

is subject to the unforeseen and irresistible decree of destiny. It is a necessity, but without a cause.

The existence of evil in the world has always been the great stumbling-block of all the different schools of teleologists. So long as men alone were involved, they were able to evade the issue by regarding all evils as punishments for offences given to gods whose pleasure was assumed to be unknown—at least, to all but the priesthood. But as knowledge of nature increased, and men reflected on their everyday observations, it became manifest that the forms of life below the human were constantly subjected to what, from any teleological view, must be regarded as gratuitous suffering. The division of all animals into herbivorous and carnivorous was a patent fact to be accounted for, as was also the apparent necessity that man should partially subsist on flesh. To be consistent, it was necessary to convict these innocent herbivores of crimes such as men were supposed to have committed against offended gods, and for which all suffering in the human family was regarded as a punishment.

It was to escape such illogical conclusions as this that rationalism first raised its protest. It first assumed the form of necessitarianism, accounting for evil on irresponsible grounds, and it can scarcely be said to have ever altered its position in this respect. We may therefore still regard the entire body of speculative opposition to teleology as constituting the necessitarian school of philosophy.

The necessitarian philosophy, while it may not avoid all unpleasant consequences, at least avoids all absurdities: while some of its legitimate deductions may be harsh or unpopular, they are at least not impossible or contradictory; while they may seem severe or humiliating, they are at least not stupid or ridiculous. Its leading principles have been already stated. They may be briefly summed up as follows:—

Matter has always existed and has always been in motion. Its moving particles affect one another according to a fixed law well understood—the law of the impact of bodies. The forms thus produced are the existing objects in the universe. This unceasing and beginningless motion produces unceasing and endless change. Every change of form results in new form, and thus an infinite series of changing forms is kept up. Whatever, therefore, exists, is the particular form of the given time and place. It exists because it has been produced. Its existence is the mere result of previous existences—of causes in the nature of things. It could not be other than it is, unless those prior causes had been other than they were. Hence, it exists of necessity. Everything is as it must be. The celestial bodies present the appearance and possess the configuration and constitution which we see, because absolute laws operating from infinity, have given them these characters at this particular epoch. The earth shares in this regimen. Unorganized matter, whether elementary or composite, is only a particular form which it has been forced to assume. Organization is but a modification wrought under the same law. The production and transformation of organization is the result of fashioning circumstances. It is not an external planning power, or intelligence, that adapts them to circumstances, but the circumstances them-