descartes.

There is one difficulty that occurs which led to the next transition. Descartes' was only a philosophy of consciousness,—the unity of thinking and being. The question remains, *What* consciousness exists, is it mine, or a universal consciousness from which mine emanates? Descartes could have found no answer to this question had it occurred, and the ego and God are equally substantial with him: others can draw no distinction which is clear and definite: and the substantiality of the ego fades into that of an Absolute. It is here that Leibnitz must come forward with the assertion of individuality: the finding of substantiality in the individual is a step

and transition  
through  
Leibnitz

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to the  
philosophy of  
Perception.

The influence  
of Descartes on  
Philosophy.

towards recognising validity in the forms of cognition which each individual possesses; and thus on this other side we have come to a problem which was solved by Kant.

The system of Descartes had been the best summary of Man's universal relations so far as they were known, but it had been proved inadequate in the face of advancing knowledge: it was a necessary step in the development of Thought, and it paved the way for a fuller exhibition of truth which was to come.\* The nature of the importance for all future Philosophy of this phase in the progressive manifestation of Eternal Truth has been touched upon above,† in putting forward a tentative hypothesis: it may now be asserted as the verified conclusion of the whole, that the philosophy of Sensuous Consciousness was an advance on that of the Natural Soul, while its later and one-sided developments were superseded by Reid and Leibnitz, who proved the harbingers of the philosophy of Perception.

and in England

The influence of Descartes stimulated the advance which was made by English thinkers from the ground that was occupied by Bacon or Herbert: there are traces of the effect he produced on the minds of his contemporaries, and he marked out the lines which future

\* Vide supra, sec. 4.

† Vide supra, sec. 13.

discussion followed, till at length the reaction came. Reid took the false step of piling up facts of consciousness rather than analysing the nature of any single one: and he has had many followers in this country. Others have preferred to observe external phenomena without sufficiently considering the nature of all experience. "Chips from German workshops" have been gathered in abundance to embellish some treatises, and others glisten with reflections of French illumination. The literary value of these works it is not our place to appraise, and their philosophical worth will be best estimated by those of posterity who peruse them; perchance they will say that the living impulse which English speculation received from Descartes was potent in Hume, and perished in Reid.



## APPENDIX.

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### ON THE INTELLECTUALISM OF LOCKE.

The inconsistencies of various parts of Locke's Essay are so striking that there has sometimes been a tendency to exaggerate them, and to neglect the general tenour of the work ; and therefore I have endeavoured to bring it into greater prominence as having more importance with regard to Locke's place in the course of English thought. As however a very different view of the general character of this philosophy has met with wide acceptance since the publication of Mr. Webb's *Intellectualism of Locke*, I desire to add a few words in justification of the opinion I have adopted above. The question at issue may be thus stated, Does Locke (on the whole) regard the materials supplied by sense to the mind as charged with elements which can be detected in them, or does he recognise that the mind superadds intellectual forms to the data of sense ? I am inclined to believe that the former is the view of Locke's philosophy, while hints of the latter theory have been sometimes

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Question as to  
the general  
character of the  
philosophy.

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introduced when he “stumbles on” truth unawares. These “hints,” however, according to Mr. Webb, furnish us with a clue to the real character of the Philosophy; not as it was apprehended by others and influenced succeeding thinkers, but as it was intended by Locke.

Alleged  
Intellectualism.

Mr. Webb writes—“Among our simple ideas Locke enumerates certain *a priori* Concepts which he describes as ‘suggested to the Understanding’ by the ‘isolated Data of Sensation and Reflection (II, vii, 1-9); ‘among the Complex Ideas, which he professedly regards as the ‘creatures or inventions of the Understanding,’ he enumerates certain ‘Modes which are ‘‘suggested’ to the Understanding by an impotence of Thought (II, xvii, 4, &c.); certain ‘Relations,’ ‘supposed, superinduced, and superadded by the Understanding in an act of Comparison or Judgment (II, xxv-xxiii.) Here then we have a triple element of INTELLECTUALISM. Here we have the Understanding, unequivocally recognised as a spontaneous energy, and a generative force.” (P. 102.) These simple ideas correspond, it is said, to Kant’s Forms of Intuition; the Modes and Relations to the Categories. The comparison becomes more difficult when we remember the purpose with which Kant investigated this complex mechanism; he describes the conditions of each exercise of mental energy—

conditions which may not be always consciously present, but which are constantly operative. Locke's design is a different one : it is to explain how certain conceptions first come into the individual consciousness : both are psychological inquiries, but one is concerned with the conditions of knowledge, the other with its content : Kant investigates the forms implied in conscious action, Locke the gradual recognition of Sense Intuitions, Intellectual Concepts, and Rational Ideas as parts of the furniture of conscious mind.

In his account of Locke's Simple Idea, Mr. Webb appears to me to understate the intellectual elements which it may be said to contain implicitly : he describes it as coinciding with the Sensible Intuition of Kant. (P. 72.) Each such intuition, it is said, whether of internal or external sense (Reflection or Sensation) "suggests to the Understanding" ideas of Succession, Power, Number, &c. ; that is, Sense furnishes occasions on which the spontaneity of the Understanding exhibits itself and adds such elements as these. The satisfactoriness of this explanation depends wholly on the meaning we attach to "suggest :" does the word necessarily imply, *be the passive occasion of*, or may we interpret it by *involve* ? It is only in the former case that Mr. Webb's argument holds, and that "the Understanding is unequivocal

Are ideas of Succession, &c., implicit in the data or added by the mind?

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“cally recognised as a source of Simple Ideas. If “certain ideas be suggested by, they must be super-  
 “added to the data of Sensation and Reflection ; if  
 “they be suggested to, they must be superadded  
 “by, the faculty of Understanding.” If we read  
 ‘involved in’ for ‘suggested to’ in the first clause the  
 argument falls to pieces. Yet Locke uses “brings  
 “this Idea along with it,” “carries with it,” “is  
 “offered us by,” as synonymous with “suggested by”  
 internal or external sense. He writes—“Every object  
 “our senses are employed about, every Idea in our  
 “Understanding, every thought of our Mind, *brings*  
 “*this Idea* along with it.” Can this mean that the  
 Understanding adds the idea of Number on occasions  
 furnished by Sense, or is it not that all external and  
 internal sense intuitions involve intellectual elements ;  
 that is to say, that these intellectual elements are data  
 furnished to the Understanding, not added by it ? If  
 so, the simple idea of Locke is a Sense intuition as  
 already wrought upon by the Categories.

Is necessity due  
 to the data of  
 sense or to the  
 mind ?

It is next urged that Locke recognises not only  
 the need of this faculty, but the definite act of the  
 Understanding in superadding the form of thought,—  
 the suggestion becomes a necessary concept by means  
 of an act of judgment. “Primary qualities are \* \*  
 “such as the mind finds inseparable from every  
 “particle of matter :” but is this inseparability due



to an intellectual impossibility (founded on the forms of the Understanding) or does it arise because all matter, as presented, or represented by the Imagination—a faculty of the Mind—is characterised by the possession of primary qualities? It would take much more definite language than Locke anywhere uses to show clearly that he regarded this impossibility as owing to the nature of mental activity, rather than to the character of the material which is furnished to the mind, *e.g.* the idea of infinity of space is got from the want of experience of limits and the inability to imagine them. (II, xvii, 4.)

There is the same question of interpretation as to his opinion of the ideas of substances: and it is here I conceive that Mr. Webb's case is strongest. "These collective ideas of Substances the Mind makes by its Power of Composition, and uniting severally either simple or complex Ideas into one, as it does by the same faculty make the complex ideas of particular Substances, consisting of an Aggregate of divers simple ideas, united in one substance."\* Further, the idea of Substance which is thus added is a supposition of the mind, and we seem to have a clear assertion of the action of the mind in the "synthesis of perception." But the question recurs whether the power of composition of which he speaks

Is the unity of an object received or created by the mind?

\* Ess. II, xxiv, 2.

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may not be one of re-uniting what has been presented in close connection, rather than one of combining the intuitions of sense into objects? And on this point it seems to me that a passage in Book II, ii, 1, is decisive: the qualities "are blended in things themselves:" "the hand feels softness and colour in the same piece of wax." Again, we may compare Bk. II, xxiii, 3, we find that "we come to have ideas of particular sorts of substances by collecting such combinations of simple ideas as are by Experience and Observation of men's senses taken Notice of to exist together." Surely it is difficult to interpret this to mean that the mind constitutes the objects by imposing the conception of substance; the activity of which Locke speaks is not creative of objects, but only a power that frames conceptions and imagines figures; the most extreme sensuists have described such operations, even if they failed to explain them.

"Notions superinduced"—  
but how?

Nor is Locke's statement, that the idea of Substance is a supposition of the Understanding (II, xxiii, 37), incompatible with this view: it is a supposition forced on us by abstraction from our sense-knowledge, not a condition presupposed and prerequisite to the recognition of any one object. The same remark may be made in regard to those ideas of relation which are "notions superinduced." Are they superinduced by the mind to the sense-intuition, or added from without

because of some change in the object? "Father is a  
 "Notion superinduced to the substance or Man, and  
 "refers only to an act of that thing called Man:"  
 (II, xxv, 4) that is to say, the idea of relation is due to  
 external change, not to the action of our minds.

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Much stress is laid by Mr. Webb on Locke's ad-  
 mission of acts of judgment; and certainly these acts  
 of judgment are mentioned, but with what view? Is  
 the Understanding merely *analytical*, breaking up the  
 elements combined in sense-perception into the parts  
 which we (now) know to be involved—or is it active  
 in the way of constituting objects, by receiving the  
 blurred manifold of Sense through the forms of intu-  
 ition and working it up by the imposition of the  
 categories of Substance and Relation? To my mind  
 at least there is little doubt that for Locke the action  
 of the mind was confined to the analysis of what is  
 given in sense, and that no formal or necessary ele-  
 ments are added by the Understanding itself. It is  
 but the philosophy of a Sensuous Consciousness whose  
 nature he has not analysed.

Analytical  
Understanding.

It remains for me to consider the evidence which  
 may be adduced from the Fourth Book. There it  
 seems that the intellectual position is fully maintained  
 since Locke finds the greatest certainty, not in sense  
 but in intellectual intuition, a fact which seems incom-  
 patible with my statement above. (P. 95.) But it

Subjective  
certainty and  
knowledge.

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must be observed that this certainty is wholly confined by him to the realm of his conceptions : if we ask after real knowledge we find that this is given by the senses. His certainty is mere subjective clearness : the certainty to which Descartes attained was knowledge of existence, it was this that was given him by his consciousness of himself as thinking : but the nearest approach to knowledge of existence which Locke admits, comes from Sensuous Consciousness : it is by this that he is convinced that his thoughts are more than a compound of fictions. (IV, iv, 4).

God as existing.

If there is so little trace of the mental activity of the Understanding there is still less recognition of the Kantian Ideas of Reason as necessary principles, while they are borrowed from common sense as existing objects. The Lockian doctrine of God has been considered above. Mr. Webb writes—" We combine " all the various perfections which our mind enables " us to perceive, enlarge them with the idea of Infinity " objectify the concept."\* But how and why can we objectify the concept ? The idea which Locke obtains is merely an idea ; the belief in God's existence which he assumes depends solely on common consciousness. It is in a very different sphere that he finds a knowledge of existence.

Mr. Webb has given us a most careful study of the

\* P. 144.

Essay; he has cleared some points of detail—notably the true nature of ‘Reflection,’—and has called attention to numerous phrases which show uncertainty in the mind of Locke,—especially in the treatment of complex ideas; but he has hardly refuted the common opinion as to the main drift of his philosophy. Locke had unconsciously thought into the sense-intuitions those very intellectual elements which he tried to gather from them by mere abstraction: to him they appeared to be supplied in the data of sense, not by the activity of mind.



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