

SAV'S SPIRITUAL ALONE IS REAL MRS. EDDY SHOWS DIVINE LAW ONLY USEFUL ONE

PROVES MATERIAL DATA IS PRODUCED BY MORTAL

Founder of Church Makes Phrases of Bible Heretofore Unsolvable Riddles to Theologians Plain and Clear

BY ARTHUR CHAMBERLAIN

MUCH has been written and said as to the fixity of natural law; meaning by natural law the supposed law of the so-called physical universe. Has any one ever defined such a natural law? Is there any comprehensive statement of a great law which rules all physical phenomena? In place of this, we find a multitude of so-called laws; indeed, it may be said that the discovery of new laws is quite as much the aim of the physicist as it is his application of those already believed in.

Moreover, these laws are often in opposition to one another; no statement can be made that will be the fact in all cases; the law ceases to be a law unless certain conditions are included. The most that can be said is, that under certain circumstances certain phenomena may be expected; yet while volumes have been written in support of some special law, it is supposed to represent the working of a special law under given circumstances, the special theory has been proved incorrect again and again in the many volumes that have become waste paper. The asserted law of material phenomena is not a law; it is nothing but a mass of empirical statements which are based on a confessedly based upon fragmentary data and subject to perpetual revision. There is no unity in such a system; no great fundamental principle which will explain all phenomena, and no rule or statement regarding such phenomena by which they may be tested.

Mortal Mind Plays with Phantoms

Men are beginning to accept the contention that it is impossible for the human mind—"the mortal mind," as St. Paul has it; "mortal mind," as Mrs. Eddy calls it—to cognize ultimate reality; that material phenomena are indeed nothing but the human mind made manifest according to the laws of its own making, as whimsical and illusive as the circumstances of a dream; in other words, the human mind evolves from itself and for itself the phenomena that it attempts to investigate, and is therefore merely playing with its own phantoms; bereft of any criterion and lost in the maze of its own hallucinations, which, in all this increasing sense of the unreliability of all statements based upon material phenomena, there is a demand, steadily becoming more insistent, for a stable criterion whereby all theories may be tested, and that the test be crucial. Admittedly, such a criterion is not to be found in the material consciousness; it must therefore be found in the spiritual. A perfect criterion must be based upon a perfect Principle, and perfection can be found nowhere save in God, Spirit. In the last analysis, the search for a perfect criterion narrows—or expands—to the question of the existence, nature, and revelation of God.

Riddle of Material Universe

Let it be assumed that we take the word of "God" in its general acceptance, and we shall find that God, being absolute perfection, must have created all things perfect; yet with evil and discord apparent all around us, we hesitate to be logical and give a vain account for the unaccountable—veritable evil as the creation of absolute good. Let us see what modern philosophy can offer as an answer to this riddle—the riddle of the material universe. No less a thinker than John Stuart Mill has declared against the possibility of obtaining any cosmical law from the evidence attainable through the five senses. As quoted by Taine, he says, "The uniformity in the succession of events, otherwise called the law of causation, must be received not as a law of the universe, but of that portion of it only which is within the range of our means of sure observation, with a reasonable degree of extension to adjacent causes. Mill's philosophy is justly summed up by Taine as teaching "an abyss of chance and an abyss of ignorance" as the only possible result attainable from material data.

Studied with Negative Outcome

Over against this philosophy Taine places that of the German thinkers, who seek their data not in the physical but in the metaphysical, in abstract considerations, the axioms of thought, wholly apart from the material and unconditioned thereby; what Taine calls "indecomposable abstract facts." Of their efforts he says, "They tried to attain to these ideas and to evolve by pure reason the world as observation shows it to us. They have partly failed; and their gigantic edifice, factitious and fragile, hangs in ruins, reminding one of those temporary scaffolding which only serve to mark out the plan of a future building." On the one hand, then, we have a system of philosophy which declares, with Goethe's Faust, that all has been studied with a negative outcome—"to know, that nothing can be known;" while on the other hand we have a system confessedly based on present data and starting from other premises; lofty in its conclusions, encouraging in its affirmations, but so destitute of proof that it seems at best but a beautiful dream, a magnificent possibility.

Useful as Well as Logical

It is clear that any truly scientific philosophy must be logical, but the most logical theory will not appeal to the rank and file of humanity unless, in addition to its purely logical soundness, it offers proofs of its utility; its usefulness is, indeed, the only proof that will give it any weight with practical men. Mill's theory, based upon material data, is admittedly sound and self-evidently useless. The German theories soar higher to fall farther; lacking practical proof, they, too, lack practical application. Curiously enough, when we come to look into it, we see that these two systems, directly opposed as they are, both admit that the material consciousness, however limited and imperfect, has a real existence that must be reckoned with; indeed, with Mill it is the only existence that can be reckoned with; while the Germans admit such an existence only to exclude it from the data of their philosophy. At the same time, however, they seek with their philosophy to arrive at a concept of material existence as a reality.

Material Data Not Real

Now, while the phenomena of material existence are admirable data upon which to build—as does Mill—a theory of the negative outcome of all material knowledge as an "abyss of ignorance" principle, nothing could be more fatal to the proof of German idealism than the mere admission that material data



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have any actual existence. Why? Let us see. If material data are real, they must have their place in any true philosophy. If all conclusions drawn from them result in the discovery of "an abyss of chance and an abyss of ignorance," it is evident that any scheme which includes them is predestined to unfruitfulness; we cannot change the conclusions without altering the data; we cannot exclude the data and pretend to a perfect synthesis. Let us assume, however, that the material data are unreal, and we are at once justified in excluding them. But what an assumption! Moreover, if we exclude them from our philosophy, what proof—not merely logical, but practical—can we offer as to the correctness of our position? Let us deal first with the purely logical considerations. If a certain class of data is unreal, a class in all respects its opposite surely must be real. If, however, the unreal data have to us all the effect of reality—even to the exclusion from our consciousness of any other data whatsoever—it is clear that we must reverse every conclusion founded on such data in order to perceive the reality. How many times in dreams we have clung desperately to the edge of a precipice, feeling that to let go was to be dashed to pieces, only to discover that by letting go we were not only not dashed

to pieces but awakened from the dream to perceive that there was no precipice, no abyss, no frightened man vainly endeavoring to save himself from a horrible fate—and no horrible fate! Mere Denial is Useless To deny the truthfulness of all that we perceive materially is the first step in our philosophy. The first step only, however! Mere denial lands us nowhere. "You lie!" may be the baseless insult of a bully; it may be the severe, though just, rebuke from the thoughtful man who speaks out of his certain knowledge of the truth. Our denial of the reality of material phenomena is baseless and impertinent unless we are prepared to assert understandingly the reality of a noumenon apart from all materiality—all inclusive, all-powerful, present throughout all space; the sum total of all intelligence, goodness and love; whose phenomena shall be the exact opposite of all and anything that we can predicate of matter, even as the noumenon which we have indicated, possesses, in an infinite degree, characteristics which we do not find in any material concept. "This is all very well," one may say. "Your infinite noumenon, as you define it, is infinitely another way of saying 'God'; but if I assume the existence of God, and proceed to deny the reality of matter on the basis of my affirmation of God's existence, what practical proof,

which you say a true philosophy must offer, will this give that this philosophy is the true one?" That depends. Do you deny the reality of all that you perceive through the five senses, and affirm the existence of God as the Infinite, and hence the only existence? If it is a mere verbal utterance, or merely a mental admission that such a theory exists, you may as well spare yourself the trouble, for no proof will be forthcoming. You have neither denied on the one hand nor affirmed on the other—you have merely dilled tentatively with a purely hypothetical proposition. God the Only Noumenon If, however, deep down in your inmost consciousness has come the abiding conviction that the spiritual alone is real, because it alone can be the expression of God, who is Spirit; and therefore that the material is the unreal—baseless, futile, whimsical as any dream of the night—then practical proofs of the truth of this philosophy are forthcoming, and what are they? Nothing less than the blotting out, in your consciousness, of the belief that sin, sickness, death, together with all forms of discord, are entities; that they are, or can be, the phenomena whose noumenon is God; and since the conviction abides that God is the only noumenon, all that you recognize as unlike Him ceases to have power over

you and ultimately vanishes from your consciousness—or, rather, your consciousness changes as a man's consciousness changes when he awakes from a dream, the change being quick or slow in proportion to the degree of understanding on your part and to your faithfulness in your application of the knowledge already won. Precisely because the proof offered is practical and not theoretical, it can never be proof to you until you have found the proof in your own experience. Possible, credible, highly probable—however it may appeal to you theoretically, you cannot know it for proof until the proof appears in your own life. The Ideal Philosophy Those who have proved it, even in the smallest degree, know that here is the ideal philosophy; true in its premises, logical in its conclusions—above all, useful; yes, infinitely useful, in the proofs that it gives in men and women rescued from sin, suffering, and cramped limitations; a Science that does indeed "break every yoke." Such a Science as this is indeed the "future building" to which Taine alludes; not the "temporary scaffolding" of German philosophy, which is a vain attempt to give to matter the harmony and coherence of Spirit; but the symmetrical structure, having no part wanting and of which no part is superfluous; our

Father's house of "many mansions," as promised by Jesus the Christ. To the clear and uplifted thought of our Leader, Mrs. Eddy, the conviction that "the testimony of the material senses is neither absolute nor divine" (Science and Health, p. 268), revealed to her what the German philosophers failed to perceive; namely, that all material phenomena are alien from, and unsupported by, the eternal reality of Spirit. Do you ask for further testimony as to the genuineness of this Science? Take your Bible and read it in the light of this Science that you are investigating. See how phrases which have been the unsolvable riddles of the theologian stand out; clear, plain, full of a new meaning, radiant with promises that can and do have their fulfillment here and now! See how this Science sifts the chaff of misapprehension and misconception from the precious wheat of those great Christian doctrines that have endured through the ages—endured because, rightly apprehended, they declare eternal truth! Above all, trace the account of Jesus of Nazareth, Jesus the Christ, and you will see that this Science finds its full and complete demonstration in the life and works of him who was Son of Man and Son of God. Should not our hearts go out in gratitude to her who has made clear to our day and generation this understanding

of the Scriptures? a gratitude best expressed by following our Master Christ, as she has followed him; not merely in word, but in deed. Yes, it is the all-inclusive Science; but not the science of the academy nor of the cloister; neither a mere intellectual gymnastic nor the ipse dixit of ecclesiasticism; but vital, practical, pulsing with that love which inspired every thought and act of the Master; a Science that is Christian because it contains the proof of that Christianity which is scientific; Christian Science, that declares the present kingdom of a present God, attesting itself as the truth by those "signs" which it is written "shall follow them that believe;" a fountain of Life to which "whoever will, may come."—Christian Science Journal. Heart Disease Caused Death SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 5.—An analysis of the contents of the stomach of David J. Baird, the young millionaire who died suddenly at his home recently after a night passed at a number of resorts on the ocean beach, failed to find any trace of poison other than that contained in the emulating fluid used by the undertaker. Coroner Leland is now convinced death resulted from heart disease.