

there is not the slightest straining or heaving required, for there is no difficulty felt, no resistance to contend with, and, therefore there is no power expended to overcome it. The omnipotence is absolutely idle, for it does not, and cannot put forth a particle of its strength where there is not a particle of difficulty to exercise it. Here the difficulty is expressed in the term *weight*; and in order to fill omnipotence up to the brim we simply shake every atom of flour out of the bags, and discharge the whole load of the property of weight. Why, under this simple rule for making omnipotence easy, I, a poor one-bag man, would undertake any number of bags, and "run" the whole universe with the load on my back.

Space will not serve to test the remaining sides of the theological square; but under the simple light of our native intelligence and unadulterated common sense, the result would be precisely the same,—an unthinkable and impossible attribute standing absolutely self-excluded from the test of realities and the domain of actual human thought. Thus the Mystery behind the veil of the temple is a fasciculus of negations, bringing the *Theos* of one school of thought into exact coincidence with the *Atheos* of the opposite school,—so wonderful, sometimes, is the contiguity of extremes. Thus, too, the great religious difficulty of to-day is so to formulate our knowledge of the force and intelligence which operate and illuminate existence as to satisfy the exigencies of modern religious thought. Various solutions have been attempted, but they have been evasions rather than solutions, as may be seen from the three specimens following:

1. Pantheism reduces deity to an impalpable and infinitely subtle solution pervading all things; but, as I have already indirectly shown, to say that God is everywhere is virtually to affirm that he is nowhere at all; and thus the amount of religious sentiment expressible from this doctrine is comparable to the amount of gold to be taken from a pail of sea-water. Under very refined analysis, there may be enough to gild a theory, but certainly not enough to "run" a religion.

2. Some able scientific men (notably that profound thinker, the late Professor W. K. Clifford) have made what appears to be a half-hearted attempt to utilize what they call "cosmic emotion" as the raw material for the manufacture of our religious sentiments. No one, indeed, can look deeply into the universe without experiencing some such feeling. But we are as often crushed as exalted by it, and it is as variable and as complex as the aspects of existence we hold in contemplation. Wherefore, to make cosmic emotion the basis of religious sentiment is much the same as if astronomers should work their "personal equations," i.e., their little jolts, and shakes, and nods, and winks, and slips, into the substructure of astronomical science.

3. Again, science has a negative as well as a positive side; and the science of our own ignorance, the methodic handling of all the things we do not know, is one of no little importance. The relation of the