

notion of power is obtained by observing change. We cannot view any change in the state of bodies, but as resulting from the operation of some active power or principle. We readily grant, that from *nothing*, nothing can proceed, therefore, any alteration in the condition of bodies proceeds from a "*something*," which is the reason of or why the change is:—this effective "*something*" is a power in action—in this state and in relation to the effect, we denominate it cause. The changes produced in bodies are of different kinds: sometimes the change is in position only, as when a stone falls to the ground, or water is raised by means of a pump. The causes of such phenomena as these are gravitation and the pressure of the atmosphere. Sometimes the change takes place by friction, as pebbles are rounded on the sea-shore; and sometimes in the condition of particles, as when water passes from the state of ice into that of vapour. The change which is produced is styled effect.

Brown, (Hume, Hartley, Stewart,) denies that we have any idea of power, as producing change, and affirms that the only relation between cause and effect is constant conjunction. What appears to me, says Brown, to be the only intelligible meaning of the three most important words in physics, immediate, invariable, antecedence is power—the immediate, invariable antecedent, in any sequence, is a cause—the immediate, invariable consequent is the correlative effect. Power is not anything that can exist separately from a substance, but is merely the substance itself, considered in relation to another substance. The form of bodies is the relation of their elements to each other in space—the power of bodies is their relation to each other in time; and both form and power if considered separately from the number of elementary corpuscles (atoms) and from the changes which rise successively, are equally abstractions of the mind and nothing more. We may learn to consider form in itself as nothing, but only as the relation of bodies coexisting immediately in space; so power may be considered as only the relation which substances bear to each other in time, according as their phenomena are immediately successive: the antecedent and the consequent being all that is present in any phenomenon, therefore, there is no additional power, separate or different from the antecedent itself. It is the mere regularity of the succession of events, not an additional and more mysterious circumstance which power may be supposed to denote. It is only by confounding casual with uniform and invariable antecedence that power can be conceived to be something different from antecedence. In answer to the question: Is this definition of power consistent with the notion which we form of the power of the Creator? or is his efficiency altogether different in nature, as well as in degree? Brown says, on the omnipotence of God: it must indeed be allowed to every created power the same relation of awful superiority, which

his infinite wisdom and goodness bear to the human knowledge and virtue of his creatures: we consider his will as the direct antecedent of those glorious effects which the universe displays: without the divine will as antecedent nothing could have been. The will is the only necessary previous change; and that Being has almighty power, whose every will is immediately and invariably followed by the existence of its object. In the celebrated passage of Genesis, "God speaks and it is done," he affirms that nothing more is stated than the antecedent and the consequent.

The above is a brief synopsis of Brown's theory and it will be observed that he discards the use of the terms cause and effect, and supplies the words sequents and consequents; also he has attempted to modify the theory which asserts that we derive our idea of cause from experience, and refers it to the perception of antecedents and consequents. Now, no amount of experience can warrant us to assert a necessary connection between an antecedent and a consequent: we say that it is unvaried, but it may vary in the future for anything that this theory provides to the contrary. Mere succession cannot give us the idea of a cause. It is very true that when we witness succession, then it is we come to the idea of a cause, but when we have got the idea of a cause we extend it to all change. What the particular cause may be we may not be able to tell, and here antecedence and consequence may assist us. But the idea of a cause is necessary before the assistance can be afforded to us. We must have the idea before we seek the cause in a particular instance. In short all our necessary ideas might be embodied in propositions, e. g., All bodies must exist in space: this and all such propositions are simply laws of thought.

A French Philosopher (I think it is Des Cartes) says, that we not only have the idea of a cause, but we judge that no phenomena can begin to exist without a cause. Here is a principle as incontrovertibly true and believed to be true as the idea. If we attempt it we cannot even conceive of an event occurring without a cause. This is real, certain, undeniable and of universal belief. True, if no phenomenon is presented to the senses we cannot have the notion of a cause, but one term being given we must form the other. Still more, to decide otherwise is impossible; therefore, this is a necessary truth. Dr. Reid is equally clear in granting that this is a first-truth—a necessary, not a contingent proposition—it is not, changes generally have causes, but, change must have cause. This is incapable of proof from induction,—experience cannot even satisfy us in this. In those instances where the causes are unknown, it is by inference, or rather judgment, that we conclude that such cases have a cause. Dr. Reid says: all admit this, learned and unlearned—all regulate their conduct by it. A child even will not be persuaded that a change is effected without a cause. Locke and Reid admit that we perceive