

material nature, for no part of the universe could cause itself, much less something besides itself. Every individual thing that we see, declares itself to be an effect. Where, then, and what, is the cause? This is the question which no Atheist can answer—the problem before which Materialistic science bows its head abashed. Atheism and its twin sister Agnosticism hang up a curtain here, and exclaim, "We don't know what is inside;" while in truth our own consciousness extends both within and without. Mr. John Stuart Mill,* while admitting that the material universe is continually changing in all its parts, and that whatever changes must be an effect, yet thinks that there is a permanent element in Nature, which does not change; and may be therefore the cause. But what is this permanent element? You will perhaps be surprised to hear that it is Force. How this statement can help the Atheist out of the difficulty of his position, one fails to see. For Force is not matter, nor an attribute of matter—nor, in fact, of matter in any sense of the word, as I will presently shew. The permanency of Force, therefore, but proves the permanency of mind, and that in mind, and mind alone, can an efficient cause of material things be found. All matter is an effect, whose cause must be other than material; and this cause is God.

Atheists are constantly babbling of Nature, as though by use of a word—which they often employ in a very loose and vague sense—they got rid of all difficulty in connection with this question. What is meant by Nature? Unless we have a clear and definite meaning in our minds that we attach to this word, its use is not likely to help us much. The term Nature, it seems to me, is very often used in a most ambiguous sense, even by scientific men. At one time it is employed to denote the totality of all existence; at another, to describe the causes or conditions of things; at another, the relations of phenomena; and sometimes all these collectively. Such use of language is likely to land us in inextricable confusion. According to the derivation of the word Nature (*Natura—Nascitur*), it means that which is born or produced—in point of fact, the becoming.

**Vid.* Essay on Theism.