

requirements of the age, or whether it be due to the memory of those sacred associations, which to me, at least, were the sweetest that life has given, I cannot but feel that for me, and for others who think as I do, there is a dreadful truth in those words of Hamilton: Philosophy having become a meditation, not merely of death, but of annihilation, the precept *know thyself* has become transformed into the terrific oracle to Oedipus.

'Mayest thou ne'er know the truth of what thou art.'

The confessions of the man who can write like this will be worth reading.

At what date George Romanes' mind began to react from the conclusions of the "Candid Examination," it is difficult to say. The Rede lecture of 1885 marks a change in his frame of mind. This lecture on "Mind and Motion" is a severe criticism of the materialistic account of the gradual evolution of mind. Some time before 1889 he wrote three lectures for the *Nineteenth Century*, on the "Influence of Science upon Religion." These lectures were not published. But as they contain an important criticism of serious errors in the very foundations of the "Candid Examination of Theism," they exhibit very clearly a stage in the mental history of their author. In these papers, two of which are here published for the first time, Romanes examines the line of demarcation which ought to separate the Province of Science from that of Religion, and his conclusion is that "In their purest forms, science and religion, really have no point of logical contract . . . for it must be admitted that behind all possible explanation of a scientific kind, there lies a great inexplicable, which, just because of its ultimate character, cannot be merged into anything further, that is to say, cannot be explained."

This naturally leads to an examination of the "Doctrine of Design" in nature. We must refer the reader to the second paper where this question is examined with all the knowledge of the biologist, the skill of a metaphysician and the candour of an earnest seeker after truth. The result reverses the decision of earlier years: "In view of these considerations, therefore, I think it is perfectly clear that if the argument from teleology is to be saved at all, it can only be so by shifting it from the narrow basis of special adaptations to the broad area of Nature as a whole. And here I confess that to my mind the argument does acquire a weight, which, if long and attentively considered, deserves to be regarded as enormous." Having come to the conclusion that the order of nature points to mental agency in creation, Romanes frankly confesses that there is "an apparent absence in Nature of that which in man we term morality." As a result the witness of Nature and the witness of the religious instincts conflict. Accordingly Romanes closes this page of his mental history with these words:

"With reference to the whole course of such reasonings, we have seen that any degree of reasonable probability, as attaching to the conclusions, is unattainable. From all which it appears that Natural Religion at the present time can only be regarded as a system full of intellectual contradictions and moral perplexities."

Romanes now devoted himself to a study of a great number of books on "Christian Evidences" and began to plan a work to be entitled "A Candid Examination of Religion," as an answer to the work of his youth:

"I have since come to see that I was wrong touching the basal argument for my negative conclusion. Therefore, I now feel it obligatory on me to publish the following results of my maturer thought, from the same standpoint of pure reason. Even though I have obtained no further light from the side of intuition, I have from that of intellect."

Romanes at this point raises the important question, "Has God spoken through the medium of our religious instincts?" This inquiry leads to the following interesting confession:

"When I wrote my earlier work, I did not sufficiently appreciate the immense importance of human nature, as distinguished from physical nature, in any inquiry touching theism. But since then I have seriously studied anthropology (including the science of comparative religions), psychology and metaphysics, with the result of clearly seeing that human nature is the most important part of nature as a whole, whereby to investigate the theory of theism. This I ought to have anticipated on merely *a priori* grounds, and no doubt should have perceived, had I not been too much immersed in merely physical research."

We cannot go into the splendid sections on "Causality" and "Faith," and the important distinction which our author draws between "Pure Agnosticism" and "Popular Agnos-

ticism," though these are the pivot points of his argument and constitute the *raison d'être* of his work. One criticism we venture to make: Romanes does not appear to be alive to the debt which he owes to Kant. He censures Kant for teaching "that there is nothing objective in the relation of cause and effect,"—Did Kant teach this or only that we cannot have any "*knowledge*" of it?—and then proceeds to develop an argument which certainly appears to us to be substantially an appreciation of Kant's contention as set forth in the preface to the "Critique of Pure Reason." Indeed, for some time it has seemed clear to us, that if we had given more heed to Kant's claim that his criticism would put an end to "dogmatic unbelief" by division of territory, the great conflict between Science and the Faith would never have arisen. However this may be, and whether or not he is indebted to Kant, we are grateful to Romanes for reminding us that we may safely allow science to bring the universe under the Empire of Natural Causation, and that then it is open to move the ulterior question—what is the nature of natural causation? And only faith can answer whether it is mechanical necessity or the freedom of God, which accounts for the kosmos.

So far it will be clear that two lines of thought operated in the conversion of Romanes' mind to Theism, (1) the evidence of Intellectual agency in Nature, (2) increased respect for the moral and spiritual nature of Man. It remains to note that a third line of thought gradually drew him towards a position of faith in the Christian religion. The objective evidences in favour of the truth of the Christian religion more and more impressed themselves upon him. This cannot be better stated than in his own words—which may prove a mirror for many minds:

"Moreover, in those days, I took it for granted that Christianity was played out, and never considered it at all as having any rational bearing on the question of Theism. And though this was doubtless inexcusable, I still think that the rational standing of Christianity has materially improved since then. For then it seemed that Christianity was destined to succumb as a rational system before the double assault of Darwin from without, and the negative school of criticism from within. Not only the book of organic nature, but also its own sacred documents, seemed to be declaring against it. But now all this has been very materially changed. We have all, more or less, grown to see that Darwinism is like Copernicanism, etc., in this respect; while the outcome of the great textual battle is impartially considered a signal victory for Christianity. Prior to the new Biblical science, there was really no rational basis in thoughtful minds, either for the date of any one of the New Testament books, or, consequently, for the historical truth of any one of the events narrated in them. Gospels, Acts and Epistles were all alike shrouded in this uncertainty. Hence the validity of the eighteenth century scepticism. But now all this kind of scepticism has been rendered obsolete, and forever impossible. . . . An enormous gain has thus accrued to the objective evidences of Christianity."

George Romanes having recognized that it was "reasonable to be a Christian believer" returned before his death to full communion with the church of Jesus Christ which he had for so many years been conscientiously compelled to forego. In his case the "pure in heart" was, after a long period of darkness, allowed, in a measure before his death, to "see God."

We regret that we have not found room for many of our author's fine remarks on the subject of the world regarded as a school of moral probation, and also as to the reasons why faith and not reason ought to be the test of divine acceptance. Pascal and Butler have evidently been laid under contribution and the disciple is worthy of such teachers. We cannot forbear from one more quotation in which Romanes reminds us that St. Augustines' *confessions* are but the classical expression of the eternal needs of the human heart—

"Which is miserable without God. Some men are not conscious of the cause of this misery. This, however, does not prevent the fact of their being miserable. For the most part they conceal the fact as well as possible from themselves, by occupying their minds with society, sport, frivolity of all kinds, or, if intellectually disposed, with science, art, literature, etc. This, however, is but to fill the starving belly with husks. I know from experience the intellectual distractions of scientific research, philosophical speculation, and artistic pleasures; but am also well aware that even when all are taken together and well sweetened to taste, in respect of consequent reputation, means, social position, etc., the whole concoction is but a high confectionary to a starving man. He may cheat himself for a time—especially if he be a strong man—into the belief that he is nourishing himself by denying his natural appetite; but soon finds he was made for some altogether different kind of food, even though of much less tastefulness as far as the palate is concerned."