

not trace accurately the nexus between cause and effect without ending in a first cause, that is an uncaused cause, a cause which was not an effect. This in truth is the idea that is necessarily involved in causation and any other view would involve the denial of causation altogether. It has been sometimes suggested that there might be an infinite series of causes and effects. But that is absurd, for it supposes an infinite chain made up of finite links which is an impossibility. And such a series of causes and effects is utterly inconceivable, because, in that case, there would be no true cause at all. Wollaston adopted an illustration, which puts this in a very clear light. Suppose an infinite number of links in a chain suspended from the sky. The question immediately occurs—By what power is this chain held up? And to say that each link supports the other will not satisfy the requirements of the mind, because we shall want to know what supports the whole chain. This demand flows naturally from the laws of thought, and the question that it asks must be answered. The true idea of a cause, as it shapes itself in the human mind is, as Dr. Clarke has ably shown: First, that it causes something else; and, second, that it is itself uncaused. In a series of causes and effects, any one may be a provisional cause; but not a real one. In following out this process of thought, we must necessarily, in the end, reach an uncaused cause, and this must be capable of producing the various effects which we observe. Now, we all know this must be discovered in a self-existent Being or nowhere. Even Herbert Spencer, the Corypheus of modern sceptical philosophy, admits that the doctrine of causation leads to a first cause. In his "First Principles" he remarks: "We cannot think at all about the impressions which the external world produces on us without thinking of them as caused; and we cannot carry out an inquiry concerning their causation without inevitably committing ourselves to the hypothesis of a first cause."*

VI. THE FORCE BEHIND NATURE ORIGINATES IN MIND.

Motion is now held to be caused by force, and all the manifestations of force in the material universe are resolvable into

*Light in the Cloud, by the same author, pp. 12, 13.