

method of proof—the method which, beginning with a certain hypothesis, and deducing the results to which it leads, concludes from the harmony between these results and actual fact, that the hypothesis is correct. And here again, as I intend to limit myself to a single example, I shall choose the most elegant and specious that I can find.

Many writers on vision have perplexed themselves with the enquiry : why are objects seen erect, when their pictures on the retina are inverted ? Sir David Brewster tells us that this is a necessary consequence, and therefore a confirmation, of his Law of Visible Direction. “The phenomenon,” he writes, “of an erect object from an inverted picture on the retina, which has so unnecessarily perplexed metaphysicians and physiologists, is a demonstrable corollary from the law of visible direction for points. The only difficulty,” he adds, “which I have ever experienced in studying this subject, is, to discover where any difficulty lay.”

In examining this statement, I would repeat the remark previously made, that the image or “phenomenon” of an object has no existence in absolute space, apart from the mind. No doubt, the language familiarly employed in treatises on vision tends to suggest a contrary idea to careless and unreflective readers ; and few philosophers are at less pains to avoid phraseology liable to be misunderstood, than Sir David Brewster himself. He not only at one time, tells us of an image being formed in front of a wall, or behind a wall, according to the circumstances of the experiment ; and, at another time, speaks of images floating in the air at a distance of so many feet from the eye ; but he even accuses certain images of assuming a position in space different from “their right position” But, of course, such language—whatever be its meaning—cannot signify that images do ever actually exist in space, apart from the mind. I do not affirm that images are *purely* subjective states : modes of the *ego* considered *per se*, and out of all relation to matter : modes in which the *ego* might have existed, though matter had never been. Most metaphysicians take this view. A different opinion, however, may be maintained. It may be held that an image is *not* a *purely* subjective state, but is constituted by the mind’s immediate apprehension of the *non-ego* ; that it is a product of two factors, the mental and the material, mysteriously united with, or existing in relation to, one another. Being desirous to avoid metaphysical discussion as far as possible, I shall not attempt here to judge betwixt these two opposite theories. But, whether the one or the other be correct ; whether an image be purely subjective, or partake partly of the subjective and partly of the objective ; this