

**An examination and popular exposition of the hylo-idealistic philosophy /
by William Bell M'Taggart.**

Contributors

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AN EXAMINATION
AND
POPULAR EXPOSITION OF
THE
HYLO-IDEALISTIC PHILOSOPHY

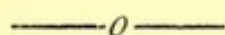
BY
WILLIAM BELL M'TAGGART
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P R E F A C E.



IN offering this little work to the public, a few words of explanation and introduction may not be out of place, for the scope and dignity of Dr. Lewins' philosophy does not lie on the surface, and may easily be overlooked by those whose attention is now drawn to it for the first time, and as its claims are of the highest order, it may be well here briefly to set them forth.

In common with nearly all systems of Philosophy, Hylo-Idealism claims to be a reasonable and adequate solution of both the mental and physical problems with which our human life is rounded. It points out the origin and limits of our knowledge; but while, in common with many other systems, it points to the beginning of knowledge, it tells that this knowledge may have hardly limit or bound. All knowledge is relative, but man is in relation to the absolute, and how much of the absolute may enter into that relation none can foresee.

This alone is a great task to have attempted, but Hylo-Idealism does more than this. It is a

great constructive effort, eclipsing the efforts of all religions, not alone by rationalizing the material universe, but by furnishing a scientific rule and guide for life.

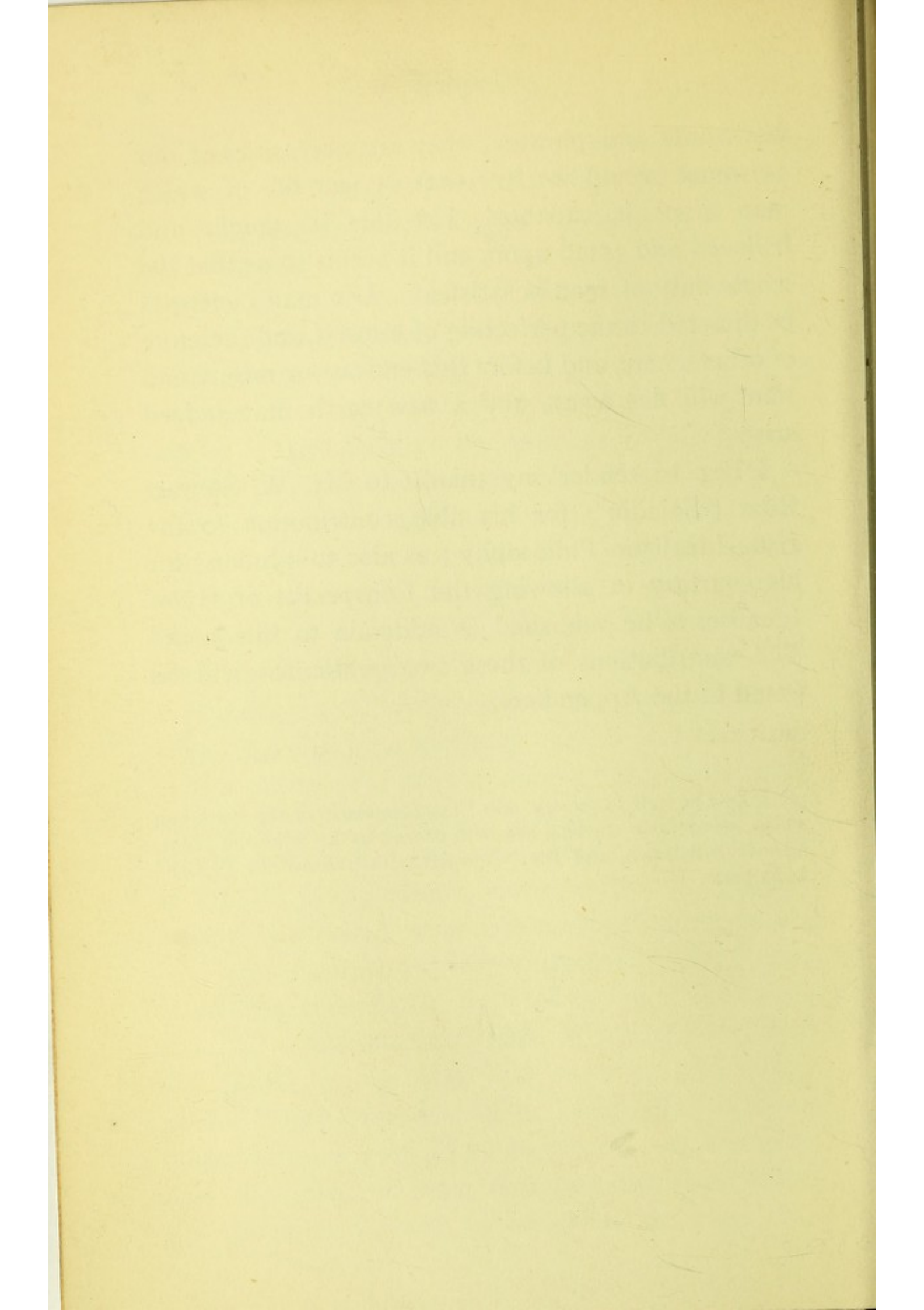
Hylo-Idealism teaches that man is the master of himself, and for himself is the master and maker of all worlds, gods, and things whatsoever. It teaches that not alone is man the master of his body, but that he is the master of his mind also. Things are but thinks. It is true that objects remain; how much of phenomena is due to the object and how much to the response by mind we may not know, but certain it is that, as man obtains mastery over his mind, by so much do things become to him what he chooses to make them. The phenomena of thunder is a different *think* to the savage and the physicist. Loss of health or wealth is less a loss to the philosopher than to the rough; and loss of honour to the gentleman is the greatest misfortune of all, but to the aforesaid rough it is no loss at all,—in fact, perhaps he never had it. Things are but thinks, and each ego to itself must be the sum and measure of all existence. Enlightened selfishness, then, is the basis of this new morality; it is the most effectual basis of all morality and the most lasting. Do your duty to your neighbour. Why? Because your neighbour is your other self,—a part of your egoity; you cannot hurt the meanest thing that moves without injuring yourself. ‘Truth, honour, love, are more than

fine words and phrases ; they are necessities of our existence would we live that perfect life of which man alone is capable.' Let this be taught and believed and acted upon, and it seems to us that the whole duty of man is satisfied. Let man's energies be directed to the perfecting of himself, and therefore of others, here, and before this endeavour misery and want will flee away, and a new earth may indeed arise.

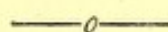
I beg to tender my thanks to Mr. W. Stewart Ross ('Saladin') for his able contribution to the Hylo-Idealistic Philosophy ; as also to 'Julian' for his courtesy in allowing the Conspectus of Hylo-Idealism to be published as addenda to this work.¹ The contributions of these two gentlemen will be found in the Appendices.

W. B. M'TAGGART.

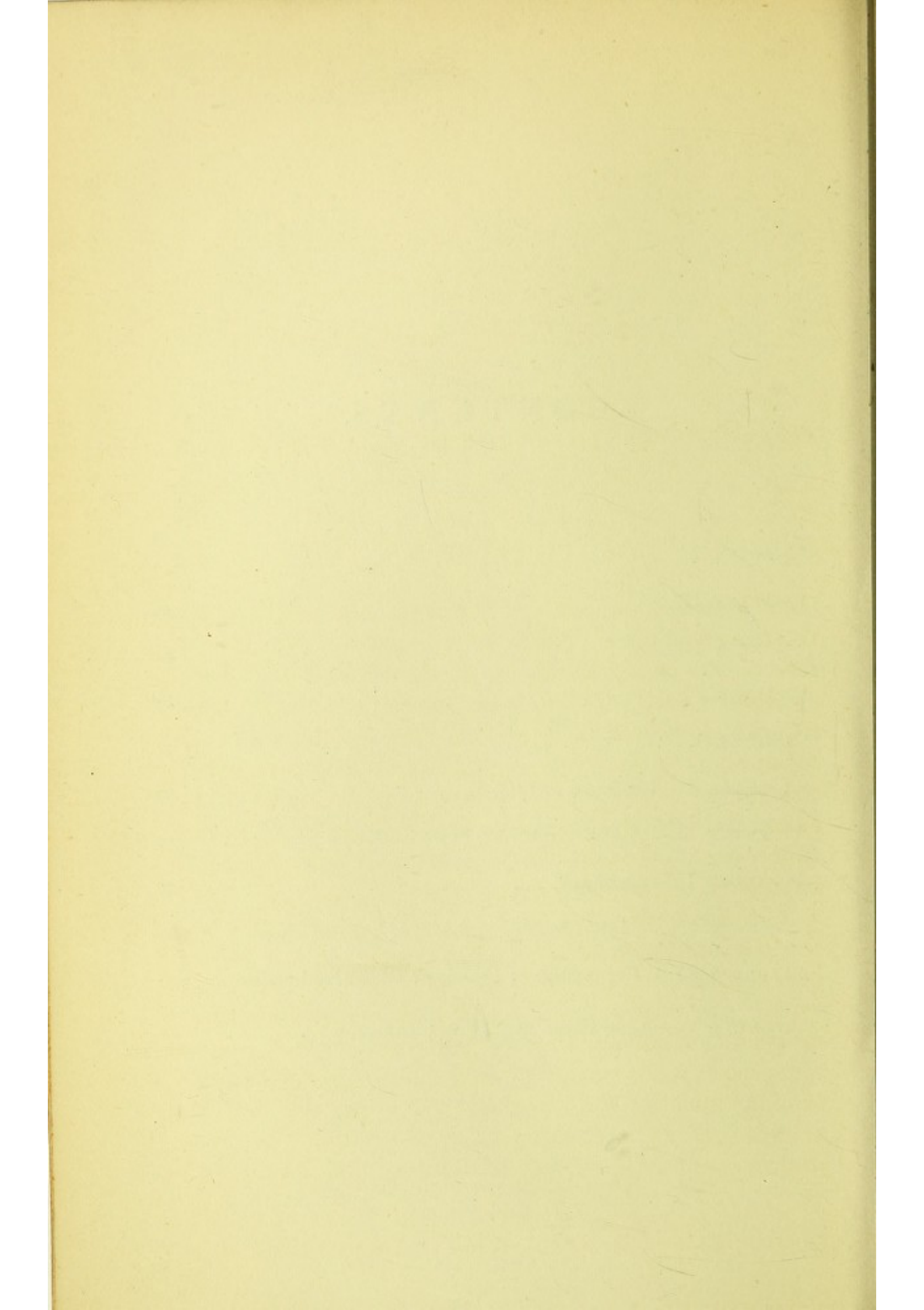
¹ It may be well to remark that 'The Confession of the Faith,' on which considerable criticism has been offered in the following pages, is now withdrawn, and the 'Conspectus' substituted by 'Julian' in its place.



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AN EXAMINATION

OF THE

HYLO-IDEALISTIC SYSTEM OF PHILOSOPHY.

—o—

CHAPTER I.

THIS system has become familiar to the public, chiefly through the articles which have appeared from time to time in the *Secular Review* from the pens of Dr. Lewins, 'Julian,' 'C. N.,'¹ and 'Pioneer,' but to Dr. Lewins belongs the whole credit of its origination. 'Julian' has, however, appeared as the most frequent and prominent advocate in the journal named, but in dealing with the matter it will be necessary for us to consider what this philosophy is, and what certain principles may be deduced from it as it is expounded in the writings of all these, its apostles.

This system demands from us a complete and searching criticism and examination, for its claims are great—greater, perhaps, than may have been apparent to the casual reader. It claims to be a complete and self-contained system of philosophy, sufficient in itself for all things, not alone as bringing about a reconciliation of that dualism of mind and matter which has been 'the difficulty' to thinkers of all generations, but as giving a sufficient answer to the problems of the universe, and furnishing a

¹ *What is Religion?* by 'C. N.,' with appendices by Dr. Lewins and 'Julian.' London: W. Stewart & Co., 41 Farringdon Street, E.C.

rule and guide for life. These are great claims indeed. They are claims, however, which all systems of philosophy have set forth, and it remains for us to see in how far Hylo-Idealism is successful in its task.

It will, I think, in coming ages, be noted as the distinguishing mark of the philosophical work of the latter half of this nineteenth century, 'the persistent effort to abolish the old dualism, the antagonism between mind and matter, subject and object, ego and non-ego, and to unite the contending theses of Materialism and Idealism into one harmonious whole.' This is the great and fundamental endeavour of Hylo - Idealism also, and, though Dr. Lewins claims to have evolved this creed from the Protagorean doctrines, yet I hope that he will not take it amiss if I venture to say that he is working, if not on the same, at least on parallel lines with our giant philosopher and thinker, Mr. Herbert Spencer, and that Mr. Spencer's evangel of Transfigured Realism is practically identical, up to a certain point, with Dr. Lewins' Hylo-Idealism. Transfigured Realism is likewise the attempt to unite subject and object, ego and non-ego, Idealism and Realism. Its fundamental assumption is, that all our knowledge is based upon and bounded by experience, and that outside or beyond himself man cannot go. The distinguishing feature, however, of this philosophy, as expounded by the late G. H. Lewes and Herbert Spencer, is the recognition that the term experience must be admitted to mean, not alone the experience of the individual, but the collective experience of the race, so that the present individual starts, as it were, with a stock of hereditary experience, derived from his ancestors; and this it is which supplies what Kant and his followers considered as necessary truths, known *à priori*, and which were added by the mind to the knowledge gained by individual experience, but which, it is now shown, are also only the results of experience (inherited

experience), known therefore *à posteriori*. Dr. Lewins has not, I believe, explicitly stated this in his exposition of the faith; but it is implicitly admitted in every article of his creed, denying aggressively, as it does, anything conceivable to man beyond man himself, and therewith necessarily denying the possibility of all *à priori* conceptions.

In order, however, that the general reader may entertain a clear idea of what follows, it will, I think, be necessary here to consider the two leading trains of thought which have been followed (with variations) by philosophers from the earliest records until now, so that it may be clearly understood what it is that has to be reconciled and united, and how this is proposed to be accomplished. Philosophy, then, may, for our present purpose, be broadly divided into two opposite and contradictory systems, namely, the Materialistic hypothesis and the Idealistic hypothesis. I say for our present purpose, for I do not believe that any leading thinker, excepting Hegel, has ever adopted in its entirety either pure Realism or pure Idealism, for both positions lead to gross—nay, *unthinkable*—absurdities of thought; and through the ages there seems to have been a feeling that there was, indeed, a borderland in common; nevertheless it has remained for this generation to openly and persistently attempt the reconciliation.

Now, Materialism may be defined as that system or systems which endeavours to construct the universe in its widest sense, including all the functions and operations of mind, out of matter alone. Recognising not only no necessity, but no room for spirit; regarding matter as self-contained and self-sufficient to produce all the phenomena of life and mind, as well as those of inanimate nature,—Materialism, relying solely on experience, declares boldly there is no spirit, good or evil; and for neither God nor devil is there place in its cosmology. Protagoras, from

whose celebrated doctrine, 'Man is the measure of all things,' Hylo-Idealism is derived, may be considered, perhaps, as the father of Materialism; though his assertion, that thought was sensation, and all knowledge consequently individual, was previously taught by Parmenides and Empedocles. Parmenides expresses himself:—

'Such as to each man is the nature of his many-jointed limbs,
Such, also, is the intelligence of each man; for it is
The nature of limbs (organization) which thinketh in men.
Both in one and all the highest degree of organization gives the
highest degree of thought.'¹

And he further states 'that, as sensible thought was dependent on organization, and as each organization differed in degree from every other, so would the opinions of men differ. If thought be sensation, we require but little reflection to see that, as sensations from the same object differ according to the senses of different persons, and, indeed, differ at different times with the same person, one opinion is not more true than another, and all are equally false.' And, again:—

'Thought is the same thing as the cause of thought,
For without the thing in which it is announced
You cannot find the thought; for there is nothing, nor shall be,
Except the existing.'

And, earlier still, in the dawn of philosophy, Empedocles wrote these remarkable lines—lines which will be subscribed to by the most modern thinkers, and to which, I will answer for it, Dr. Lewins at least will take no exception:—

'Who think aught can begin to be which formerly was not,
Or that aught which is can perish and utterly decay?
Another truth I now unfold: no natural birth

¹ See *History of Philosophy*, by G. H. Lewes. In these articles I shall largely avail myself of Mr. Lewes' assistance and of his authority; and therefore, to avoid endless quotations, I now refer the reader to this encyclopædic work.

Is there of mortal things, nor death's destruction final ;
Nothing is there but a mingling, and then a separation of the
mingled,
Which are called a birth and death by ignorant mortals.'

These are pregnant words indeed. Written 2300 years ago, in which of our minds do they not find a response in this, the nineteenth century?

As, however, Protagoras was later than these philosophers in time, so also were his conceptions, as a whole, considerably in advance of these, his predecessors; for, though he held that thought was sensation,—identical with, and limited to, sensation,—he further insisted that everything is therefore true, *relatively*, to the individual. Every sensation is a true sensation as far as it relates to the individual; but as there is nothing but sensation, knowledge is necessarily fluctuating and imperfect; in fact, nothing absolute can exist; man is the measure of all things. This position was the starting-point of the great controversy which has raged down to the present time, and it may therefore be well to examine these doctrines a little closely. It has been urged that thought cannot be reduced to sensation, because all sensation is not thought; but if we consider the subject attentively, the fallacy of this will become apparent. What is sensation? It is the result of stimulus applied to something capable of responding to stimulus; it is stimulus *plus* neurility,—neurility being defined as the function of nerves. The function of nerves is to feel,—*i.e.* to respond to stimuli, *as sensation*; neurility, therefore, is the power to respond to stimuli, *as sensation*. Now, it cannot be urged that all things should therefore feel, for all things respond to stimuli; for (and this is just the crux of the whole question) if a wall or a stone be struck, vibrations indeed take place. If a piece of india-rubber be compressed, it springs back again on the removal of the pressure; but there is no feeling. Why? Because there is present only

one of the terms necessary to produce sensation. The stimulus is there, but there is no substance present having the function of neurility to respond to the stimulus ; *ergo*, sensation is not there.

To continue : As it must be admitted that all sensation is not thought,—for the brain, the organ of thought, may be removed, and still the remaining nerve-centres will respond to appropriate stimuli,—how, then, does sensation become thought ? We have seen that sensation is the response to stimuli by the nerves, the nerves (which, in this connection, include the nerve-centres) being defined as that which has the function of responding to stimuli, as feeling ; so, also, thought is the response to stimuli, of that which has the function of thought. Apply stimulus to nerves (nerve-tissue) unconnected with the brain, but connected with some other nerve-centre, and sensation is the result. Apply similar stimulus to nerves connected with a brain, whose function is not suspended or destroyed by sleep, disease, etc., and thought is the result. The higher the organization and function of the brain, the more complicated and higher the thoughts produced. Thought, therefore, is the connexus between a stimulus and an object capable of responding to stimulus in a *definite fashion* ; the higher the organization of the organ, and the more complicated and more powerful the stimuli, the higher and more complicated the results ; and if, indeed, the stimulus be ill-adapted to the organ,—be too powerful,—lesion or destruction of the organ is the result. ‘Too much learning hath made thee mad.’ And it is within the knowledge of us all that a powerful stimulus or shock, such as sudden very bad or good news, fright, and so on, has the effect of causing serious injury, if not destruction, to the organ, which is not adapted to withstand so great and unusual a strain. A sudden or violent muscular strain may injure arms or legs so as to render them unfit to carry out their functions ; and, similarly, a

sudden or violent strain will injure the brain, and render it unfit to carry out its due functions.

Cause and effect—nothing here, either in the brain or out of it, but force and matter ; thus, in one sense, doing away with subjectivity altogether ; but as we can only define objectivity as a something, or *the* something, external to ourselves, and as we cannot, without a contradiction in terms, consider our brain (representing ourselves) as external to ourselves, therefore subjectivity must arise, the brain or thought-organ being the subject, and all else the object ; and it is the *relation between these* which is the cause of thought. Thus all degrees of thought, starting from the simplest form of sensation up to the thoughts of man, proceed in one unbroken scale. From the jelly-fish to the mammal, sensation rules. Stimulus *plus* organization : the more complicated the organization, the greater, the more complicated the sensation. This is, as I understand it, part of the position of Hylo-Idealism ; and, carried thus far, it appears to me that the premises are undeniable, the conclusion irresistible. Protagoras, however, sums up : ‘Man is the measure of all things.’ Now, this statement, as it stands, is certainly, on these premises, not a logical conclusion—not true. If man were the measure of all things, then the absurdity often put forward as a valid objection to his doctrine would be true. The argument which is urged by pure Idealists amounts to this : That if man is the measure of all things, then, indeed, there is no object, only subject. If all men were destroyed, if all thinking things were destroyed, then all objects of thought would equally pass away. But, as against this, it is, I venture to think, a truism which must be accepted, that if all life and thought were destroyed, matter would still remain ; nay, possibly nothing else might be altered in the universe, if all thinking organisms passed away ; therefore, if this be accepted, as I believe it must, man is not the measure of

all things. Amend the formula, however: say man is the measure of all things *for man*, and a proposition is laid down that, in my judgment, is absolutely impregnable. A horse is the measure of all things for a horse; he cannot think beyond a horse—he cannot think like a man, like a being of higher organization. So, though a man cannot think beyond himself, beyond the capacity of his own organization, it does not in the least follow that, in other worlds, or even in this world at some future period, there may not be beings of higher organization and higher powers of thought; therefore, as a horse is the measure of the universe for a horse, so also must man be the measure of the universe for man. In this connection let me quote from Xenophanes, B.C. 620:—

‘ But men foolishly think that gods are born like as men are,
And have, too, a dress like their own, and their voice and their
figure;
But if oxen and lions had hands like ours, and fingers,
Then would horses like unto horses, and oxen to oxen,
Paint and fashion their god-forms, and give to them bodies
Of like shape to their own, as they themselves, too, are fashioned.’

In writing this portion of my criticism, I am somewhat at a loss to know what is the accepted doctrine of Hylo-Idealism; for in the pamphlet, *What is Religion?* by ‘C. N.,’ with appendices by Dr. Lewins and ‘Julian,’ and which is a profession of the faith, ‘Julian’ adopts the formula of Protagoras, ‘Man is the measure of all things,’ intact; but elsewhere both he and Dr. Lewins, at least by implication, adopt the modified formula; and as the second proposition is as clearly logical as the other is illogical, I must take it for granted that one of Dr. Lewins’ fundamental propositions is, that ‘man is the measure of the universe for man,’ though I cannot but express the opinion that the omission of the last two words in any single instance is to be regretted, for a chain must be judged by its weakest link; and all critics will certainly

not be so well disposed to overlook a palpable weakness, even though it be—as I venture to hope that it must be—only a slip of the pen. I must, therefore, consider that the amended formula, ‘Man is the measure of the universe *for man*,’ is one of the fundamental propositions of Dr. Lewins’ philosophy; and though we may accept this as a foundation of rock which cannot be moved, and though we must give our entire adhesion to this premise, it does not follow that we are called upon to give a similar assent to all the deductions which may be drawn therefrom.¹ It will be unnecessary, I think, for our present purpose, to extend our inquiry into the various modifications of Materialism which have been advanced by various thinkers. From Protagoras to Dr. Büchner is a far cry; but an outline of the general body of doctrine is sufficient for us here, for Materialists have generally been so appalled at the results of their reasoning, that they have refused to follow the premises to their legitimate conclusion, and have taken refuge in ‘Scepticism,’ which may be defined as a universal ‘Doubt,’ or ‘I don’t know, and can’t know.’

The conclusions of Materialism, however, up to this point, and no further, are accepted by, and are part of, the fundamental conceptions of Hylo-Idealism. Hitherto it has been found that, if the conclusions from these premises are continued to their logical extremity, there results only a universal necessity: matter, force, and law. Man, being in every bodily tissue, in every desire, thought, and action, only the resultant of all the conditions of his environment, animal automatism, human automatism, must result. This conclusion, from which so many Materialists have shrunk, was boldly accepted by the late Professor Clifford; and I am compelled to confess that, on the lines of transfigured realism, I can see no other

¹ Dr. Lewins has since replied in the *Secular Review*, September 8, entirely accepting and postulating the amended formula.

outcome. If, however, my memory serves me rightly, Mr. Herbert Spencer replied in one of the reviews, refusing to accept this conclusion as the result of his philosophy, and requested that judgment might be suspended until the completion of his system of philosophy, the foundation-stones only of which had been laid in his two works, *Principles of Biology* and *Principles of Psychology*. This promised work, so far as I know, has not yet been given to the public; therefore I can only say that, though Mr. Spencer has disavowed the doctrine of human automatism, I am entirely at a loss to see how he proposes to avoid that issue. For my own part, I have always held that what is true cannot be morally hurtful; and 'C. N.,' in *What is Religion?* agrees with me in this passage:— 'If intellectual truth appears to land us in moral evil, it is at least possible either that the seeming truth is in reality falsehood, or that we have failed to form a just estimate of its bearings.' Now, I maintain that the doctrine of human automatism is subversive of all morality, and that, if taught, and believed, and acted upon, society must crumble to pieces, and a *modus vivendi* would be impossible. This is the terrible conclusion which has turned so many Materialists into Sceptics,¹ and they have felt compelled to maintain that, as reason had led them into the quandary, then either nothing is true or the truth cannot be discovered. Now it is the extraordinary and unique merit of Hylo-Idealism—a merit shared, I believe, by no other system—that it successfully surmounts this difficulty. It has followed, as we have seen, pure Materialism along its pitiless path up to the point, and up to the point only, where logic seems to fall into unacceptable positions; and it has also followed, as we shall presently see, pure Idealism along its unimpeachable premises, up to that point where

¹ I may explain that the term Sceptic has not, necessarily, any religious connection. A philosophic Sceptic is one who doubts the validity of our sources of knowledge.

its deductions also commence to land us in unthinkable absurdities. Thus, as it were, having accepted all that is true in both these opposite, though parallel, trains of thought, at the identical point where they both break down, Hylo-Idealism, by a supreme effort of genius, saves reason from shame, and, by a union of both trains of thought, enables logic to continue its path up to the great aim and object of all search—an all-sufficing system of belief.

Having now traced the identity between Materialism and Hylo-Idealism up to the point where Materialism ceases to be acceptable, let us pass on to consider the affinity between Hylo-Idealism and Idealism, so that, having thoroughly examined the foundations, we may look forward with a good hope to be able to reason upon the superstructure.

There has, I am persuaded, been only one pure Idealist since the beginning of time, namely, Hegel. As this, however, is not the place to examine fully his philosophy, and as we wish to arrive at something definite as rapidly as may be, we must here, I think, set him on one side as too difficult for our purpose. *En passant*, I may remark that, among other paradoxes,—in fact, at the commencement of his logic,—Hegel postulates the somewhat startling axiom, ‘Being and non-being are the same.’ This is not the wild nonsense that it appears, although ‘Lara’ has, with, as I believe, a higher conception of truth, laid it down as a dogma of pure reason, and as the second law of thought (in the number of July 28 of *The Secular Review*), that ‘nothing can both be and not be.’ Neither from the earlier philosophers shall we obtain much to our point, so that we may at once, I think, commence with Bishop Berkeley.

It cannot be too often repeated that Bishop Berkeley did not deny the existence of matter in the vulgar sense of the term; in fact, he ostentatiously avowed himself to

be on the side of the vulgar as regards the evidence of the senses. This misconception, or, too often, wilful misrepresentation, has been the cause of the whole of the ridicule which has been hurled at him and his followers by both of those classes, who either are unwilling to think at all, or who think in the obstinate and dogmatic groove of a Dr. Johnson. What Berkeley really denied was the existence of philosopher's matter, the substratum, the noumenon, which underlies all phenomena. This unknown substance he rejects and replaces by a known cause, a spiritual substance. He says,—

‘If it (the noumenon) is unknown, unknowable, I will none of it, for it is a figment worse than useless. But if by matter you understand that which is seen, felt, tasted, touched, then I say that matter exists, and herein I agree with the vulgar. If, on the contrary, you understand by matter that occult substratum which is not seen, not felt, then I say, I do not believe in the existence of matter; and herein I differ from philosophers, and agree with the vulgar. And, further, what I see, hear, and feel doth exist—*i.e.* is perceived by me.’

This is the key-note, these things exist for me; for I see, hear, and feel. It is on account of my own subjectivity, and by it only, that these things exist for me.

The reason given by philosophy for inferring the existence of matter was ‘the necessity for some synthesis of attributes.’ Berkeley made the synthesis a mental one, and disposed of matter, ‘the substratum,’ at a blow. He urged the undeniable truth that, when we do our utmost to conceive the existence of external bodies, we are all the while contemplating only our own ideas. Now, for an idea to exist without a mind capable of forming an idea, is an impossibility, and as all things external to us only exist as ideas for us, therefore, if all minds capable of forming ideas were annihilated, all ideas would cease to exist, and, consequently, all matter also; for matter only

exists as represented in our ideas. Realism urges, in reply, that these ideas, with which we admit the mind to be solely conversant, are but the ideas (images) of certain things; these things exist independently of being perceived, though their ideas cannot. To which Berkeley replies,—

‘But, say you, though the ideas themselves do not exist without mind, yet there may be things like them, whereof they are copies or resemblances, which things exist without the mind in an unthinking substance? I answer: *An idea can be like nothing but an idea*; a colour or figure can be like nothing but another colour or figure. Again, I ask whether these supposed originals or external things of which our ideas are the pictures or representations, be themselves perceivable or no? If they are, then they also are ideas, and we have gained one point; but if you say they are not, I appeal to any one whether it be sense to assert that a colour is like something which is invisible, hard or soft like something which is intangible.’

This is unimpeachable, and has never been overturned. The result is, we are compelled to admit that, in modern language, states of consciousness *only* exist. Hylo-Idealism adopts this in the modified formula: We can only know our own states of consciousness. The Idealist says: ‘There is but one existence, mind. Analyze the concept matter, and you will discern that it is nothing but a synthesis of qualities,—*the qualities are sensations, the synthesis mental.*’ Consider this carefully: *the qualities are sensations, the synthesis mental.* By a paraphrase, the thoughts are sensations! And here we find that one of the fundamental conceptions of Hylo-Idealism is identical with pure Idealism. We have, however, seen that Protagoras, on the basis of Materialism, has asserted that thought was sensation, identical with and limited to sensation; and that this position, on the Materialistic basis, has been accepted by Hylo-Idealism. We are

now beginning to grasp the extraordinary completeness with which the union between mind and matter, subject and object, Materialism and Idealism, has been brought about by Dr. Lewins' system. Idealism, then, is that which holds that all things are subjective within ourselves; that we all and each of us construct our own world for ourselves, and in the same manner construct even our own gods—are the parents of our gods. But in writing this, am I not only repeating Dr. Lewins' own words? Idealism, however, like Materialism, if continued to the bitter end, lands us in absurdities of thought and in untenable positions, for the logical outcome thereof is, what Fichte saw and tried so hard to evade, a sublime egoism. Only the individual ego and its world exists :—

‘This conclusion is rigorous if the basis of consciousness be rigorously accepted. If nothing exists except my thoughts, then no other mind can exist beyond my thought of it. The ground we have for believing in the existence of other minds, is not a whit stronger than the ground for believing in the existence of other bodies.’

We have seen, then, that Materialism and Idealism are both logically correct, and sufficient up to a certain point only. And it has remained for Hylo-Idealism, while absorbing into itself the undeniable positions of both lines of thought, to grasp the moment where they each diverge from truth, and by a flight of genius to keep them in the path of reason by uniting them at the critical moment into one harmonious whole.

The time has now come, after this brief examination of the foundations, that we can, with some degree of confidence, taking Dr. Lewins' and ‘Julian's’ professions of the faith *litteratim*, pass an opinion upon the colossal structure that has been reared; and it is this which I propose to undertake in the following chapters.

CHAPTER II.

IN commencing this, the second portion of my task, I am confronted at once by the difficulty of how much, or how little, of Dr. Lewins' own expositions must be quoted, in order not only to state his case fairly, but to render it intelligible to the ordinary reader. This difficulty, though necessarily common to all examinations of the works of others, is greater in Dr. Lewins' case than in any of which I have had experience; and in self-defence, therefore, I feel bound to remonstrate with him upon his terminology, which is the main cause of the difficulty.

Dr. Lewins' terms and phrases, when treating of philosophy, do, it is true, convey definite and accurate images to his own mind, and to the minds of the very few who have made philosophy a study, but the general reader is appalled and turned aside by an array of words which he cannot hope to understand. Dr. Lewins complains of the supineness of the public towards philosophy, and of their obtuseness in failing to grasp the simplest problems of life and mind; but he should remember that every one has not a philosophical dictionary at his elbow, and that, though it is true brevity might be somewhat sacrificed, still much might be gained if philosophical technicalities were, when possible, replaced by paraphrases couched in every-day language. The especial difficulty, then, which he has landed me in is this: If I quote him verbatim, I

am satisfied that the general reader will not have the faintest notion of what it is all about, and most certainly will not be encouraged to enter upon the thorny path of metaphysics, and, therefore, will never arrive at the light of the glorious day to which we hope by and by to lead him. If, on the other hand, I cut down his paragraphs and paraphrase his language, then I lay myself open to the charges of misquotation and of failure to represent his real meaning. However, I must do my best; and if on any occasion I do fall into error of the latter description, Dr. Lewins will, I hope, accept my assurance that such failure will arise from my own misapprehension, and not from any willful misrepresentation.

We have, in the first portion of our inquiry, considered briefly the two opposing theses of Materialism and Idealism, and I have pointed out that it will become evident that Hylo-Idealism is really the scientific union of all that is best in both trains of thought. Bearing this in mind, let us turn to Dr. Lewins himself, not only for confirmation of this statement, but also in order to learn how this union is accomplished. In *What is Religion?* Appendix II., he writes:—

‘By Hylo-Idealism I mean nothing else than a less ambiguous and self-explanatory form of the term Psychology, [which term] . . . is the accredited creed of all rational human knowledge, in contradistinction to the occult and morbid mysticism of ontology or metaphysics. Psychology is defined by Sir W. Hamilton as “the science conversant with the phenomena of the mind, or conscious subject, or self, or ego;” ontology, by Littré, as . . . “first theory of being; science of being—that is, generally, the synonym of metaphysics.” . . . Psychology is thus relative and phenomenal, the doctrine of life . . . and human knowledge, beginning and ending as anthropomorphosis, and automorphosis, which is quite one with Hylo-Idealism, the notional or cerebral theory of mind

and matter. By it *things* become *thinks*, or sense-objects, and nature is revealed as the creature—not separate from and independent—of the mind, which, in its turn, is no immaterial principle or entity, but only the function or symptom of brain. . . . For the relativity of Hylo-Idealism rigidly confines each sentient being to the limits of its own egoity, the transcendence of which to Deity is utterly impossible, all concrete objects being *subjected* before cognition; and all abstract ones, including the God-idea, being notional concepts of the mind itself. . . . So that, as far as human thought can reach, man himself to man, and, within that circle, each ego to itself, must be the measure and proplasm of the universe, absolute being having no basis whatever in reality. [Dr. Lewins, it will be here observed, adopts the modified formula, Man is the measure of the universe *for man*.] . . . At all events, it seems perfectly clear that, as now mirrored in modern thought, the objective can have no other than a relative existence, being thus *solidaire* with the subjective. This is only, in other words, formulating the *solidarité* of the ego and non-ego, as psychosis is now diagnosed by medico-psychological symptomatology as vesiculo-neurosis in activity!!! [the notes of admiration are mine], thus unifying Hylo-Idealism and Materialism, and demonstrating the identity of so-called spirit, or anima and idea.'

Here, it will be seen, is declared the unity between Hylo-Idealism and Materialism, and the union consists in the recognition that subjectivity and objectivity are, as it were, reverses of the same medal; that subjectivity arises only from combinations and qualities of what must be regarded as the objective, namely, matter; and that objectivity, in its turn, arises also from the combinations and qualities of matter which have produced a subjective organization capable of perceiving and *responding* to the objective. Matter, matter everywhere; but let me point out—avoiding the difficulty of the pure Materialistic

hypothesis, which denies the subjectivity of matter—Hylo-Idealism admits that the subjective does exist, but shows that it exists as a part of, a phase of, but not independently of, matter. Subjectivity, as states of consciousness, and objectivity, including all modes of force, are equally regarded, in their last analysis, as only states of matter. This, then, it will be seen, is the point both of union and divergence between Hylo-Idealism and Materialism, and, for the point of contact between Hylo-Idealism and Idealism, let us now turn to Appendix I. of the work already quoted. Dr. Lewins writes :—

‘Without further preamble, let me state that the Hylozoic theorem of life and the world may be formulated as the utter and self-evident impossibility, in the nature of things, to transcend or escape in any way from the limits of our own anatomy, of our own conscious ego ; the non-ego, or—falsely so-called—“external universe,” being but the objective or projective image of our own egoity, not the vera effigies, or absolute substance, of any “thing” external to self ; in other words, that all “things,” or entities, or non-entities—abstract or concrete—from Divinity downwards, are merely ideal or phenomenal imagery of our own mind, the essential physical basis, proplasm, or officina of which is the vesiculo-neurine or grey tissue of the hemispherical ganglia ; that, in still more concise terms, being is perception and conception (ideation), which, apparently two abstractions, are virtually one—the function, namely, of a somatic organism, itself *fons et origo* of all cognition. On this view of nature and mind I trust your enlightened readers will be enabled to realize without difficulty, as a self-evident fact and principle, my corollary, that the only “world spirit,” or anima mundi, accessible to us is the animal life on the earth, and, in the last analysis, our consciousness, by which we alone feel “we live, move, and have our being,” or, in less mystic phraseology, are cognisant of motion and

sensation. So that no objection can be valid against Hylo-Idealism on the score of any contradiction between determinism or necessity and self-determinism or free-will, the seemingly two being really—*i.e.* ideally, or phenomenally, or relatively—identical, the “absolute” being to man an inaccessible *terra incognita*. . . . Surely it is clear and self-evident, on this theorem of Hylo-Idealism . . . that, though fate or natural law present itself to our conscious ego in the domain of cosmical order, “as if” rigidly immutable and inexorable, yet, as this law, which includes gravitation, or the self-activity of matter, is one with the law of *our own* organization—is indeed . . . a purely mental abstraction, not an actual force in nature, as vulgar realism conceives it, and thus only a figment and imaginary enactment of our own brain—the much vexed question of free-will or necessity resolves itself into a skiamachy, or dance of shadows. I find this view a perfect eirenicon on the momentous question of free-will and human responsibility to any power other than self. We *must*, must ! but compulsion there is none, since it is a law of our own nature, and is thus transformed into the law of perfect liberty. . . . The very keystone of Hylo-Phenomenalism is the impossibility and supererogation of affirmation or negation in regard to *any* phenomena outside the subjective universe of self, our only and all-sufficing “final or great first cause.” The whole universe of things and thought is thus only an automorphosis, each ego being to itself, as Protagoras postulated, the measure and standard of all existing things, of all thought and objects of thought whatsoever ; and actual altruism being what the Brahmans, in their prehistoric ontology, term *maya*, or illusion.’

This is the side of agreement with pure Idealism. To us and for us, those things contained in, and produced by, our own subjectivity can alone exist. Self is all, and the ego furnishes, contains, and produces its own universe.

In order that this position and results may become more clear, let me here quote from 'Julian,' in his confession of the faith, published lately in *The Secular Review*. He says (Article X.) :—

'While affirming that the "external world" is part of our own egoity, it must not be supposed that we deny the objective. All we deny is the absolute, and that only thus far that it is beyond the scope of our *gnosis*. We admit the objective, but insist on the identity of object and subject—in fact, the ego and non-ego are incessantly interchanging, the ego being transmitted into the non-ego, and the non-ego into the ego, in every breath we breathe and every mouthful of food we eat.'

This statement, coupled with what Dr. Lewins has written, will, I think, make clear, not only the connection between Hylo-Idealism and pure Idealism, but also how the union between Idealism and Materialism is brought about by Dr. Lewins' system of philosophy. It is accomplished by the recognition of the *relativity* of the two : without subjectivity, no objectivity ; without objectivity, no subjectivity. It is by the interchange—*i.e.* the relation between them both—that both exist.

Our examination of the premises, then, of Hylo-Idealism may here conclude. I have endeavoured, in a popular way, to lay them bare to their inmost recess. If I have succeeded so far in my task, it may be admitted that the premises are sound, and that a real and sufficing union between Materialism and Idealism has been brought about. In succeeding chapters, then, I will endeavour to ascertain and to examine what conclusions and results are, or should be, obtained from these premises.

CHAPTER III.

HAVING examined the foundation—the premises—of Hylo-Idealism, and having ascertained that they are sound and capable of supporting the weight of any logical edifice that may be reared upon them, let us now pass on to the conclusions which have been, or ought to have been, arrived at. For this purpose let us take 'Julian's' exposition, and consider it *seriatim*. 'Julian' writes:—

'The following is offered as an *ad interim* confession of the faith:—

'1. Everything must be either absolute or relative to ourselves. What is absolute is wholly independent of ourselves. What is relative is, in fact, part of ourselves. This is obvious, for it must be either a part of ourselves, or independent, and no part of ourselves; in which latter case it is absolute, or isolated from us.

'2. Man can take no note of what is absolute or wholly isolated from himself. Whatever is cognisable must, therefore, be relative and a part of ourselves.

'3. To be a part of ourselves it is not necessary to be bone of our bone and blood of our blood; but it is absolutely essential for it to be brought into relativity with ourselves.'

These paragraphs require a very careful examination, for on the acceptance of these, or the construction which they may fairly bear, much depends.

Now, I will completely and unhesitatingly accept the third proposition, and also the latter part of the second—namely, that man can have no knowledge of anything except what is in some relation to himself. But it is on his first statement, ‘That what is absolute is wholly independent of ourselves,’ and, therefore, out of relativity to ourselves, that I must join issue. It is here laid down as a hard-and-fast line that what is absolute cannot be relative to us, for if the absolute became relative, it would cease to be the absolute. Now, though this may seem a truism, it will, I think, be found that it is the result of an incomplete induction—a complete induction being impossible, owing to our want of knowledge of the absolute. It is surely a *petitio principii* to say the absolute is unknowable by me in every particular, and then to predicate something of it by stating something about it—by stating that it cannot be relative. Now, I venture to think, in opposition to this, that the absolute, to be the absolute, must include all terms of relation; the absolute being the whole, and the varying states of relation being the part. And if this is so, we ourselves have clearly a point of contact with the absolute, owing to the relation which we ourselves bear to the whole. The absolute, then, becomes relative to us as the relation of a whole to its part. It will no doubt be replied: ‘If you bring the absolute (the whole) into relation with its part, you limit the absolute by destroying its infinity (which means destroying the absolute), by bringing it into relation with the part, which is necessarily finite.’ What can be the relation or proportion? Is the proportion a hundred millions to one, or anything that might be conceived as being expressed by figures? If there is any relation or proportion, however great, you destroy the absolute as surely as if the relation was only as two to one; for the absolute must be limited by its relation, in any degree or proportion to the relative (finite). But it will, I think,

become evident that this is not necessarily so—in fact, is necessarily not so; for, consider the case of the absolute, from the side of eternity, in its relation to finite time. Now, it will be granted that the absolute, as eternity, must include all modes of time, and therefore is in relation to them. Is it, then, the case that, because eternity is undoubtedly in relation to an hour or to a million years, that, therefore, owing to this relation, eternity itself must be limited? It is clear that eternity does not so become limited. And why? Because, though the absolute-eternal includes all time, and is, therefore, related to it, it is not itself limited, because, though there is relation between eternity and time, there is *no proportion*. It is this idea of proportion which is the cause of the confusion. Is it not accepted that a million years or the millionth part of a second stand both of them in relation to eternity? The proportion between them is great, but their proportion to eternity is the same—namely, *nil*. By no process of multiplying or subtracting their difference can eternity, as the absolute, the whole, be affected. This is, to me, the test of the absolute in all its aspects of space and time—namely, that it is in relation, but not in proportion.

‘Julian’ further states (Article IX): ‘If there is an outside world—that is, a world isolated from man, absolute and not relative—man can know nothing about it, because it is beyond him—out of the pale of his cognisance,’ etc. Now, indeed, it must be admitted as a truism, that if the absolute is isolated or cut off from man, then indeed he can know nothing about it; but I have endeavoured to show that it is just because the absolute is not cut off from us, but is relative to us—it is owing to this very relativity that we can and do predicate something of it. I am persuaded that there is no impassable gulf fixed between the absolute and the relative, for it may well be urged that, if this was so, then the relative, standing away

from and opposed to the absolute, would itself become another absolute; and we should then have two contradictory absolutes standing out in contradistinction to each other, namely, an absolute absolute and a relative absolute. Absolute being would then, as Hegel urged, be confronted by absolute non-being. This, however, I venture to think, is an absurdity of thought, and therefore, as there cannot be two contending absolutes, the absolute must include the relative, and consequently be in relation with it.

I have here, then, endeavoured to show that 'Julian's' first hypothesis is a *petitio principii*; and in this connection I wish to refer to a recent statement of 'Lara's' in *The Secular Review*, which falls, I think, into a similar category. I feel constrained to consider this at some length, for it is a form of dogmatism into which strong and clear thinkers, saturated with the fair-seeming logic of Materialism, have from time immemorial been too apt to fall. These statements, however, result, not from any flaw in Hylo-Idealism as a whole, but from too hasty generalizations; and it is to the enduring credit of this class of thinkers that they are not only generally the first to recognise that they have overstepped their premises, but are always most willing to admit the oversight.

'Lara' says that spirit, if immaterial, cannot act directly on matter, because, without a fourth dimension, there could be no point of contact. 'Julian' also, in a recent article ('Can Pure Spirit act on Pure Matter?') answers that it is impossible. Now, in the tenth article of 'Julian's' confession of faith, it is laid down 'that the absolute (spirit) is beyond the scope of our gnosis.' Yet we are immediately told something about spirit—what spirit can or cannot do. No doubt what they both really mean is that we cannot conceive how spirit, if it exists, can act on matter; but this is a totally different

position from laying it down as a sweeping generalization that there is no point of contact because we do not know of it. 'Julian,' from his premises, rightly enough urges that spirit, the absolute, is out of our gnosis: as it is not relative to us, we can know nothing about it. But even this is not the same thing as saying, 'If there is spirit, or the absolute (which is out of our gnosis), even then we know that spirit cannot act on matter.' I do not urge that it can act on matter. I do not even urge that the absolute, or spirit, exists. I regard these things as being under discussion. But it is clearly begging the whole question to say that there can be no point of contact.

'Lara' continues: 'Without a fourth dimension there could be no point of contact.' I have just endeavoured to show that this is a statement which may or may not be true. But I would point out that, even if we accept this as true, it still leaves the whole matter open to discussion; for, as 'Lara' is evidently aware, mathematicians have already arrived at the conclusion that a fourth dimension of space may exist, and they have worked out a few of the extraordinary things that might be accomplished under the known laws of nature by a being who understood, and was able to take advantage of, this fourth dimension. For instance, a hollow sphere could be turned inside out without rupture; and I have been assured by an eminent mathematician that a vista has been opened of possibilities of a fifth or sixth, or even a n th, dimension. On these grounds, then, a point of contact between spirit and matter would seem more than a probability.

The position, then, which I have endeavoured to lay down as a legitimate deduction from the Hylo-Idealistic premises is this, namely, that though man can know nothing out of relation to himself, yet that the absolute is related to him, and that it is through this relation that

the absolute may be known. This opens a wide scope for inquiry, which, I fear, would be too lengthy for these pages—an inquiry into the relation between man and the absolute, for the clearer the relation the greater the possible knowledge. There is, however, in this connection one argument to which I should wish to call attention; it has, it is true, no bearing whatever on the Hylo-Idealistic theory except *as I have ventured to suggest that it should be laid down*; but if my amendment be adopted, then it has a very, if not all-important, bearing on our knowledge of the absolute. This argument, to which I have already called attention in these pages, is the argument advanced last year by the Bishop of Carlisle. He says:—

‘As regards matter, science lays it down that of all its properties the one most firmly established is its indestructibility; matter may be transformed, but cannot be destroyed. This being so, it follows that the whole quantity of matter in existence is fixed and constant; that is to say, that as the earth has a definite weight, so have the sun, moon, and planets, which could be expressed by a certain number of tons weight; the same also holds of the stars, nebulae, and so on, and whatever that total weight may be it is always fixed and constant. This irresistible fact being acknowledged, we must further admit that there is some reason why this quantity should be what it is rather than any other. No result without a cause. Why not twice or three times as great? Why not less?’

There is certainly no power in matter to fix its own quantity; in fact, matter must first exist, and so its quantity be determined, before any property of any kind can possibly belong to it; consequently the quantity of matter in existence must be determined by some *power*, some *will*, some *principle* outside matter, which itself is not matter.

Now, I do not presume to assert that this argument is sound; but it has to be faced, and I call attention to it again in the hope that it may be exhaustively considered by the philosophical readers of this work; and I am the more anxious that this may be done, as I must confess that I have been unable to find any flaw in it whatever. However, for the sake of argument and illustration, let us accept this as sound, and see whither it will lead us. The absolute spirit, or unknown X, is here displayed as having exerted power upon matter. Very great power; it may almost be said infinite power, for it has succeeded in limiting matter by fixing its quantity. There is, then, a point of contact and a relation between spirit and matter; so also, as we are built up of matter, there is, then, a relation between us and spirit. Now, if it be admitted that the unknown X has had the effect of limiting matter and determining its quantity, is it not also probable that the unknown X should also have determined its quality? In other words, it has become apparent that the unknown may be the cause of all the varied functions of matter, beginning, of course, with the fundamental function of matter, namely, force. Here, then, owing to our relation to matter, we arrive at the knowledge that there is a something outside and beyond matter which is not matter, and, moreover, which has power over matter; nay, more, which may endow matter with all its functions; and it is this absolute whose existence is now made known to us by its and our joint relation to matter. It is, as I have shown, but a brusque and unreliable argument to say that a thing must be absolute or relative; for, independently of the more lengthy examination into this fallacy, by way of illustration, if not argument, it might be urged that white cannot be black, which is true enough; but white may become black, through the mediumship of grey, to which they are mutually related; and it is just this process of greyness, or becoming, as it

were, which may be the cause of all the phenomena of the universe. It is no argument whatever to urge, as it is frequently urged, that nothing is gained by going behind matter, for even then the question is only put back a step; for knowledge is indeed increased. The knowledge has been obtained that there is a something which is not matter, outside and beyond matter, which is not only not matter, but which has power over matter—nay, infinite power, which may even endow matter with all its functions. And it is this absolute which we know by our joint relation to matter. The confusion has arisen from the inability of many to entirely disassociate their idea of spirit from any form of matter. They materialize their spirit in their own minds, and then their contention amounts to this: What do you gain by putting one (more rarefied) form of matter behind another? Of course, nothing. But if they can recognise that the absolute, which is behind matter and is in relation to it, though its point of contact be unknown, is something not different in degree, but different in kind, from matter, then the force of my argument will become apparent.

CHAPTER IV.

To resume our examination. 'Julian,' in his 'Exposition,' axiom 4, says (it will be remembered that we have considered axioms 1, 2, and 3):—

'4. Man is an organized animal, with only one nature. Life, intelligence, mind, and all the functions of what some call "soul," are merely products of organized matter. Degrees of intelligence, conscience, mind, depend on the thickness of the cortex of the brain and the convolutions and size of its ganglia.'

Now, admitting this to be true, which I do, in a sense, I would here point out that this is at least a misleading method of expression. It may be said that, put in this form, it ceases to be a truism at all; in fact, it is a formula worthy only of the crudest Materialism. It is, I think, generally admitted by the most accurate reasoners, that though there is no doubt whatever that life, intelligence, etc., are always observed in coincidence with an organism, and, moreover, that there is, up to a certain point,¹ an observed ratio between complexity and size of

¹ I say up to a certain point, for the real point of difference between human brains, of greater or less intelligence has not yet been clearly ascertained. Size and complexity and number of convolutions were, at one time, supposed to be the essence; but the most modern researches have clearly established that this is not the co-relation. It may lie in the grey or white matter of the brain, or in both; but even this has not been traced to quantity. And if it be quality, we are as far off as ever from understanding the cause.

structure and degrees of sensitiveness and intelligence ; still, it would be as legitimate to assert that increasing intelligence is the cause of increased complexity of structure, as to assert that complexity of structure is the cause of increased intelligence.

Dr. Blüchner, who is one of the most ardent and consistent Materialists, says : 'Though it may be difficult—nay, impossible—to trace in detail the recondite process of this relation, still it appears to us that, on empirical grounds, there can be no doubt as to the fact itself.' And this is all that can be said. The parallelism, at least, is indisputable, and it is this parallelism which gave rise to the now exploded doctrine of pre-established harmony. Now, though we also must reject that theory as untenable, and as on scientific reasoning we must also reject the idea that one is the cause of the other, would it not solve the difficulty if we admit what I have already pointed out as at least likely—'that force, in all its forms, including gravity and vital phenomena, are all functions of matter, impressed upon it by the action of the unknown X, or spirit' ? We should then be at one with the deductions of Hylo-Idealism on the one hand, and with the God idea on the other, and whose most complete expression is this : 'In him [in it] we live and move and have our being.' I am aware that the introduction of the God idea will pain many so-called Freethinkers, who believe that they have discarded the mummeries and fetters of ages ; but before they commence their condemnations and anathemas, I would have them remember that the God idea here postulated, though it be anthropomorphic, in a sense, inasmuch as we rise to the absolute only through the relation in which we stand to it, still all that is really postulated, or is intended to be postulated, is the admission that the absolute may exist—a postulate to which most thinkers will, I am persuaded, give their adhesion.

I have, then, here pointed out what I consider to be the failing of 'Julian's' vigorous intellect, namely, its dogmatism; and as this dogmatism may lead to serious consequences,—even to the upsetting of Hylo-Idealism altogether,—I feel here compelled to examine another of 'Julian's' statements. This statement, it is true, is not contained in any definite exposition of Hylo-Idealism; but as 'Julian' is the popular exponent of the creed, and as the subjects are mutually bound up, I think it right to call attention to the matter. It is astonishing to me how a philosopher of 'Julian's' learning, capacity, and vigour of thought can have fallen into what I must consider as error. He has done so, however, and therefore, I suppose, there are others who have done the same. And as these assertions lie at the root of the subject, and must bear the weight of much superstructure, the question must be examined fully; and let the reader judge between him and me. In the number of the *Secular Review* for June 23, 1883, 'Julian' writes:—

'In regard to the testimony of "six persons" to an *impossible event* [the italics are mine], 6000 would not render it credible, nor sixty times 6000. Let us take a well-known case,—the pullets of Compostella. These pullets were roasted and served at the table of the Alcayde. He was just about to carve them, when they resuscitated, and while those present were dumbfounded with amazement, and opened the door to run away, in flew the heads, legs, feathers, and wings to dress the pullets. These wonderful birds were carried in grand procession to Compostella, and thousands upon thousands testify to the truth of this story,—popes and cardinals, bishops and abbots, lords and peasants, almost without number.' But 'Julian' asserts that not all the bulls that ever issued from the Vatican, nor all the testimony of all the pilgrims that have worn feathers from these pullets, nor all the eye-witnesses of the Alcayde and his company, could render

the story credible. 'Take, again, the case of Gassner of Bratz, witnessed by about 30,000 persons, of all ranks and conditions of life; yet who believes his miraculous cures? *What is impossible no testimony can render credible.*'

The italics are again mine. Now, this is just what begs the whole question—the assertion that anything is impossible before receiving the evidence. Everything, on the other hand, I venture to maintain, is to be received as more or less credible entirely according to the *quality* of the evidence by which it may be supported. If 'Julian' will turn to Mill's *Logic*, vol. ii., to the treatise on 'Induction,' he will find it there laid down that nothing must be held to be impossible except what is found to be contrary to a complete induction; and that, owing to the fallacies of our senses and the limitations of our knowledge, a complete induction is rarely, if ever, possible; therefore there is only for us a wide range of greater or less probability. Metaphysicians, however, have endeavoured to define possibility or impossibility by the unthinkableness of the negative. But this is hopelessly weak; it makes confusion worse confounded by exalting the subjective element in the matter—the very element which is the source of all variation and all error. The unthinkableness of the negative will clearly vary with each individual, and must, therefore, at once be disregarded as a criterion of truth. G. H. Lewes, however, in his Prologomena to the *History of Philosophy*, when treating of necessary truths, lays it down, I think, beyond all dispute that the only statements which can satisfy the requirements of a complete induction are what is called 'identical propositions,' and that what is contrary to these are alone impossibilities; all else being varying degrees of probability, varying with the evidence. The more complete the induction, the greater the probability; the less complete the induction, the less the probability. Now, identical propositions are of one class only. $A = A$;

$2 \times 2 = 4$; all truths are true. These are merely equivalencies of statement, and do not add to knowledge. But metaphysicians have often urged : How do you know that A always equals A, and that, in other worlds and by other beings, it may not arise that $A=B$, and that $2 \times 2 = 5$? But here it will be seen that there is an unconscious change in the conditions. My assertion is that A, limited and defined by me to a certain thing, will be A always. In other worlds and under other *conditions* A may become B, and the whole alphabet, and the differential calculus to boot, for all I know ; but it would cease to be the A I have postulated. The contention of the metaphysicians amounts merely to this : If A is changed, then it will be different, to which I fully subscribe, as it is a complete induction, because it is an identical proposition. All truths are true. This is evident ; but, in this statement, we do not add to knowledge by saying what are truths and what are not truths ; only all truths are necessarily true, for if a truth were not true, it would not be a truth. Identical propositions, then, are the only complete inductions possible for us, all else being probability hinging upon evidence. Now, the credibility of a thing depends for us in how much it is in agreement with our experience in its widest sense. The more a statement is opposed to our experience, the greater the amount (quality) of evidence necessary to render it credible. For instance : A friend in whom I have every confidence returns from America and tells me that there are sparrows there, but they have a purple feather in their wing. This is contradictory to my experience of English sparrows ; but experience also tells me that difference of location permits of considerable divergence of species, and though it contradicts some of my experience, it is in conformity with another experience ; and, having confidence in my friend, I should accept his statement as highly probable, and very little

corroboration would be required to induce me to accept it as a practical truth. Suppose, however, this same friend then told me that the sparrows in America, in their wild state, spoke three European languages fluently. This statement, contradicting as it would all my experience, would at once commend itself to me as in the highest degree improbable. 'Impossible!' cries 'Julian;' 'not at all—simply a matter of evidence.' But, as it is in complete contradiction to experience, the quality of the evidence must be very high before I could accept that proposition. Suppose, however, a dozen or a hundred or a thousand *credible* witnesses returned from America with the same assertion, and suppose, moreover, hundreds of these birds were captured and brought to this country, and became as common as canaries are now, so that I could hear for myself any number of these talking birds, would not the statement then become almost a truth? And, finally, if I went to America myself, and found these birds by thousands, in their wild state, talking in this fashion, then should I not be right in accepting my friend's original statement as true—that is, of the highest probability? It will be admitted that, without lapsing into universal Scepticism, I must consider that it had been proved to be true. Just so—a matter of evidence. So with 'Julian's' pullets. It is quite true that the thousands of witnesses mentioned do not make the story in the least probable. Why? Simply because the quality of their evidence is bad; they are all under suspicion. But suppose that this went on down to the present, and that pullets had the habit of flying away after they had been cooked, and that this occurred every day all over England; would the story be incredible then? Would it not, indeed, be accepted as a fact, and would not discoveries of some peculiar sort be invented to prevent their disappearance from the would-be diner? All 'Julian' has a right to say, therefore, is, not that no number of

witnesses could make credible a contradiction to all *hitherto* experience, but that no number of unreliable witnesses could make it credible,—a statement amounting merely to this, that nothing should be accepted except on sufficient evidence. What is or what is not sufficient evidence is another thing, and has always been a bone of contention, there being a somewhat wide divergence between Roman Catholic peasants and men of science on this point. What X may consider as conclusive proof of the existence of ghosts may appear totally inconclusive to Z.

Even what is vulgarly considered as cause and effect is not a complete induction; in fact, we know it is an incomplete (erroneous) induction. Because a given series A is always followed by a given series B, this is no proof whatever that A is the cause of B, though we may conveniently and in a rough-and-ready manner thus express it. The cause of anything—the why of anything—is unknown; all we can observe are sequences (so-called effects).

Having considered what are necessary truths, we can now continue our examination of 'Julian's' confession of the faith; and this reference to necessary truths will, I think, throw much light upon what will follow. Article 5 runs thus:—

'There is no such thing as life or soul independent of the organized body. The only future life of man is that which may arise from the recomposition of the elements of the body (separated by decay after death) into other living forms.'

The first part of this may be accepted, if the words 'for man' be added after 'organized body.' The second part admits a future life for man which is a contradiction in terms. Even the recomposition of his elements will not constitute a future life for that individual which is here essentially connoted by the word man. It may be urged,

however, by those who long for a future state: 'How do you know that, when we die, a material eidolon, as it were, is not given off from our bodies, and in new combinations with more refined states of matter does not continue the identity—nay, even the appearance—of the individual? You cannot show that only the organism of the brain produces thought. May not more subtle combinations of matter produce even greater results?' The answer to this is, that here you leave all groundwork of experience and evidence, and wander into conjecture. We have no evidence whatever either for or against; therefore, there is at least no presumption in its favour; negatively, the presumption is the other way. It is outside of the domain of science, which deals only with evidence, and must be relegated to the domain of faith—faith being defined as 'the evidence of things not seen.' Taking 'seen' as it should be taken—in its widest sense—it may be paraphrased as follows:—'Faith is the evidence of things of which there is no evidence.' When evidence on the subject is produced, then it will enter the domain of observation and verification (science). Till then, as 'Julian' rightly says, Hylo-Idealism declines to wander in the region of vain conjecture.

In article 6 'Julian' proceeds:—

'As spirit, presuming there is such a thing, is imponderable, its action on matter is impossible (two assertions about the unknown). The action of light, heat, and electricity—all imponderables—on matter is not to the point, as all these things are material forces, and have no existence *per se* or apart from matter. [These are also assertions, which, however, are more or less justified by the present state of our knowledge.] Only matter, or the forces of matter, can act on matter [another question-begging assertion]; and if there be such a thing as immaterial spirit, it can act only on immaterial spirit [again the *petitio principii*]. *Ex nihilo nihil fit*: from

nothing it is impossible to manufacture or create anything [an identical proposition, which must be always and everywhere true, but which is not the least to the point when it is urged that, therefore, matter could not be evolved by something that is not matter]. That pure spirit could have evoked *ex se* a material universe, wholly and essentially different from itself, is an impossibility; for a fountain can only give forth that which it contains.'

Just so; but how does 'Julian' know what that fountain does contain? He must know all that and more before he can assert what cannot come out of it.

By the light of our recent examination, the reader will, I hope, with the aid of these brief notes, understand how entirely the whole subject under discussion is begged. Article 7 is even worse. 'Julian' continues:—

'If man has for his "soul" a spark or breath of Divinity, that spark or breath must be like Divinity, as a fragment of gold is like a mass of gold, and a drop of water is like water generally. But the essential attributes of Deity are infinity, ubiquity, omniscience, and omnipotence, none of which does man possess, and none of which is capable of degree; therefore the notion of man containing a spark or breath of Deity, called the soul, is wholly untenable.'

The absolute is here defined, limited with a certain amount of cocksureness which is refreshing in an author who, immediately afterwards, declares that the absolute is beyond the scope of his *gnosis*. But let us consider the statement that the absolute in its various phases is incapable of degree. I venture to think that all these wholes are in relation to their part, and that man's power of motion, both of body and thought, *does* stand in relation to ubiquity; and that man's knowledge, man's power, *is* in relation to omniscience and omnipotence. It is the word degree which is the misleading term. Degree implies proportion, and, as I have recently endeavoured to show, the absolute—the whole—must be in relation to

all things, but not in proportion to them ; therefore, exactly the contrary of this statement is true, and everything that man thinks and feels and does, he does only through and by his relation to the absolute.

In article 8 'Julian' says :—

'Man can in no wise step beyond himself. He can cognise nothing beyond that limit. He can never even think beyond it. [This is, as we have seen, soundly established upon the principles of Hylo-Idealism.] Hence he cannot even think of annihilation or of pure spirits without parts, without form, without succession in time.'

This is Hylo-Idealism *plus* 'Julian.' It might be maintained that man does think about these things, otherwise 'Julian' would not have written about them ; and I think it is a fair corollary to the Hylo-Idealistic theory that man can and does think about these things, because he is in relation with them, and that they are, therefore, part of his own egoity.

Article 9 runs thus :—

'If man can never escape from his own egoity, it follows as a thing of course that what in regard to himself is called the "external universe" is part of his egoity, otherwise he would cognise beyond himself. [Extend the external universe to its proper scope, and let it include the spirit or absolute, and this contention becomes thoroughly sound.] If there is a world isolated from man, absolute and not relative, man can know nothing about it, because it is beyond him ; it is out of the pale of his cognisance, it is cut off from him, it is unknowable and unthinkable, for man can only know and think as far as he can know and think, and this limit must be himself.'

Certainly, if there is a world (of spirit) wholly isolated from man, man can know nothing about it ; but if, as I have endeavoured to show, the absolute is, in reality, also relative, then man's mental range and dignity is, I venture

to think, not only largely extended, but is placed upon a logical footing by Hylo-Idealism.

Our examination must draw to a close. Article 10 of 'Julian's' profession we have previously examined. Articles 11, 12, and 13 are undoubtedly correct, but are scarcely so much expositions of faith as statements intended to reduce discussion by forestalling a number of absurd arguments which might be urged against this philosophy—arguments which, though continually knocked on the head, will never, I suppose, be finally allayed till absolute truth is at hand. For the second portion of 'Julian's' exposition I must refer the reader to the *Secular Review* for June 9. I do not here quote it, because comment is superfluous. It is a vigorous and logical deduction from the premises of Hylo-Idealism, and, for my part, subject to the remarks I have here made, I accept it in its entirety as a most masterly and lucid exposition.

My task, for the present, is nearly done. The reader has accompanied me along a thorny road and a weary road, and it will be, indeed, a reward to me if it has, in any sense, been rendered, by my instrumentality, easier, clearer, or shorter. I have, indeed, no pretensions to infallibility, and have merely ventured to urge what seems to me as the truth; and if my readers agree with me in any measure, I think we may sum up as a conclusion that Hylo-Idealism has maintained its pretensions—that it is an all-embracing philosophy on an incontrovertible basis, and that it has succeeded in uniting Materialism and Idealism into one harmonious and workable hypothesis. Moreover, if we have found any fault with the superstructure, it was only that it was too cramped, that its scope had been unnecessarily limited. And should my readers go so far as to accept the position that the absolute is in relation to us, so that there may be no bounds set to the ultimate scope of our *gnosis*, then I venture to think that

an edifice of so fair and roomy a proportion, and constructed on so secure a foundation, must succeed in at least attracting the attention of the philosophers of this generation.

One word here to anticipate a possible objection: 'You, too, have constructed your own god—the absolute—according to your own egoity. This is but your own automorphosis.' Quite true, I exclaim; it is only my own automorphosis. But how am I able to arrive at this conception of the absolute? Simply because it is in relation to me and all mankind—to all the things that are; and it is owing to this relation that it is part of my egoity, and that it appears in my automorphosis.

So far, this has been but a popular exposition of the principles of Hylo-Idealism; but in the succeeding chapter it will be necessary, I fear, in order to do full justice to Dr. Lewins' philosophy, to dive somewhat deeply beneath the surface to get at the root of the whole matter. I venture to hope, however, that, by the light of what has gone before, the way may now be made clear even to the uninitiated.

CHAPTER V.

CONCLUSION.

To sum up. In my judgment, Hylo-Idealism is the most logical and complete system of philosophy that the brain of man has yet evolved. Why? Because it is an ultimate analysis of our knowledge, and is an adequate and simple statement of the facts thereby arrived at. The 'How' and the 'Why' can never be known by us, either through concrete science or abstract philosophy; nevertheless, it is in pretended explanations that ontology chiefly revels. Hylo-Idealism is the denial that ontology is a science, that the conclusions of ontology can be verified. But, as Hylo-Idealism so stands to Mysticism, so also is its relation to Materialism. It holds that the facts of Materialism rest also upon a subjective basis: knowledge is, and can be, for us, only relative; absolute knowledge an impossibility. 'Julian,' however, from these premises, has laid it down that, therefore, for us there can be no knowledge of the absolute; the absolute is shut off from us, and can be in no relation to us. This is, I venture to think, a *non sequitur*. I have already referred to the matter somewhat fully; but, as this is the keystone of the edifice, and is of the first importance, I hope I may be pardoned for offering here some further considerations on such a vital point.¹

¹ Since the above was written, 'Julian,' in *The Secular Review* of October 13, has in the most handsome manner accepted almost the whole of the contentions advanced in these pages, including the

Now, the fundamental premise of Hylo-Idealism is : 'Knowledge is relative.' Knowledge is possible, and exists only by the *relation* and *interchange* of subject and object. Mind is not a mere glass, reflecting objects, but is one of two active factors : stimulus (the object) on the one hand ; response to stimulus (the subject) on the other.¹ Analyzing the process of thought, we find that what arises from subjectivity (active response to stimulus) may, and often does, turn into objectivity, by itself becoming a fresh stimulus, and so becomes, as it were, a subjective object ; and it is because Hylo-Idealism has alone grasped and included this conception that it occupies its present unique position.

Now, in order that we may perceive the full scope and bearing of this, let me recapitulate for a moment, and consider again our knowledge and its origin. Firstly, stimulus ; secondly, response to stimulus. These are the two factors : without the presence of both, knowledge for us is impossible. This is the thesis, and the soundness of this premise will, I think, become apparent from the following considerations :—Let us examine the idea 'tree.' Firstly, there is something apart from us which stimulates our subjectivity. Secondly, our egoity responds to the stimulus, and the result is a perception, an object, admirably called by Dr. Lewins 'a think,' a sense-object, which we call a tree. This combination is a true object for us. I say combination advisedly, for it is not the tree itself alone, it is also our conception of it ; but our conception of it is also determined by the nature of the stimulus ; therefore, this object is the result of two factors, not of one alone ; it is stimulus *plus* response to stimulus

modification of the absolute and relative, concerning which see a letter from myself published in *The Secular Review*, October 6, hereto appended.

¹ In this connection I would especially refer the reader to the latter half of Chap. I. of this work.

—the compound, the result, the tree, has, then, become a veritable object. We respond, however, to a varied class of stimuli, all of which give rise to the idea of trees, various trees. These, then, are real objects, and, as such, become fresh stimuli, to which the mind responds. This fresh stimulus is the likeness, and yet variation (or unlikeness), in these objects; the response by the mind is the generic idea, 'tree.' This is the ultimate abstraction from the sense-objects, trees. This abstraction, however, does not become, in its turn, an object, a real object, but remains an abstraction. Why? Because it is an *ultimate* abstraction, and, as such, is incapable of furnishing a fresh stimulus to the mind; therefore it is not an entity or object, but merely an abstraction, because only one term (subjectivity) necessary to produce an object remains; the other term, necessary for 'the becoming' of an object (stimulus), is wanting. So, also, with the ideas of hardness or sweetness. Various stimuli, to which the mind has responded, and which have, therefore, become true objects, are the cause of further stimulus, and, from the consideration of their relations, the mind, in response, abstracts one quality which is common to them all in its conception of them, such as hardness, or sweetness. These are ultimate abstractions. The conception is analyzed down to its final limit, and hardness, or sweetness, remain as abstractions only. They do not in their turn become real objects, because they are incapable of furnishing further stimulus to which the mind may respond.

The generic ideas, then, of man, virtue, goodness, tree, table, hardness, sweetness, etc., are all in the same category, and remain ultimate abstractions only, without any real (objective) existence. But it will now be asked, Are not space, time, eternity, the absolute, also only abstractions, and not realities (objects)? Are not they also but ultimate abstractions, and, therefore, not real objects? My reply is, No. These are not in the same category;

they are different in kind. Why? Because these alone are synthetical generalizations ; the rest are analytical abstractions. Let us examine this fully. Space is the synthesis of all relations of co-existence.¹ It is the response by the mind to all stimuli of a certain character. It is the factor (the synthesis) supplied by the mind, a necessary synthesis, without which response to that class of stimuli would be impossible. The idea of space is not merely an abstraction, some generalization taken out by the mind. It is a necessary something added. This synthetical generalization becomes a true, a real object—as much an object as anything of which we are cognisant. Why is this so? Because this object of thought becomes a further stimulus, it is not an ultimate. This stimulus is again responded to by the mind, and the result is a further synthetical generalization : eternal space. The idea of

¹ Herbert Spencer says, 'Space is the abstract of all relations of coexistence. Time is the abstract of all relations of sequence.' This appears to me to be a somewhat misleading definition : space and time are not *abstracted* or taken out by the mind from the consideration of coexistences and sequences, in the same manner as sweetness is abstracted from the consideration of the relation between our child's voice and the honey she is eating. They are rather a something added by the mind, in order to enable the mind to respond to a certain class of stimuli. Before the consideration of coexistences and sequences can commence, space and time must in some degree be postulated. These ideas then furnished, or added, by the mind, are what 'Kant' called *à priori* or necessary ideas ; and so they are, but not in the sense he maintained. He regarded these ideas as something independent of the mind—which were placed in all minds by an outside *potentz*. Hylo-Idealism proves how these ideas are necessary, *à priori*, if you please, but are not independent of the mind or products of other agency. They *are* capable of being produced by the mind, as Herbert Spencer shows, simply through organized and inherited experience of things. A child or savage has ideas of space, though vague enough they are. They think to touch the moon ; and early astronomers conceived the sun at 40,000 miles from earth. Organized experience modifies these conceptions, but inherited experience has gradually rendered higher organization possible.

eternal space, in its turn, also becomes a true object, as we shall presently see ; but, for the moment, let us turn to the consideration of time, eternity, and the absolute.

Time, in like manner, is 'the synthesis of all relations of sequence.' It is also a synthetical generalization, a something added by the mind, and, therefore, in its turn, becomes a true object (a think), a true stimulus, in response to which the ego postulates eternity. Now, though the ideas of eternal space and time are necessary syntheses of limited space and time, and exist only so long as limited spaces and times remain, yet they are not ultimates. They, in turn, become true objects, because, so far from being ultimates, the more we can obtain from our knowledge of spaces and times (true objects), by so much the more must these syntheses be extended. For example : At present our idea of limited space is of three dimensions only, and the synthesis of eternal space is likewise limited to three dimensions ; but if at any time we are able to arrive at the idea of limited space being of four dimensions, so, also, must the syntheses of eternal space be improved in order to include this new term of relation. The absolute, in like manner, is a synthetical generalization, and becomes, therefore, a true object. The absolute is the synthesis of eternal time and space, and of all objects included in the relationship to either or both. It is as necessary a synthesis, added by the mind, as are the syntheses of space and time and eternal space and eternal times. It is a true object of thought, a true stimulus, to which the mind responds, because, in so far as we keep increasing our knowledge, and learn more of the relation of objects in space and time, so must we keep altering our conception of the absolute, in order that it may remain the absolute. As, therefore, eternal space and time are necessary postulates of the mind, and have become true objects, so, also, the absolute is a necessary synthesis. It is the

response by the mind to the stimulus of all the relations of all things whatsoever within our cognisance; and as the two factors are present, stimulus and response to stimulus, so, also, the absolute becomes a *vera effigies*, as truly an object as anything of which we are cognisant.

True it is that eternal space and eternal time are entirely dependent for their existence upon the stimulus afforded the mind by limited spaces and times, and that these eternities would cease to exist if limited times and spaces passed away. True it is, also, that eternal space and time could not have arisen except through the medium of limited spaces and times. So, also, the absolute. The absolute hinges and depends as the last and first link of a chain upon the totality of all things. If all things and times passed away into nothingness, so, also, would fade away the absolute. Through and by stimulus, *plus* response to stimulus, space, time, eternity, and the absolute have come to be, and they are, for us, just as much real objects and existences as tables, trees, or men. Herein lies the difference between these and those. Abstract generalizations (analytical abstractions) are single and ultimate, not *vera effigies*, because in them there is no stimulus to provoke further response by the mind, and they are, therefore, rightly called pure mental abstractions. Synthetical generalizations become true objects, because they do furnish further stimuli. They are not ultimate: the mind responds to their stimuli, their objectivity, and real objects they most certainly become.

This is the plain statement of Hylo-Idealism: all things, all objects, are things and objects for us only in their dual character. Things *per se* we can never know. Our ideas of trees, etc., caused by the reciprocity of object and subject, are all that we can know. Without object (stimulus)—for us nothing. Without subject (response to stimulus)—nothing. In this fashion, however, space, time,

eternity, the absolute, being stimulus *plus* response to stimulus, are, for us, as much objective entities as anything within our gnosis. It is through our relation, our response to these, that we can and do postulate something of them.

Here our examination must close. With Dr. Lewins I am nearly at one; the point of difference is merely nominal. Dr. Lewins holds that all our ideas of gods, or god, or the absolute, are anthropomorphic, and become, in their last analysis, simply self-idolatry. In this we are agreed; but I also hold that, as our mental powers increase, as we enter into more ultimate relationship and knowledge with 'the powers that be,' so, also, are our anthropomorphic conceptions plainer and clearer adumbrations of the truth.¹ The higher and more cultivated the organism, the higher the conception of his god. Yet this higher and clearer conception is but the more adequate response of the mind to the objective stimulus beyond. Other than this, with Dr. Lewins, 'C. N.,' and 'Pioneer,' I find no loss of continuity whatever; but with 'Julian' I have felt compelled to differ nearly *ab initio*. It appears to me that 'Julian' has dwelt almost entirely upon the objective side of the hypothesis, to the neglect of the subjective side. This is a leaning away to pure Materialism—pure Materialism being, in my judgment, unworthy of the term philosophy in any sense. Pure Materialism appears to me as illogical, as dogmatic, as aggressive and uncharitable, as are the more orthodox teachings of Stiggins in little Bethel. This it is which must be my apology for having considered the matter at so great a length. But, in my judgment, Hylo-Idealism depends, not only for its advancement, but for its very

¹ Adumbrations.—As we approach nearer to the light, the clearer cut and the more distinct the shadow; but knowledge can never be for us other than relative—the shadow can never turn into the substance.

existence, upon the recognition of both factors, object and subject, and any attempt to exalt unduly either will be fatal to its logical completion. It is, therefore, on account of this early tendency towards what I must call the Materialistic fallacy that I have endeavoured with all my strength to raise the cry of alarm before it be too late.

If, however, my exposition be accepted, and the absolute is admitted to be in relation to us, then, indeed, Hylo-Idealism will have solved the problem of philosophy—the problem which has been attacked unsuccessfully by so many ages. It will verily have resolved the one into the many—the many into the one.

APPENDIX I.

RESPONSE TO 'JULIAN.'

WITH regard to 'Julian's' letter on 'The Absolute and Relative,' the difference between him and myself is a good deal one of words. In my article of September 1, I took exception to 'Julian's' definition of the absolute. It may be remembered that I there urged 'that, if—according to "Julian's" definition—the absolute is isolated or cut off from man, then, indeed, he can know nothing of it.' But I disapproved of that definition, because I ventured to think that the absolute did become relative to us. This is, as will be seen, a good deal a matter of phrases, and I may say that, as some private correspondence has since passed between 'Julian' and myself, and as both of us are only anxious to arrive at truth, independently of preconceived opinions, a satisfactory *via media* has been arrived at. For let us accept 'Julian's' axiom that the absolute is not the relative, that it is cut off from us, and out of our cognisance; but let us add the explanation, that this absolute may, and continually does, pass into relativity with us—does become relative; but that, in becoming relative, it ceases to be the absolute. And, bearing in mind that we have ourselves thus drawn a line between the absolute and relative merely for the purposes of clearer exposition, and that no such hard-and-fast line exists, there is, then, a final definition, which we may accept without reserve; and, as a *sequitur*, it will

appear that the absolute is incessantly becoming relative, and the relative absolute, in precisely the same manner as there is incessant interchange and reciprocity between subject and object ; and, as Hylo-Idealism regards subject and object as the *two-sidedness* of the one, so, also, are absolute and relative clasped in mutual embrace.

The absolute may, then, be defined as 'the whole' (including all terms of relation); but this whole, this totality, this *per se* of all existence, is most certainly out of our cognisance ; for to know the whole we must be the whole (for to know a thing we must asself it—it must enter into relation to us). The relative, then, is such portion of the absolute as has entered into relativity with us, which we have asselfed, and of which, therefore, we can be cognisant.

W. B. M'TAGGART.

APPENDIX II.

A HYLO-IDEALISTIC BASIS FOR A
NOUMENA.

AMONG many correspondents to *The Secular Review*, and therefore, presumably, among others who have not put pen to paper, there is, I am afraid, a great want of appreciation of, or rather of knowledge of, the Agnostic position; and as, I regret to say, something more than traces of this want of knowledge have appeared in the writings of so many and such able minds, it will be well, I think, if we examine this matter a little closely.

In order to clear the ground, it will be necessary to point out a number of fallacies which are continually being put forward with as much certitude as if they were ascertained and verified truths; and in this connection I would earnestly call the attention of all writers on, or readers of, this subject to Mr. Mill's book on 'Fallacies,' contained in the second volume of his *System of Logic*. This work is much too lengthy for us to even consider here; but I cannot refrain from quoting some of what he there shows to be purely *à priori* fallacies. Mr. Mill writes:—

'But this [class of fallacies] to which we are about to proceed have been, and still are, all but universally prevalent among thinkers. . . . In one of its most undisguised manifestations it embodies itself in two maxims, which lay claim to axiomatic truth. Things which we cannot think of together cannot co-exist; and things which we cannot help thinking of together must co-exist.'

Mr. Mill then, after pointing out how Descartes and even Newton fell into confusion by accepting *à priori* the axiom that a thing cannot act where it is not, continues:—

‘It is strange that any one, after such a warning, should rely implicitly on the evidence *à priori* of such propositions as these: that matter cannot think, that space or extension is infinite, that nothing cannot be made out of nothing, or that, as Coleridge affirms as an evident truth, “the law of causality holds only between homogeneous things—hence, as mind and matter have no common property, mind cannot act upon matter, or matter upon mind.”’

That is, that spirit and matter can have no point of contact,—a proposition that has been confidently affirmed by more than one recent essayist. Now, it must be borne in mind that, though these are certainly fallacies if maintained on *à priori* grounds only, it does not follow that each or all of them may not be true if supported by sufficient evidence; it is merely the blank and dogmatic assertion of these, or their opposites, as self-evident truths, that is the root of the error. As I have pointed out in a preceding chapter, the only necessary truths are identical propositions, all else but varying degrees of probability, hinging upon evidence. When, however, we enter into this domain of speculation, the factors for induction are so limited and so uncertain that, at the best, only slight degrees of probability can obtain. Bearing these things in mind, let us now proceed to consider the Atheistic or Materialistic position.

The difference between Atheism and Agnosticism is, in reality, a good deal one of terms and phrases, but not altogether so; and, in order that we may not run into confusion, let us define the terms Atheist and Agnostic.

The Atheist is one who denies the existence of any god or gods. The Agnostic is one who affirms that God to him is unknown and unknowable, but who refuses to fall into the *à priori* fallacy of asserting that there is no God because he cannot conceive of one. Now, this is all very well as far as it goes; but, having commenced definitions, we must define still further, and the hard-and-fast line thus drawn will be seen, I think, to vanish away. For before God can be denied he must be affirmed. Before an Atheist can begin to argue he must call to his antagonist: Define your god first, then we will dispute over him afterwards. If the luckless one should then commit himself to the statement that his god is the god of the Greeks, Jews, or Turks; that he is Mumbo-Jumbo, or sweetness and light; or that he is a vindictive god, or a capricious god, or a local god, or that he possesses any known qualities,—then there is clearly a means of carrying on the argument on the various grounds of science, history, revelation, and so forth.

Now, Agnosticism, accepting all the researches of science, history, philology, and philosophy, would most probably be completely at one with the Atheist, and would gladly give assent to the proposition: 'In the light of our modern research and reason, actual disproof can be given to these old-world myths.' But let us advance a step further. Suppose the term god or spirit be defined as the unknown cause of all things, that unknown noumenon underlying all phenomena of life and mind. To this the Atheistic Materialist replies: 'I will not accept your definition of the unknown; your noumenon implies spirit, and I declare that it is matter alone. Matter, alone and unaided, is the first, final, and sufficient cause. Unless you consent to call this unknown *x* by its right name, *matter*, I will none of you.' Here it is where Atheism and Agnosticism join issue, and it is this

position which we must consider very carefully. Now, there are only three hypotheses possible :—

1. That matter is eternal, uncreated.
2. That matter has been created by, or was evolved out of something that was not matter.
3. That matter created or evolved itself out of nothing.

It should be borne in mind that none of these postulates can be affirmed as *à priori* truths ; but their relative probability must hinge entirely upon evidence. As a matter of fact, they are all and each in the same predicament ; they are all unthinkable. To state that matter is from eternity is to state something which, to our minds, conveys no real meaning. We have no conception of eternity, having experience only of time ; and though, by a necessary synthesis of the mind, we are compelled to admit the proposition that eternity must exist, still, we are entirely incapable of any comprehension of it ; and, so far from having any experience of permanency, all our experience is of continual change, combination, and re-combination, and it is only of the hypothetical substratum underlying phenomena that we do venture to predicate permanency ; and we venture, rashly, perhaps, to predicate permanency of it, simply because it is unknown ; for, of all that we do know, the very reverse of permanency is the fact.

So, also, of No 2, that matter was created by, or evolved out of, something that was not matter. This, likewise, is entirely unwarranted by experience, and is therefore, to us, unthinkable. No. 3, perhaps, is the most unthinkable of all, and is, I believe, a contradiction in terms, if the word matter, or thing, be rigidly defined ; and, for our purpose at least, we may entirely set it on one side, and consider only the other two. Now, if both these propositions—1 and 2—are unthinkable, wherein lies the superiority of No. 1 over 2 ? The Materialist

will answer at once: 'In its simplicity. If both are unthinkable, whereby do you gain in putting an unknowable cause behind unknowable matter?' But the Materialist has reckoned without his host; he has yet to consider force. Now, it is of no avail to assert that force is a property of matter, and that the unity and simplicity of matter as a self-existing cause from all eternity is thereby demonstrated, for this is one of those *à priori* fallacies, one of those wanton assertions, which beg the whole question. In the first place, we know not force; all its manifestations which we ken—*i.e.* that are brought into relation with ourselves—are, it is true, the dynamics of force, matter in motion; but from that to assert matter is the cause of force, or force is a function of matter, is wholly unwarranted. If we consider force as we know it, we find it of many kinds. If, indeed, it were that force simply consisted in the power in every particle of matter to attract every other particle, then there might be some faint show of reason in urging that force is a property of matter; but we find that force is not to be defined as the tendency of particles of matter to move uniformly in straight lines. Forces of repulsion hold as high a place in the economy of nature as forces of attraction. There is also centrifugal force, forces of polarization, forces of vibration, or translation of matter in minute periods; electric states, magnetic states, latent force, and composite forces in endless complications—nay, more, force (the force of gravity) acts throughout all space, entirely independently of matter; each particle, according to accepted science, acting in a straight line on every other particle in the universe with precisely the same intensity, whether the mass of suns, planets, ether, or blank space, intervene between one particle and another. So that, in so far as science tends, not only are we not justified in saying that force is a property of matter, but the boot is really on the other

leg, and we should be much more justified in asserting that helpless matter is divided and sub-divided and arranged entirely by force alone, and has itself no word to say as to how and when it is to be kicked and cuffed about. Therefore, as a *simple* explanation of the phenomena of the universe, if all things, by one Materialistic generalization, are to be reduced to the underlying unity, matter, we now see how this generalization is found wanting.

That this may be the more evident, let us, for a moment, set aside all idea of spirit, and let us examine the material hypothesis upon which modern science is built. Modern science accepts matter as the basis upon which she must build, and rightly, because matter, force, and their laws are all that come within the scope of the inductive method; but mark what a foundation of sand it is, if anything more is claimed for matter than as being the hypothetical basis for a working hypothesis. The difficulty in the way of establishing even this basis as a foundation for physics is almost insurmountable. Let us consider this. The researches of chemists have resolved a great number of substances formerly called elements into their constituents, and by a wide and *necessary generalization* for *working purposes*—necessary, not alone for the physicist, but also for the philosopher—it is admitted that under and behind these elements there is a homogeneous basis which, unknown and unknowable though it be, may be designated by the generic name, matter. Now, mark the difficulty that arises at even now finding a foundation upon which to build. Reason says that this ultimate basis must be infinitely divisible, for she can put no bounds to the process. But this divisibility, ever progressing, gives not a starting-point. So, in order to create one, science has been compelled to postulate an ultimate particle of matter so infinitely small as to be finally indivisible, and therefore homogeneous and indestruct-

ible, and from this foundation a very respectable theory has been evolved; but it is continually being overlooked by Materialists, who accept the superstructure (as indeed we all do) that it is merely provisional, and not based on an absolute truth,—not based, indeed, on anything conceivable by us. Nay, more, it is based on a premise which is *not possible*, according to all our conceptions. For consider for a moment this indivisible particle of matter, so small as to be incapable of further division even in thought, this ultimate particle which is the working basis of all concrete science.¹ Now, an ultimate particle, to be indivisible, clearly cannot have an inside and outside; for otherwise it could be divided into inside and outside; therefore, it must be all outside. Nay, more, if it is to be indivisible, it cannot be allowed to have two surfaces, an upper side and an under side; therefore not alone must it be all surface, *but all one surface only*, which is, as far as we are concerned, an absolute and unthinkable impossibility; so that the whole of concrete science is reared upon an hypothesis which is, I venture to think, even more out of the range of our faculties than the assertion that spirit created matter.

In all these mysteries, then, by which we are surrounded, surely there may be found food for reflection and reasons for diffidence? All things are in their last analysis unknown and unknowable, and must not the Agnostic position be alone tenable? Accepting with becoming modesty all the results of concrete science treating of the laws of phenomena, but, on going back to noumena, to those things which are out of the scope of our possible knowledge, but whose existence is a necessary postulate of the intellect, surely it is wise not to be too

¹ An ultimate particle must not be confounded with atoms or molecules. A molecule is built up of atoms, and an atom of ultimate particles—not a few.

confident. Is it not better to own in a manly way that these things are unknown, and most likely for ever unknowable, rather than to proclaim from the housetops, 'Matter, matter alone, is self-sufficient for all things. Matter I know, and force I know; but who is spirit?' As a fact, neither matter we know nor force we know, nor anything whatever connected with them, in ultimate recess. Surely—

'In the far presence of the Grand Unknown
For ever we are dumb.'

APPENDIX II.

(Continued.)

IN the preceding chapter I endeavoured to demonstrate the logical soundness of the Agnostic position; and it will be remembered it was pointed out that the only three possible hypotheses were each and all unthinkable. Having finally discarded No. 3, let me recapitulate Nos. 1 and 2.

No. 1. That matter is eternal, uncreated.

No. 2. That matter has been created by, or was evolved out of something that was not matter.

In this paper I wish to point out how it may arise that, on logical grounds, No. 2 is a tenable and satisfactory working hypothesis both to the concrete scientist and abstract philosopher. It would, indeed, be rash to urge that the following considerations are new, for so fully and ably have these paths of reasoning been followed from the dawn of time that they can hardly have escaped the attention of many. Still, so far as I myself am concerned, I will venture to say that I have not met with identical views in any writings which have fallen in my path.

For the moment, then, let us consider that an unknown x , which I will call spirit, is the unknown noumenon underlying force and matter; and, on this assumption, let us see how the production of matter and force from it alone might be attempted. Let us imagine that in this ultimate and homogeneous substratum of spirit differentiations arose. Nor is this so much to ask, as at first sight

may appear, for, on the Materialistic hypothesis, as the ultimate basis is presumed to be homogeneous matter, differentiations admittedly must have arisen, otherwise varied states and conditions of matter could not be; and this, then, is a necessary primary hypothesis. The spirit basis and matter basis are in the same boat, and pot must not call kettle black; for, admitting that, starting from either basis, we must postulate that differentiations arose, so equally must we admit, in either case, the cause of these differentiations is unknown.

Having postulated that differentiations arose in the ultimate spirit, let us leave this premise for a moment, and pass to the consideration of certain combinations of matter which, by analogy—and, as I believe, by an unusually faithful analogy—may explain the theory. Let us consider the union of the two gases, oxygen and hydrogen. The result of their combinations in certain proportions is water. Now, on *à priori* grounds, be it noted, the Materialistic argument would be: Out of gases and their combinations only gases can arise. Liquid is different in kind from gas; therefore, gases not containing liquid can never produce liquid. This is on all fours with the assertion that spirit, being different in kind from matter, could never produce matter even by combinations of its differentiations. This will explain my meaning. Let us suppose that the ultimate spirit substratum differentiated, merely, for the sake of illustration, let us say, as a beam of light differentiates through a spectrum.¹ Let us further suppose that, after differentiation, combinations and recombinations of the differentiations take place. Towards one end of this spiritual spectrum, as it were, the combinations tend to the production of matter, and

¹ I say, merely for illustration, not analogy, for we know the cause of the differentiation of a ray of light; it is caused, so to speak, by the spectrum. But the reason of the differentiation of spirit is admittedly unknown.

towards the other end to the production of force ; and in the varied combinations of both strains of differentiations, force and matter, results the universe, with all phenomena of life and mind.

Why should not the combinations of differentiated spirit produce, some of them matter and some of them force, in a manner suggested by the union of oxygen and hydrogen to form water? The objection that lies on the surface is : Oxygen and hydrogen are matter and water is matter ; it is true that, not many years ago, it would have been asserted that gases could not produce liquid ; but science advances, and it is only matter, one form of matter being resolved into another. But you and your assertion that spirit might turn into matter—something different in kind—are ridiculous. But softly, my friend ; the objection lies only on the surface. It is you who make the difference in kind ; it is you who assert that matter must be apart from spirit. The theory I venture to put forward holds that matter and force are only forms of spirit, and that there is, comparatively, no more difference in kind between them than there is between liquid and gas. But, say you then, what is gained by putting this unknowable hypothesis, spirit, behind admittedly unknowable force and matter? Let us see. In the first place, both for concrete science and abstract philosophy a starting-point must be postulated. The starting-point for physics is a homogeneous something underlying phenomena. Now, in the preceding chapter I pointed out that, at the commencement of this century, when spectrum and chemical analysis began to move with giant strides, many so-called elements were resolved ; and, as a necessary generalization, in order to obtain a starting-point, it was assumed that matter was homogeneous at heart, and that it was within the bounds of hope that science might some day grasp this ultimate element in her test tubes. What is the position now? The necessity for the generalization

—the hypothesis—is as great as ever ; but how has science progressed? It has, indeed, resolved some things into their elements ; but it has, on the other hand, discovered many entirely new elements which were before unknown ; and so far has the recent march of science been from following the track of the one, that it has, in reality, been leading up to the many. This is so much the case that the theory of homogeneous matter, upon which science is built, is the despair of leading physicists. The more they learn, the more untenable the theory ; and yet let go the theory they cannot, for there is none to fill its place. This conception—a spirit-base—would fulfil all requirements ; for it would then be seen how there was no necessity for postulating one homogeneous form of matter, nor an ultimate indivisible particle. The elements in the universe might be numbered by countless thousands, and each would have sprung direct from the combination of spiritual differentiations. No unthinkable, ultimate particle of matter need be postulated ; but thinkable, tangible particles, each after its kind, would have come to be, endowed with forces and qualities, just as they arose from the various combinations of the differentiated spiritual substratum.

Do not let me be misunderstood. By the term spirit I do not mean that it may be postulated of it intelligence or personality or volition, or the reverse ; I simply use the term spirit for an unknown x underlying force and matter, the origin of all things. It may be asked, What is gained by postulating this unknowable x ? At least, something is gained by reducing many unknowables—force, matter, ultimate particles—to one. The craving for unity is satisfied, and the necessary generalization for scientific purposes will rest upon a thinkable basis.

This is the train of thought to which the Hylo-Idealistic system of philosophy has led me. What we call force and matter may only be combinations of differentiated

spirit. This appears to me to complement the satisfaction that Hylo-Idealism affords to both the Idealistic and Materialistic systems of philosophy. This theory seems to me to be the keystone for each—the completion of the unity between the real and the ideal. It satisfies Idealism by showing how spirit at bottom alone exists, spirit being the foundation of all things. It satisfies Materialism by showing that, for us, force and matter and their laws are all that we can know, for it is these which have been brought into relation with us. And it satisfies entirely all the requirements of concrete science, by giving it, as a basis and a starting-point, definite—I might almost say tangible—particles, each endowed after its own kind, on which to rear the universe, instead of that unthinkable and impossible effort of the imagination, an ultimate and homogeneous, indivisible, and one-surfaced monstrosity. It satisfies, moreover, the longing of all philosophy throughout the ages, and renders possible the completion of the last great generalization—the resolution of the one into the many, the many into the one.

W. B. M'TAGGART.

APPENDIX III.

HYLO-IDEALISM AT THE BRITISH
ASSOCIATION.

MANIPULATORS of 'Christian evidences' are never tired of descanting upon the mental, moral, and political evolution which operated to fit the world of eighteen centuries ago to receive the teachings of the Messiah. Of course, if the world had not been prepared to receive the evangel of Jesus of Nazareth, it could not have received it; and it received it just in the proportion in which it was prepared to receive it. I willingly concede the proposition, and forestall all possible dispute on that point.

Even so in the pages of our higher reviews, and in the utterances of our most close and consecutive thinkers, there is a presaging cry in the world of vulgar Realism, which is becoming effete: 'Prepare ye the way for the Hylo-Zoic theorem of existence!' The latest cry in the wilderness proceeds from Southport, and the evangelist is Professor Cayley, President of the British Association. The Professor held that the truths of geometry are truths precisely because they relate to what Mill calls 'purely imaginary objects.' He granted that those objects do not exist in Mill's sense, and that they do not exist in nature. He granted that they were 'not even possible,' if that meant possible in an existing nature. He held that the purely imaginary objects were the 'only realities,' the *ὄντα*

ὄντα, in regard to which the corresponding physical objects were as shadows in the cave, shadows of the 'imaginary objects,' the ὄντως ὄντα, the 'only realities.'

The learned Professor seems to leap to Hylo-Idealism by a *quasi*-instinct, although, if Dr. Lewins were to place the theorem before him, he, as a specialist and physicist, might, like Professor Tyndall, take it for Absolute Idealism, under a new and etymologically self-contradictory name, and repudiate it, so fatuous is the tendency of the human mind to overlook the simple and fix upon the abstruse, to far overleap the horse when attempting to vault merely into the saddle. Professor Cayley, it would seem, has not excogitated and formulated the Hylo-Idealistic thesis, but seized upon it as a self-evident proposition by dint of the refinement and pre-science of reasoning involved in a study of the higher mathematics. But Hylo-Idealism accounts for the process by which, say, a mathematical line, length without breadth, Mill's 'purely imaginary object,' comes to be not only a reality, but an entity, such as the President of the British Association classes among 'the only realities.' Hylo-Idealism contends that the idea of space is not only an abstraction. Herbert Spencer defines it as 'the abstract of all relations of co-existence.' It is rather the cerebral response to a particular order of *stimuli*. It is a necessary mental synthesis to render cerebral response to that particular order of *stimuli* possible. The idea of space is necessarily implemented by perception to bring a certain order of *stimuli* within the range of the gnosis of the ego. It is, in short, what my friend W. B. M'Taggart would call a *synthetical generalization*, and, as such, on the lines of Hylo-Idealism, becomes as much a real object as a horse or a tree. But this special objectivity is not an ultimate, but an accretive generalization: like a true object, as it is, it again appeals to the mind, as a *stimulus*, and the mind responds with such

further synthetical generalizations as infinite space, a mathematical point, and a mathematical line, as defined by Euclid. Thus Professor Cayley was justified in claiming for Mill's 'purely imaginary objects' that they are, in fact, 'the most pronounced realities;' and although Professor Cayley had evidently no conception of the reason why the objectivity of infinite space or of a mathematical point is more 'real' than the objectivity of a tree or a horse, still he had a perception of this truth. Hylo-Idealism steps into the gap by tracing the process of thought, and showing that the former (truths) are accretive, the latter only primitive, 'thinks,' sense-objects, or phenomena; the former being *more* than once checked and *accredited* by our mental response to *stimuli*, the latter only once.

In passing, I will venture one word upon Sir William Hamilton's dictum, that 'those purely mathematical sciences of algebra and geometry are sciences of the pure reason, deriving no weight and no assistance from experiment, and isolated, or at least isolable, from all outward and accidental phenomena.' It is clear, on the Hylo-Idealistic lines, that this is not so. The relative stands in relation to, though in *no proportion* to, the absolute. *Order* is a necessary synthetical generalization of the regular succession or co-existence of phenomena, and from *order* we have the accretive idea of *numbers*, to deal with which is the function of arithmetic and algebra. Matter is unthinkable without three dimensions—length, breadth, and thickness—and to deal with these is the function of geometry. The notions of number and dimension cannot, then, as Sir William Hamilton held, be 'innate ideas.' They arise clearly enough, as all other ideas do, from the *stimuli* and *response* to *stimuli*—the no objectivity no subjectivity, no subjectivity no objectivity theory of the Hylo-Idealistic philosophy.

Kant's view, that most cognitions begin with experience, but that, nevertheless, we are in possession of *à priori* cognitions, is liable to the same objection as the contention of Sir William Hamilton, to which I have just referred. On the theory of *heredity*, there might be some colourable defence set up for the Kantian position; but Hylo-Idealism does not concern itself with the biological evolution of mind, but with the laws of the cognition of phenomena in the particular kosmic epoch in which we live.

All things are merely 'thinks.' *From a clearer and more exalted view of the relative, and from that only, can we obtain a wider and grander estimate of the absolute.* When we establish the fourth dimension of space, ideation will throw a new synthetical generalization into the idea of infinite space.

'We find not what we seek, but what we are.'¹

Mill's 'purely imaginary objects' assuredly—if not, in the words of Professor Cayley, 'the only realities'—are, at all events, the more than once accredited 'realities' of existence, being, as I have shown, the objectivities of accretive generalizations or accumulated 'thinks,' and are, as such, of a higher certitude than primitive 'thinks.' 'Thinks,' it should be borne in mind, are, for us, the only realities; object *plus* subject. Generic ideas, such as man, virtue, sweetness, are not 'thinks,' or sense-objects, because they are analytical abstractions, ultimates, in which subjectivity alone remains. Furthermore, the higher order of objectivities are present only in the mind when it is strong and disciplined. The ideas of infinite space, for instance, and of a mathematical point do not occur to the savage or to the illiterate peasant. Therefore, if things be only 'thinks,' the 'thinks' of the powerful and highly-developed mind have a higher claim to be considered 'realities' than

¹ William Maccall.

the 'thinks' which the philosopher has in common with the savage or the peasant. When we step outside the ring of vulgar Realism, the poet's most ethereal imaginings and the sculptor's loftiest ideal must not only be received as truth, but as the highest attainable standard of truth, the boldest and most successful leap against the esoteric, but not utterly opaque nimbus which veils the absolute.

On the Hylo-Idealistic theory, it must be conceded that the idea of *numbers*, which Sir William Hamilton relegates to the region of pure reason, *à priori*, was not, after all, so irrationally adopted by the Pythagorean school, as representing the whole method of intellectual research, and contending that the necessary basis of ontology must be number and dimension; as number and dimension, as has been demonstrated, are accretive as opposed to ultimate abstractions, and are consequently Professor Cayley's *ὄντως ὄντα*. The Pythagorean principle of basing ontology on number and dimension was more or less broken down by the succeeding great school of Hellenic philosophical speculation, the Eleatic, which demonstrated that the nature of *things* cannot altogether be opened by the key of the relations of numbers and proportions. But now we are in a position to affirm that the principle lay far deeper than, peradventure, even its exponents knew, tied down as they were by the unwarrantable axiom that all ontology, all scientific knowledge, must rest on the deductive handling of intuitive ideas. The principle never died, but continued to exist, with more or less vitality, between the widely-sundered epochs of the numerical and spacial ontology of Pythagoras and the mechanical pantheism of Spinoza, which latter had to give way to the pre-established harmony and monadology doctrines of Leibnitz, the groundwork of the speculations of subsequent philosophy, which recognises that ontology must necessarily have a *qualitative as well as a quantitative side*.

Still, Professor Cayley's contention, that Mill's 'purely

imaginative objects' are the 'only realities,' and at a meeting of the British Association, is a significant fact, which Hylo-Idealists should note as an indication as to the direction in which the tide of the strongest thought is turning. In the interests of truth, in the interests of mankind, no available time or opportunity should be lost in letting men, in the words of Voltaire, *learn what is true in order that they may practise what is right*. Application should, before the next meeting of the British Association, be duly made for permission to read an exegetical paper upon the Hylo-Idealistic philosophy. The vanguard of honour in the movement must ever be conceded to Dr. Lewins. But if he declines to occupy the pride of place to which he is entitled, a paper should be read by 'C. N.,' W. B. M'Taggart, or 'Julian.' If none of these writers care to take upon themselves the responsibility of embracing so grand an opportunity of introducing Hylo-Idealism or Neo-Protagoreanism to the thinking world, I myself will try to step into the gap, and perform, as best I can, a task I should prefer to see discharged by abler hands.

SALADIN.

APPENDIX IV.

CONSPECTUS OF HYLOIC OR OBJECTIVE
IDEALISM.

I. SUBJECT AND OBJECT.

SUBJECT is the ego, the thinker, the individual.

Object is the non-ego—that is, whatever exists, or is considered for the nonce to exist: in a word, ‘stimulus’ of any sort.

Stimulus is of two kinds: sense-objects, or those objects which are amenable to the senses; and mind-objects, or those which exist only in the thought of the thinker.

Subject may become object, and object may become subject; for example, my thought may be employed on myself or on some abstract idea, evoked from my own brain; in which cases, the subject or ego becomes, for the time, the object or non-ego also. The thinker becomes the thought of the thinker.

On the other hand, a sense-object (as a tree) may be the subject of memory, or imagination, like Macbeth’s dagger; in which case the sense-object becomes only a mind-object, or subjective idea. Generally, whatever a thinker is thinking on is, for the time being, an object, either a sense-object or a mind-object.

Subjective and objective are, of course, adjectives. *Subjective* is whatever pertains to the mental act of the subject, or person who thinks. A subjective object is the abstract idea of a thinker made the object of his thought.

Objective is whatever pertains to the object under consideration. Whatever pertains to the ego is subjective. Whatever pertains to the non-ego is objective.

An objective-subjective idea is the idea of an object revived by memory, or created by imagination. A subjective-objective idea is an abstract thought made, for the nonce, an object.

Subjectivity and objectivity are abstract nouns. *Subjectivity* is whatever may be predicated of the subject or ego. *Objectivity* is whatever may be predicated of the object or non-ego.

II. EGO AND NON-EGO.

Ego and non-ego are, in some cases, the synonyms, or nearly so, of subject and object. *Ego* is all that goes to constitute an individual; not only his body and brain, but all that is brought into relationship with either. *Non-ego* is all that is not primarily ego. Ego *plus* non-ego is everything to each individual. Thus the ego and non-ego, as far as any individual horse is concerned, is everything *ad quem res spectat*; and the ego and non-ego of you or me is everything *quoad* you or me.

To the ego there cannot possibly be a non-ego, for either the non-ego is part of the ego or non-existent to that particular ego. Thus non-ego, by being an object of thought, or by being made sensible to our senses, or by being received into our body (as air, when it is inhaled, or food, when it is eaten), is not non-ego at all, but part of the ego of you or me, as it may be.

Egoity is whatever constitutes the ego, whatever may be predicated of it, whatever goes to make up the sum thereof. Less than the whole of any of these is a part of this egoity.

III. ABSOLUTE AND RELATIVE.

Both these are relative terms, and have no fixed limits.

'Relative,' as far as any individual is concerned, is all

that the said individual has asselfed. 'Absolute' is everything else.

In other words : all that has been brought into relation with any individual is relative to that individual—all the non-ego which has been engrafted into the ego—all sense-objects, even we ourselves abstractedly considered : Thus my brain (essentially a part of myself), abstractedly considered, is an object, and as much relative as a tree, or any other sense-object of thought.

The objection, so heedlessly urged, that the brain, which creates objects, is also itself an object, according to Hylo-Idealism, is wholly without force. Brain, as brain, is admittedly an object ; but brain, as the respondent of objects, is the subjective clock of the objective clock which words the telegram.

On the other hand : 'absolute' is all that which has not yet been brought into relation with any given individual ; and so long as it remains isolated from the said individual, to him it is non-existent : thus America, to our forefathers who knew not of it, was non-existent ; but to you, and me, and others, it is part of our egoity.

It must be obvious to every thinker that 'absolute' to each one of us is an ever-varying quantity. What is absolute to any individual to-day, may be relative to him to-morrow, and the reverse.

For example, many things may be absolute to children and the uninformed which greater experience and riper knowledge may make relative to them. So also, on the other hand, disease or abnormal action may shut out, even from recollection and thought, some once familiar object.

It has been aptly said, that 'absolute is the whole, and relative only a part of the whole.' Clearly, this must be so : Before we asselfed anything, everything was absolute to you and me. Before we had even an embryo existence, all, as far as you and I are concerned, was absolute,—not

only all exterior to our present bodily frames, but even we ourselves belonged to this category. At birth a part of this absolute was asselfed, and every day since farther encroachments have been made on the *terra incognita*.

It is objected, if the absolute is really absolute, really cut off from us, really isolated even from our gnosis, then we cannot predicate anything of it, no, not even that it is absolute and unknown. The reply is this: we do not attempt it. We only define what we mean by the word, we merely state how the word will be employed: we say we shall call that 'absolute' which is not relative—all that has not yet come into the field of our egoity, and of which we can know nothing; for if we knew anything thereof, nay, even if we thought thereon, it would cease to be absolute.

Without doubt, I may know that I know, and I may know that I don't know. The former is positive and the latter negative knowledge: for example, I may know what water is, I may know it is a compound of two gases, hydrogen and oxygen, I may know about its freezing, boiling, and evaporation. All this is positive knowledge. On the other hand, I may know that I do not know what deity is, what a sixth sense is, what a formless partless being is, and this ignorance is negative knowledge. It certainly is knowledge, for it is thought known to be thought—thought recognised—thought which may be the subject of argument and inference.

It is important to recognise this negative knowledge as a part of our egoity, otherwise we could not know the fact of our ignorance of it, and, of course, could predicate nothing about it; but seeing that the knowledge of what we know not is every whit as much a part of our gnosis as the knowledge of what we know, we may accept the definition given, and admit the absolute into the category of predicants.

In a word: In the first stage the absolute is universal

to each one of us; then comes birth, and the relative begins; from that moment to the end of life the absolute must decrease and the relative increase.

The objection that the Hylo-Idealist denies the possibility of our knowledge of the absolute, and then tells us all about it, is silly. The Objective Idealist simply defines the meaning he attaches to the word; and that no such objection may by any possibility be charged against him, he distinctly states that if thought wanders into the region of things unknown, then the unknown is brought within the field of thought, and becomes the object of any of the five predicables, as much as an ordinary phenomenon would be.

IV. KNOWLEDGE.

All knowledge is relative, and, therefore, part of our egoity.

Subjective, as well as objective knowledge is the result of the interchange of subject and object—or, rather, the sum of the two added together. The object, in this case, is the stimulus, and the subject is the response thereto. Thus, if a tree is the given object, the tree is the stimulus of sense, or the neural *via* to thought; and if our brain responds thereto, the result will be a sense-object, or subjective object.¹

Hence all sense-objects are merely 'thinks;' the asselfing of the non-ego, or making the non-ego part of the ego.

Before any object can exist to any individual, there must, of necessity, be this combination—that is, there must be the object (either of sense or mind) to give the telegraphic message, and the brain at the other end to receive it. And they must be in reciprocity and perfect accord in order to obtain just conception and perception of phenomena.

¹ This is simply an epitome of Mr. M'Taggart's masterly exposition in *The Secular Review* of September 22nd.

If the brain does not exactly respond to the message sent by the object, the knowledge obtained will be imperfect. Thus, in diseased eyesight, the sense-object is incorrect; and in abnormal, or undeveloped brain, the message is incorrectly read. The higher the organization, the greater the capacity of reading correctly, and reading, not only the lines, but between the lines;—in fact, the larger the capacity, the more it finds in the message. The same message speaks more and opens up more to a large capacity than it does to a meaner one.

What we call 'external objects' have no existence to any individual till they have been made part of his egoity, any more than a telegraphic message sent to a clerk is a message to *him* till he has received it and understood it. If the wire is cut, or the clocks out of order, the message (so far as the reader is concerned) is no message at all. So houses and trees have no existence to any individual till that individual has read and understood the telegram. Hence a tree or house to you or me is an object *plus* the asselling thereof—the non-ego planted into the ego.

Herein is the fundamental difference between Idealism and Hylo-Idealism (or Objective Idealism). In pure Idealism objects have no independent or real existence. In Hyloic or Objective Idealism they have a real independent existence, but none to any individual till they and the brain have been brought into reciprocal relationship, like the sender and receiver of a telegraphic message.

What the independent existence of any sense-object is like—that is, what it is *per se*, independent of our conception and perception of it—we cannot possibly know. All that we can cognise of anything is just the message sent—or, rather, how we ourselves interpret and understand the message; in a word, all our knowledge of objects resolves into 'thinks;' 'thinks,' not essences; phenomena, not noumena.

V. ABSTRACT IDEAS.

Abstract ideas are notions formed of objects by the mind without the intervention of the objects themselves. All abstract ideas are, of course, subjective; but the reverse is not true. Having seen divers kinds of trees, the mind forms an abstract idea of a tree. This abstract idea is not a sense-object, because it lacks one essential of a sense-object, viz. the sense-stimulus. It is not an objective-subjective 'think,' but a subjective-objective one.

Abstract ideas not connected with objects, such as eternity, spirit, deity, are abstractions of abstract abstractions. Thus the idea of spirit is an abstraction of the abstract idea of matter etherealized, or emptied of all materiality,—the converse of matter. The idea of eternity is an abstraction of the abstract idea of now extended both ways to $a+n$; not past and future, but only present, without succession, and infinitely extended both ways. So with the idea of deity, space, etc.

The abstractions may or may not be realities. No matter; they are mental concepts, and are, therefore, capable of being parts of our egoity, as much so as houses and trees; but, unlike houses and trees, they can never be sense-objects, but must always remain subjective abstractions—objects, it is true, but not sense-objects.

Abstractions of *abstract* abstractions are abstract ideas of wholly mental 'thinks.' Abstractions of *concrete* abstractions are abstract ideas of concrete 'thinks.' The former can never become concrete; the latter may. Thus Jamaica may, at one period of our life, be only the abstraction of the abstract idea of an island; but, at a future period, personal knowledge of the island may make it a concrete idea. Not so with abstractions of abstract abstractions; they must always remain abstract.

VI. MAN AND THE OBJECTIVE WORLD.

Man can in no wise step out of or beyond himself.

This is not a *petitio principii*, but a logical inference and necessary corollary. (1) A logical inference from the fact that a man's self is himself, and, if he could step out of himself, he would no longer be himself; and (2) it follows as a necessary corollary of the relativity of knowledge. Supposing such a thing possible—that is, supposing a man's thoughts were ever to dart beyond the circle of his present egoity—that very moment the circle of his egoity would enlarge itself to take in the new field of thought.

If man can in no wise step out of himself, it follows that he can take no knowledge of anything out of himself. If there is anything else, it has to *him* no existence, and is wholly removed from the range of his gnosis.

Two inferences must be admitted as deductions :—

1. What is generally called the 'outside world' must be part of man's egoity: not identical to all, but each to each—that is, each man has his own 'outside world,' and it is by no means necessary, nor even possible, that your circle and mine should exactly coincide.

2. Whatever a man can think about is part of his egoity, or else his thoughts would be able to take excursions outside of himself; in which case his thoughts would not be his at all. This would be to jump out of himself, and yet to be contained in himself—a manifest contradiction.

In affirming that the 'outside world' is, to each of us, part of our own egoity, it must not be supposed that we deny the reality of the objective. We admit it fully; but we insist on this: that nothing is real or objective to any individual till it has been made subjective. No tree, no house, exists to you or me till that tree or that house has been made part of our egoity. The non-ego has no existence to any one of us till it has been grafted into the ego.

The non-ego and ego are perpetually interchanging. For example: we inhale and make the non-ego part of the ego. We exhale and make the ego part of the non-ego.

We see a tree, hear a sound, smell an odour, in all which processes we asself the non-ego. We void what the system refuses to retain, in all which processes we exself the ego.

We think a thought; in which case thought is an object, and, by being the subject of thought, becomes part of our egoity. More knowledge or experience induces us to abandon that thought, and we abandon thus a part of our ego.

To be part of ourselves it is not necessary to be bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh; but it is sufficient to be brought into relativity with ourselves to be part of our egoity.

The notion that objects, to be part of ourselves, must be in our skull, is therefore absurd, as all that is required is their relativity.

Similarly, the notion that, as we lose sight of an object, or cease to think about it, the object ceases to be part of our egoity, and that, therefore, all subjective objectivity is intermittent, is also absurd, as relativity is not intermittent, and relativity is alone sufficient to constitute egoity.

So, again, the notion that any one, by supposing the non-existence of an object, makes it to be non-existent, is absurd, as the only thing that can remove it from a cognisable existence is to remove it out of the pale of our cognisance, and this is not done by supposing its non-existence; indeed, the very contrary is the fact—that is, the very fact of supposing *anything* at all of an object presupposes it not to be removed from our cognisance.

These ‘absurdities’ would not have been introduced into this conspectus had they not been fired by correspondents against Objective Idealism as fatal to the whole system; but, like the shaft of old Priam—

‘Telum imbelle sine ictu
Conjecit. Rauco quod protinus ære repulsum,
Et summo clypei nequicquam umbone pependit.’

VII. NOUMENON, PHENOMENON, AND EIDOLON.

Noumenon is the ultimate basis from which all stimulus springs. Pure *Materialists* call it matter, or object only. Pure *Idealists* call it spirit, or subject only. The Hyloic or Objective Idealist recognises that it may be either—or, more strictly speaking, that it is probably both. In any case, it is unknowable. We call it the absolute, and as the absolute—so long as it remains so—it is out of the sphere of our cognisance. By asselfing the noumenon, the response made to the stimulus we call phenomenon. For example: we know not what a tree is. All we know is what our 'think' informs us. That 'think' is the phenomenon we call a tree; the noumenon is the object itself which makes this conception and perception. The phenomenon is the tree mixed up and modified with our sight and brain. The noumenon is the genuine object without this mixture and modification.

There are no such things as eidola in Objective Idealism. Eidolon means the image or copy of an object (as the reflection of ourselves in a looking-glass). The Hylo-Idealist does not believe in such an interpretation. What we perceive is not an eidolon, or picture, but object *plus* subject. The object is the stimulus, and this stimulus *plus* our response is our conception and perception of any given object. The 'think,' not the eidolon, or picture, is the phenomenon we cognise.

VIII. WORSHIP AND DEITY.

Of course, since all we think, all we believe, and all we know, is part of our own egoity, one of two things follows of necessity. Either God is absolute, and wholly cut off even from the very possibility of our existing belief, faith, or knowledge, or else is part of our own ego; and adoration of such a being is self-idolatry.

As deity cannot be a sense-object, if an existence at all, it must be a mind-object. The primary stimulus must be in ourselves, where the response is also. Faith creates the being which faith adores. We worship our own belief, as the heathens did and still do. And what is this but idolatry—the adoration of our own thought, our own belief?

JULIAN.

APPENDIX V.

AGNOSTICISM AND HYLO-IDEALISM.

HYLO-IDEALISM is the new philosophy, excogitated by Dr. Lewins from the Protagorean formula, Knowledge is relative—man is the measure of the universe *for man*. Hylo-Idealism holds that our knowledge is the result of two factors—object and subject. The results are ‘thinks,’ or sense-objects—the only realities for us. These thinks arise by the relativity between subject and object; they are the combination of stimulus *plus* response to stimulus. Object *per se*, subject *per se*, they are not; they are the issue of both. Absolute knowledge, then, of subject or object we can never have; all that lies within our sphere of contemplation is the combination, the think, the sense-object. The higher the organization, the higher, the more adequate, the response to stimulus. The nearer the light, the more distinct the shadow; but the shadow can never turn into the substance; absolute knowledge is impossible. The think, the sense-object, is determined by both—the stimulus and the response to the stimulus. Mr. Herbert Spencer writes :—

‘Pure Transcendentalism holds that space and time are forms of thought known *à priori*.

‘Crude Realism holds that space and time are objective realities, forms of things, known *à posteriori*.

‘Transfigured Realism (his own philosophy) holds that

space and time are forms of things which have become forms of thought through organized and inherited experience of things.'

Hylo-Idealism teaches that space and time are 'thinks,' sense-objects, arising from stimulus *plus* response to stimulus; and are, therefore, *for us*, as much objects as tables, trees, or men. Hylo-Idealism shows that there are no pure ideas, either *à posteriori* or *à priori*; but that every idea is a combination of them both, the *à posteriori* side being derived from the constancy of the stimulus since the beginning of time, the *à priori* from the capacity of response by the mind. Space, time, tables, trees, or men, are, all of them, 'thinks,' composed of *à posteriori* and *à priori* conceptions. Without *à posteriori* no *à priori*, without *à priori* no *à posteriori*.¹ This conception of the combination of subject and object throws much light on all the dark places of philosophy. As a corollary, it shows how the functions of matter (force) are the subjective or spiritual side of the absolute, and matter the objective side. If, as has been urged, matter is indestructible, and therefore its quantity is fixed and constant—and, as a corollary, this quantity must have been fixed by some *power, will, principle*, that is not matter—here is the answer: The objective side of the universe is affected by the subjective side, the subjective by the objective; neither *was* before the other. Matter is affected by spirit (force), spirit by matter. Their union is the 'think' of the absolute. The material universe is this 'think,' and has become a reality to the absolute, just as much as space

¹ *A priori* is here used for that portion of the idea which arises from or is added by the mind; not in the Kantian sense as being, as it were, independent of the mind, but as that part which the mind is capable of adding through organized and inherited experience of things—in fact, its function. Behind this function we cannot go, nor can we say how the capacity of the mind arose; we can only recognise that the mind has the power of responding to various stimuli in varied definite fashions.

and time, trees and men, are our 'thinks,' and have become realities to us. Beyond this we cannot go. What is matter, or what is spirit, we cannot know; and what their point of contact is we may not even imagine. As, however, our world is clearly comprised, for us, not of things as they are, but as they become by the interaction of subject and object, so also we can conceive that the universe is what it is, only by the action and re-action of the subject and object of the absolute. The outcome, the universe, then, which is object to us, is the 'think' of the absolute, not the absolute itself. Under this luminous conception crude Materialism vanishes away like an evil dream, for matter depends on spirit. Pure Idealism must bow its head, for spirit depends on matter.

Everything, the totality of all things, is relative. It is the result of the relation of the two factors. What the relation is we know not, nor can we ever know. To know the relation our knowledge would cease to be relative; it would become the absolute knowledge of the absolute—the shadow would become the light. Herein is Agnosticism. We neither can know matter or spirit, *per se*, nor can we know their relation, their point of contact. Hylo-Idealistic Agnosticism refuses, therefore, to accept the dogmatics of either party—either of those who tell us that God is or is not, on the one hand, or of those who, with equal cocksureness and an equal want of premise on the other, tell us all about matter and its belongings. As the varying ego, in response to stimulus, postulates its god according to its own subjectivity, its own response to stimulus, so also, in response to stimulus, does the ego, in proportion to its powers of response, babble forth and dogmatize concerning matter, force, and law. Pure Materialism is the Calvinism of philosophy. From equally inadequate premises it asserts equally positive knowledge concerning the unknown and the

unknowable. Knowledge being only relative, we must regard all our perceptions, all our objects, as merely adumbrations of the truth—relative truth merely. Positive knowledge is shown to be a delusion and a snare ; matter, force, law, cause, effect, *et hoc genus omne*, being but working hypotheses at the best. To the strictly logical mind, therefore, Agnosticism alone remains.

W. B. M'TAGGART.