

chain, which has had no beginning, and which shall have no end. This notion sets aside creation by denying that the Universe ever had a commencement.

Then there is the theory of *progressive development*, which supposes all existing substances and forms to have been gradually evolved from one simple and vastly extended material substance, by the force of innate and eternal tendencies and laws. Allowing the existence of the original substance, this theory makes the Universe to be self-created. It is the most philosophical expression of Materialism.

A third theory is that of the *pantheistic substance*, differing from the last mentioned, in holding that the various objects of the Universe are not parts, but merely manifestations of the original substance, and that this substance of existence is not material, but spiritual. All things are phenomena—or forms of thought—arising in the unconscious Divine mind; which, however, attains to conscious intelligence in man.

The only remaining theory is the doctrine of *creation by a personal Deity*, who is ever present and active throughout His works, yet distinct and separate from them.

We do not say that no other doctrines have been devised than those now enumerated, but we assert—what we believe investigation will sustain—that all cosmogonies which differ from these may be reduced either to a modification of one, or to a combination of more than one, of these four general theories, of *endless succession*, of *progressive development*, of the *pantheistic substance* and of *personal creation*; and we propose to show that the first three are untenable.

1. The notion of an endless succession of existence is one inconceivable in itself. It is possible for the mind to go back from one cause to another and from that to its predecessor and so on till the view is lost in the retrospect, yet still we ask for some *original* cause. We may return through generation after generation, but we expect to come to Adam at the last, and to find him formed by the hands of God.

Should a chain hang from Heaven, the links of which we might trace till the sight of them was lost in the blue distance, we could not resist the conviction that it terminated at some point where it found support. It may, indeed, be said that