

the idea of God, asserted the impossibility of such a regress to infinity, and insisted that the mind must pause somewhere and confess an original cause who was not an effect. As reasonably might we assert that the universe is finite, on the ground that after travelling in imagination from star to star and from system to system, the mind becomes weary of the process and seeks to rest in a boundary line. Once admit the form of evolution with which this argument begins, and logically the Divine existence is an impossibility.

Another celebrated argument, the most metaphysical of all, and generally known as the *apriori* argument for the being of God originated with St. Augustine and was formulated in later ages by Anselm and Aquinas. It says : "I have an idea of an all perfect being, and with this idea is bound up the idea of necessary existence ; therefore an all perfect being necessarily exists." To which the sceptic philosophically replies : "Yes, he exists, but where?—in your mind ; just as you have an idea of a unicorn with which is bound up the idea of the white horse of the Saxons, with a straight horn in his forehead, and it exists in the royal arms as a painting or sculpture in paper, wood or stone." The essence of this *apriori* or ontological argument is that the mind is the measure of existence, of fact, one of the most pernicious of all errors, one of the greatest barriers in the way of the discovery and acknowledgment of truth. It is the principle which underlies the so-called higher criticism that denies miracles, rejects inspiration, and turns the page of history into a work of the imagination. The Christian should be especially careful to avoid the use of a form of reasoning which has done more than any other mode of thought to undermine his holy religion.

Then comes the moral argument which Kant deemed impregnable. It may either say, "the conscience within me is not my voice nor the world's, it is, therefore, the voice of a great moral governor who is God." Or it may contrast the judgment of a right conscience upon good and evil with the moral irregularity of the world where virtue often suffers, while vice goes unpunished, and assert the necessity for the existence of a righteous judge who will yet render to men according to their deeds. But if the sensational philosopher or utilitarian moralist chooses to deny that conscience is innate, if he holds that it is a mere matter of education and convention, the argument as first stated no longer exists for him. And as to the second form which looks to final retribution, it is in its process as much an identification of thought with real existence as that which obtains in the argument *apriori*. These arguments, with others that might be mentioned, are sanctions and most important sanctions of the belief in the existence of God, but they are one and all incapable of furnishing the mind with such a belief.

The natural theology of the Bible is contained in two verses of the first chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans. "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them ; for God hath shewed it unto them. For