

into the smelting furnace erected by him difficulties are resolved and doubts vanish. All that people now have to do is, as they travel, to keep an eye upon the finger-posts erected by him, and they will straightway reach the Destructable Mountains and Beulah land. For them will remain only millenium after millenium of peace. But the next philosopher asserts that the whole theory is a house of cards, and with the blasts of his criticism overthrows the fabric. Humanity once more finds itself grovelling in the mire. Thus the work of construction and demolition goes unceasingly on. But beneath the currents and counter-currents there is a steady onward flow bearing away without deviation towards the truth. There is undoubted progress. Even the fact that the preceding theory is known to be a failure is a step nearer the attainment of the end, or, at least, of making discernible the impossibility of attaining it. The snail may crawl up the face of a rock three inches in the day time and fall back two at night, but in the twenty-four hours it has climbed an inch. Although it should, the next morning, find itself again at the starting point it will have learned that, unless its efforts are increased, all further endeavour at that particular point will be unavailing.

We may now see that even the failures of philosophic research are in a sense successes, and that, accordingly, philosophy is not standing still, but marching forward. The terminus for one generation is only a way-side station for the next. What was an impassable barrier for the thinkers of yesterday has been scaled or circumvented by the thinkers of to-day. Rugged mountains have been reduced to painted canvas. But though we may take by storm a fortification which resisted all the strategy of our fathers, it is only to be confronted by a wall within the wall. Finally we will have to face the citadel which to us and to all future generations will be impregnable. Reason must at this juncture assemble its forces and own its inadequacy. This point has been more or less clearly reached by the Idealists. Indeed, it is contained implicitly or explicitly in Idealists of all ages, ancient and modern.

Here, naturally, there comes to be considered the question as to what reason has actually done. What have the employees of the mental workshop turned out as indubitable fact? Over what extent of country does reason now possess undisputed sway? What land is still debatable?

Thinking men hold it beyond a doubt that God is. They assert that He is manifested in the intelligible order of nature in conjunction with the intelligible character of man. However much materialists may dispute this proposition, Emerson and the students of Queen's will not yet come to blows. Just as Christopher Columbus set out from a country, whose boundaries were all clearly defined upon the map, to discover a new world, so philosophers now set out from the starting-point of the existence of God to discover the nature of his relation to man. It is here that the mist of the ages is still to be

dispersed. This mist, like a peculiar atmosphere in the Arctic regions, has rendered dimly visible to all explorers only startling and misshapen monsters, and the best and hardest of our pioneers have returned disappointed. Reason has at all times failed to clear away this obstruction. It is at this time somewhat outspokenly acknowledging its failure. In groping about this realm of darkness many a one has taken hold of something and gloried in the imagination that he had solved the mystery. When brought to the light his prize was found to be only a ghost. One of the best works of Kant is his demonstration that everything, as yet discovered in this region of obscurity, has been but ghost and shadow—that, in his own words, each of these philosophers had been occupied with an illusion. He has further shewn that if we are left to the guidance of reason, this illusion is inevitable. His most suggestive work, I think, is that he shows what must be the form which the relation of God to man is forced to take in order that it may be adapted to the nature of man. Here, then, we have on the one side illusions, and on the other the outline of a reality.

In the entire course of speculation two theories have been put forward regarding the nature of the relation of the infinite to the finite—of God to man. Each ends by declaring that it is unnecessary to seek for any relation, since on examination the two are discovered to be essentially one. One makes the finite infinite; the other makes the infinite finite. The first says that man is God; the second, says that God is man. The latter has been adopted by the great majority of heathen nations. Each of the gods of Greece and Rome is a human being enlarged indefinitely in one direction only. Jupiter, for example, is all-powerful, but far from being all-wise; while some of the other gods were put to rout by the heroes of the Trojan war. The former has been adopted by the Hindus and by a school of philosophy represented by Emerson. The worshippers of Brahma, by stopping up their ears, eyes and nose, and by lying motionless, except that they muttered the mysterious syllable 'Om' (which performance, as this word has no meaning for themselves or anybody else, was equivalent to an absolute negation of human reason), believed that they became one with God. Emerson considered that every atom in the universe exhaled the Deity. He says, 'Nature is too thin a screen—the glory of the One breaks in everywhere.' An ordinary mortal will call a rock a rock, and nothing more. A geologist will examine the object in order to learn its composition and the character of its formation. A geologist of a speculative turn of mind, on finding that even a pebble is an almost inexhaustible field of research, may be led by a process of reasoning to infer an intelligence capable of comprehending the universe. He sees through a glass darkly. Only the mystic leaps beyond the sensible barrier and stands face to face with God. He needs nothing finite whatsoever. Processes of reasoning are too dull and sluggish. He disdains all contact with the things of earth. To him nature is a perfectly