

I. The argument from the general consent of mankind in that belief.

II. The argument from effect to cause.

III. The argument from design.

IV. The argument from the moral nature of man.

In each of these the witness is clear, and the cumulative weight of the four ought to be irresistible to every candid and open mind; at any rate, those who fail to be convinced on these grounds, will scarcely be so by any amount of abstract reasoning or mathematical demonstration.

Let us consider these arguments in order.

I. Mankind in general consents to the belief in the Deity. This is an undoubted fact, which none can gainsay. Not only do Christians, Jews and Mohammedans acknowledge a personal God—not only did the ancient Greeks and Romans and Egyptians worship an All Father—but practically every nation throughout the world professes the same belief—the innumerable millions of China and Japan—the multitudes of India—the wild tribes of Africa—the American Indians, the aborigines of Australia, the Esquimaux of the Arctic Circle, the Hottentot of the Torrid Zone, all adore a Supreme Being; and although it is claimed that tribes have been discovered who had, apparently, no conception of a deity, yet, if we allow these claims, which are by no means clearly proved, the exceptions are still so rare that we may maintain that the belief in a God is so nearly universal among the families of the earth as to justify the inference that there is something in the constitution of human nature which suggests the idea to man, or else that it is one of the primitive beliefs which have been handed down from the beginning of the race, until now. Grotesque and degraded as are the forms in which this belief often appears, it is possible to trace features in them, all which point to an original universal belief in a personal God of power and goodness. Polytheistic and other degraded ideas of the Deity are evidently departures from the original. These are not universal. The common features in which the manifold forms of religion coincide testify to an original universal belief such as just alleged.

How, then, are we to account for the immemorial, universal belief in God? It cannot be said that it is a mere historical conclusion, an error of our forefathers,

which has been transmitted from generation to generation because in the course of centuries it would have been rectified. The phenomenon of inherent belief in God can only be explained as a natural instinct, as a result of the influence of the senses upon the reason. There is in the generality of mankind a God-consciousness. Just as there is a self-consciousness. It is true that some men seem to lack this God-consciousness just as there are cases of color blindness, or even of partial insensibility to moral distinctions. But in such instances we may well demand whether the faculty has not been atrophied by neglect, whether the eyes of the soul that once did perceive God have not been put out; whether this inability to recognize the existence of God is permanent, of only temporary; whether the God-consciousness be not dormant rather than dead or non-existent." At any rate these are exceptions to the general rule. St. Thomas Aquinas was but confirming the axiom of Cicero and Seneca when he said, "That which all men affirm cannot be false." And it has been always held that universal testimony may be accepted as evidence of the natural intuition of mankind. Therefore we must conclude that when all men with common consent believe that God exists, God does exist.

II. The second argument we produce for the belief in the existence of a God, is that of effect and cause. No law is more universal than this: every effect must have a cause. We are ill, and we know that something caused that illness. It rains, and we know that some atmospheric changes produced that rain. We stumble as we walk, and we know that some impediment caused us to stumble. Day changes into night, and we know that something has obscured the light of the sun; and so, whenever we see an event, we cannot help inferring that it must have originated in a cause, it being impossible even to imagine an event without a cause.

Nature exists; we see it, we feel it. Now, reason tells us there is no work without a workman, and from this axiom, which admits of no exception, we conclude that there must be a supreme workman, apart from nature, who has created all things; that this workman must be from eternity eternal without ever having been created.

Nature has life, movement; but reason tells us there is no motion without a motor; and from this axiom, which admits of no