

exception, we conclude that there must be a prime motor who has life in Himself and can never lose it.

Nature is regular, methodical in her movement; but reason tells us that there is no regularity without a regulator; and from this axiom which admits of no exception, we conclude that there must be a supreme, perfect, intelligent regulator. "In other words the universe is an effect, or rather a complicated series of effects. It must have had a cause. That cause is God. We trace, indeed, a series of causes, a chain of causations. But our minds compel us to believe that that series must have had a first term; that chain must have had a beginning. Every stream must have a source; the many branching streams of effects which we call the universe must have its source, its fountain head. That fountain, that cause of causes, is God. He is the first Great Cause, the uncaused Cause. Such, stated in the briefest terms, is the argument from causation, and the principles on which it rests are among the axioms of natural science. Let me give you an illustration. In the year 1846, astronomers observed an irregularity in the orbit of the planet Uranus. It was evident then that some hitherto unknown and hidden force was disturbing his motion and deflecting his path in the starry heavens. Two mathematicians, one in France and one in England, quite independent of each other, made a series of calculations and declared that in a certain fixed locality, in infinite space, there was an undiscovered planet, sufficiently large to affect the motion of Uranus. Astronomers in obedience to their commands searched for this planet with their telescopes, and there at a distance of 2,862 millions of miles from the sun—that is to say, about 3,000 times as distant as the earth is from the sun, they discovered the planet Neptune. "Precisely in the same way the believer in a personal God may feel confident that He exists, and that He is possessed of certain attributes." No man hath seen God at any time. We have not the evidence of our senses that He exists. We have not demonstrative evidence. But we have sufficient evidence from which we infer His existence as certainly as those two mathematicians inferred the existence and the locality of the planet Neptune." The force of this argument is acknowledged by some of the most distinguished representatives of agnosticism, including Herbert Spencer.

III. The third argument we produce for the belief in the existence of a God is that of *design*. This may be treated under two heads. (1), *order*; (2), *adaptation*.

(1) "Whenever we behold order and arrangement, our mental constitution compels us to infer that it must have originated in intelligence. We cannot believe that orderly arrangements can have resulted from the action of blind, unintelligent forces. As far as we know anything of the action of the latter, they do not produce order but disorder. Now, the universe is full of orderly arrangements of the most striking character. We therefore infer that they must be due to the action of a Being who possesses an amount of intelligence adequate to have produced them. This Being we designate God.

One or two simple illustrations will make the force of this argument plain. We take a walk in the country and see various flowers growing by the way side. They are in no order or design, but are scattered here and there in luxuriant profusion. We are told that the seeds were blown thence by the wind or carried by birds and insects and we have no difficulty in believing the statement. But we go to Queen Square Gardens and we see the flowers there laid out in set design with mathematical precision, no one flower is out of place, no one has outgrown its fellows in the same pattern. If we are told that this is merely the work of wind and birds and insects, we are incredulous; we know that some intelligent force must have planted these flowers and tended their growth.

We stroll along the seashore and we see huge masses of stone lying about, of all shapes and sizes, in all conceivable positions; we are told they were once imbedded in the cliff, and that the action of the wind and waves and frost has gradually eaten the cliff away and left these boulders exposed to view, and we accept the explanation. But we go into a city and see some lofty church or elegant mansion, composed of the same stone, all cut and carved and embellished, and we scoff at the idea that this could be produced by the combined action of wind and wave and frost, for we know that some intelligent force must have fashioned these stones and laid them in their places one by one.

So it is when we survey the universe. We see the regularity of the seasons, the