

The
Works, of George Berkeley
D.D.; Formerly Bishop of Cloyne
Including his Posthumous Works

With Prefaces, Annotations, Appendices, and
An Account of his Life, by
Alexander Campbell Fraser

Hon. D.C.L. Oxford

Hon. LL.D. Glasgow and Edinburgh; Emeritus Professor
of Logic and Metaphysics in the University of Edinburgh

In Four Volumes

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PREFACE

MORE than thirty years ago I was honoured by a request to prepare a complete edition of the Works of Bishop Berkeley, with Notes, for the Clarendon Press, Oxford. That edition, which contains many of his writings previously unpublished, appeared in 1871. It was followed in 1874 by a volume of annotated Selections from his philosophical works; and in 1881 I prepared a small volume on 'Berkeley' for Blackwood's 'Philosophical Classics.'

The 1871 edition of the Works originated, I believe, in an essay on 'The Real World of Berkeley,' which I gave to *Macmillan's Magazine* in 1862, followed by another in 1864, in the *North British Review*. These essays suggested advantages to contemporary thought which might be gained by a consideration of final questions about man and the universe, in the form in which they are presented by a philosopher who has suffered more from misunderstanding than almost any other modern thinker. During a part of his lifetime, he was the foremost metaphysician in Europe in an unmetaphysical generation. And in this country, after a revival of philosophy in the later part of the eighteenth century, *idea, matter, substance, cause,* and other terms which play an important part in his writings, had lost the meaning that he in-

tended; while in Germany the sceptical speculations of David Hume gave rise to a reconstructive criticism, on the part of Kant and his successors, which seemed at the time to have little concern with the *a posteriori* methods and the principles of Berkeley.

The success of the attempt to recall attention to Berkeley has far exceeded expectation. Nearly twenty thousand copies of the three publications mentioned above have found their way into the hands of readers in Europe and America; and the critical estimates of Berkeley, by eminent writers, which have appeared since 1871, in Britain, France, Germany, Denmark, Holland, Italy, America, and India, confirm the opinion that his Works contain a word in season, even for the twentieth century. Among others who have delivered appreciative criticisms of Berkeley within the last thirty years are J. S. Mill, Mansel, Huxley, T. H. Green, Maguire, Collins Simon, the Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Leslie Stephen, Dr. Hutchison Stirling, Professor T. K. Abbott, Professor Van der Wyck, M. Penjon, Ueberweg, Frederichs, Ulrici, Janitsch, Eugen Meyer, Spicker, Loewy, Professor Höffding of Copenhagen, Dr. Lorenz, Noah Porter, and Krauth, besides essays in the chief British, Continental, and American reviews. The text of those Works of Berkeley which were published during his lifetime, enriched with a biographical Introduction by Mr. A. J. Balfour, carefully edited by Mr. George Sampson, appeared in 1897. In 1900 Dr. R. Richter, of the University of Leipsic, produced a new translation into German of the *Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous*, with an

excellent Introduction and notes. These estimates form a remarkable contrast to the denunciations, founded on misconception, by Warburton and Beattie in the eighteenth century.

In 1899 I was unexpectedly again asked by the Delegates of the Oxford University Press to prepare a New Edition of Berkeley's Works, with some account of his life, as the edition of 1871 was out of print; a circumstance which I had not expected to occur in my lifetime. It seemed presumptuous to undertake what might have been entrusted to some one probably more in touch with living thought; and in one's eighty-second year, time and strength are wanting for remote research. But the recollection that I was attracted to philosophy largely by Berkeley, in the morning of life more than sixty years ago, combined with the pleasure derived from association in this way with the great University in which he found an academic home in his old age, moved me in the late evening of life to make the attempt. And now, at the beginning of the twentieth century, I offer these volumes, which still imperfectly realise my ideal of a final Oxford edition of the philosopher who spent his last days in Oxford, and whose mortal remains rest in its Cathedral.

Since 1871 materials of biographical and philosophical interest have been discovered, in addition to the invaluable collection of MSS. which Archdeacon Rose then placed at my disposal, and which were included in the supplementary volume of *Life and Letters*. Through the kindness of the late Earl of Egmont I had access, some years ago, to a large

number of letters which passed between his ancestor, Sir John (afterwards Lord) Percival, and Berkeley, between 1709 and 1730. I have availed myself freely of this correspondence.

Some interesting letters from and concerning Berkeley, addressed to his friend Dr. Samuel Johnson of Stratford in Connecticut, afterwards President of King's College in New York, appeared in 1874, in Dr. Beardsley's *Life of Johnson*, illustrating Berkeley's history from 1729 till his death. For these and for further information I am indebted to Dr. Beardsley.

In the present edition of Berkeley's Works, the Introductions and the annotations have been mostly re-written. A short account of his romantic life is prefixed, intended to trace its progress in the gradual development and application of his initial Principle; and also the external incidents of his life in their continuity, with the help of the new material in the Percival MSS. and the correspondence with Johnson. It forms a key to the whole. This biography is not intended to supersede the *Life and Letters* of Berkeley that accompanied the 1871 edition, which remains as a magazine of facts for reference.

The rearrangement of the Works is a feature in the present edition. Much of the new material that was included in the 1871 edition reached me when the book was far advanced in the press, and thus the chronological arrangement, strictly followed in the present edition, was not possible. A chronological arrangement is suggested by Berkeley himself. 'I

could wish that all the things I have published on these philosophical subjects were read in the order wherein I published them,' are his words in one of his letters to Johnson; 'and a second time with a critical eye, adding your own thought and observation upon every part as you went along.'

The first three volumes in this edition contain the Philosophical Works exclusively; arranged in chronological order, under the three periods of Berkeley's life. The First Volume includes those of his early life; the Second those produced in middle life; and the Third those of his later years. The Miscellaneous Works are presented in like manner in the Fourth Volume.

The four little treatises in which Berkeley in early life unfolded his new thought about the universe, along with his college *Commonplace Book* published in 1871, which prepared the way for them, form, along with the Life, the contents of the First Volume. It is of them that the author writes thus, in another of his letters to Johnson:—'I do not indeed wonder that on first reading what I have written men are not thoroughly convinced. On the contrary, I should very much wonder if prejudices which have been many years taking root should be extirpated in a few hours' reading. I had no inclination to trouble the world with large volumes. What I have done was rather with a view of giving hints to thinking men, who have leisure and curiosity to go to the bottom of things, and pursue them in their own minds. Two or three times reading these small tracts, and making what is read the occasion of thinking, would, I believe,

render the whole familiar and easy to the mind, and take off that shocking appearance which hath often been observed to attend speculative truths.' Except Johnson, none of Berkeley's eighteenth-century critics seem to have observed this rule.

Alciphron, or The Minute Philosopher, with its supplement in the *Theory of Visual Language Vindicated*, being the philosophical works of his middle life, associated with its American enterprise, form the Second Volume. In them the conception of the universe that was unfolded in the early writings is applied, in vindication of religious morality and Christianity, against the Atheism attributed to those who called themselves Free-thinkers; who were treated by Berkeley as, at least by implication, atheistic.

The Third Volume contains the *Analyst* and *Siris*, which belong to his later life, *Siris* being especially characteristic of its serene quiet. In both there is a deepened sense of the mystery of the universe, and in *Siris* especially a more comprehensive conception of the final problem suggested by human life. But the metaphysics of the one is lost in mathematical controversy; that of the other in medical controversy, and in undigested ancient and mediæval learning. The metaphysical importance of *Siris* was long unrecognised, although in it Berkeley's thought culminates, not in a paradox about Matter, but in the conception of God as the concatenating principle of the universe; yet this reached through the conception of Matter as real only in and through living Mind.

The Miscellaneous Works, after the two juvenile Latin tracts in mathematics, deal with observations of nature and man gathered in his travels, questions

of social economy, and lessons in religious life. Several are posthumous, and were first published in the 1871 edition. Of these, perhaps the most interesting is the *Journal in Italy*. The *Discourse on Passive Obedience* is the nearest approach to ethical theory which Berkeley has given to us, and as such it might have taken its place in the First Volume; but on the whole it seemed more appropriately placed in the Fourth, where it is easily accessible for those who prefer to read it immediately after the book of *Principles*.

I have introduced, in an Appendix to the Third Volume, some matter of philosophical interest for which there was no place in the editorial Prefaces or in the annotations. The historical significance of Samuel Johnson and Jonathan Edwards, as pioneers of American philosophy, and also advocates of the new conception of the material world that is associated with Berkeley, is recognised in Appendix C. Illustrations of the misinterpretation of Berkeley by his early critics are presented in Appendix D. A lately discovered tractate by Berkeley forms Appendix E. In the Fourth Volume, numerous queries contained in the first edition of the *Querist*, and omitted in the later editions, are given in an Appendix, which enables the reader to reconstruct that interesting tract in the form in which it originally appeared.

The present edition is thus really a new work, which possesses, I hope, a certain philosophical unity, as well as pervading biographical interest.

As Berkeley is the immediate successor of Locke, and as he was educated by collision with the *Essay*

on *Human Understanding*, perhaps Locke ought to have had more prominence in the editorial portion of this book. Limitation of space partly accounts for the omission; and I venture instead to refer the reader to the Prolegomena and notes in my edition of Locke's *Essay*, which was published by the Clarendon Press in 1894. I may add that an expansion of thoughts which run through the *Life* and many of the annotations, in this edition of Berkeley, may be found in my *Philosophy of Theism*¹.

The reader need not come to Berkeley in the expectation of finding in his Works an all-comprehensive speculative system like Spinoza's, or a reasoned articulation of the universe of reality such as Hegel is supposed to offer. But no one in the succession of great English philosophers has, I think, proposed in a way more apt to invite reflexion, the final alternative between Unreason, on the one hand, and Moral Reason expressed in Universal Divine Providence, on the other hand, as the root of the unbeginning and endless evolution in which we find ourselves involved; as well as the further question, Whether this tremendous practical alternative *can* be settled by any means that are within the reach of man? His Philosophical Works, taken collectively, may encourage those who see in a reasonable *via media* between Omniscience and Nescience the true path of progress, under man's inevitable venture of reasonable Faith.

One is therefore not without hope that a fresh

¹ *Philosophy of Theism*: The Gifford Lectures delivered before the University of Edinburgh in 1894-96. (Second Edition, 1899.)

impulse may be given to philosophy and religious thought by this reappearance of George Berkeley, under the auspices of the University of Oxford, at the beginning of the twentieth century. His readers will at any rate find themselves in the company of one of the most attractive personalities of English philosophy, who is also among the foremost of those thinkers who are masters in English literature—Francis Bacon and Thomas Hobbes, George Berkeley and David Hume.

A. CAMPBELL FRASER.

GORTON. HAWTHORNDEN, MIDLOTHIAN,
March, 1901.

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GEORGE BERKELEY

BY THE EDITOR

I

EARLY LIFE (1685-1721).

TOWARDS the end of the reign of Charles the Second a certain William Berkeley, according to credible tradition, occupied a cottage attached to the ancient Castle of Dysert, in that part of the county of Kilkenny which is watered by the Nore. Little is known about this William Berkeley except that he was Irish by birth and English by descent. It is said that his father went over to Ireland soon after the Restoration, in the suite of his reputed kinsman, Lord Berkeley of Stratton, when he was Lord Lieutenant. William Berkeley's wife seems to have been of Irish blood, and in some remote way related to the family of Wolfe, the hero of Quebec. It was in the modest abode in the valley of the Nore that George, the eldest of their six sons, was born, on March 12, 1685.

There is nothing in the recorded family history of these Dysert Berkeleys that helps to explain the singular personality and career of the eldest son. The parents have left no mark, and make no appearance in any extant records of the family. They probably made their way to the valley of the Nore among families of English connexion who, in the quarter of a century preceding the birth of George Berkeley, were finding settlements in Ireland. The family, as it appears, was not wealthy, but was recognised as of gentle blood. Robert, the fifth son,

became rector of Middleton and vicar-general of Cloyne ; and another son, William, held a commission in the army. According to the Register of Trinity College, one of the sons was born 'near Thurles,' in 1699, and Thomas, the youngest, was born in Tipperary, in 1703, so that the family may have removed from Dysert after the birth of George. In what can be gleaned of the younger sons, one finds little appearance of sympathy with the religious and philosophical genius of the eldest.

Regarding this famous eldest son in those early days, we have this significant autobiographical fragment in his *Commonplace Book*: 'I was distrustful at eight years old, and consequently by nature disposed for the new doctrines.' In his twelfth year we find the boy in Kilkenny School. The register records his entrance there in the summer of 1696, when he was placed at once in the second class, which seems to imply precocity, for it is almost a solitary instance. He spent the four following years in Kilkenny. The School was in high repute for learned masters and famous pupils ; among former pupils were the poet Congreve and Swift, nearly twenty years earlier than George Berkeley ; among his school-fellows was Thomas Prior, his life-long friend and correspondent. In the days of Berkeley and Prior the head master was Dr. Hinton, and the School was still suffering from the consequences of 'the warre in Ireland' which followed the Revolution.

Berkeley in Kilkenny School is hardly visible, and we have no means of estimating his mental state when he left it. Tradition says that in his school-days he was wont to feed his imagination with airy visions and romance, a tradition which perhaps originated long after in popular misconceptions of his idealism. Dimly discernible at Kilkenny, only a few years later he was a conspicuous figure in an island that was then beginning to share in the intellectual movement of the modern world, taking

his place as a classic in English literature, and as the most subtle and ardent of contemporary English-speaking thinkers.

In March, 1700, at the age of fifteen, George Berkeley entered Trinity College, Dublin. This was his home for more than twenty years. He was at first a mystery to the ordinary undergraduate. Some, we are told, pronounced him the greatest dunce, others the greatest genius in the College. To hasty judges he seemed an idle dreamer; the thoughtful admired his subtle intelligence and the beauty of his character. In his undergraduate years, a mild and ingenuous youth, inexperienced in the ways of men, vivacious, humorous, satirical, in unexpected ways inquisitive, often paradoxical, through misunderstandings he persisted in his own way, full of simplicity and enthusiasm. In 1704 (the year in which Locke died) he passed Bachelor of Arts, and became Master in 1707, when he was admitted to a Fellowship, 'the only reward of learning which that kingdom had to bestow.'

In Trinity College the youth found himself on the tide of modern thought, for the 'new philosophy' of Newton and Locke was then invading the University. Locke's *Essay*, published in 1690, was already in vogue. This early recognition of Locke in Dublin was chiefly due to William Molyneux, Locke's devoted friend, a lawyer and member of the Irish Parliament, much given to the experimental methods. Descartes, too, with his sceptical criticism of human beliefs, yet disposed to spiritualise powers commonly attributed to matter, was another accepted authority in Trinity College; and Malebranche was not unknown. Hobbes was the familiar representative of a finally materialistic conception of existence, reproducing in modern forms the atomism of Democritus and the ethics of Epicurus. Above all, Newton was acknowledged master in physics, whose *Principia*, issued three

years sooner than Locke's *Essay*, was transforming the conceptions of educated men regarding their surroundings, like the still more comprehensive law of physical evolution in the nineteenth century.

John Toland, an Irishman, one of the earliest and ablest of the new sect of Free-thinkers, made his appearance at Dublin in 1696, as the author of *Christianity not Mysteriorious*. The book was condemned by College dignitaries and dignified clergy with even more than Irish fervour. It was the opening of a controversy that lasted over half of the eighteenth century in England, in which Berkeley soon became prominent; and it was resumed later on, with greater intellectual force and in finer literary form, by David Hume and Voltaire. The collision with Toland about the time of Berkeley's matriculation may have awakened his interest. Toland was supposed to teach that matter is eternal, and that motion is its essential property, into which all changes presented in the outer and inner experience of man may at last be resolved. Berkeley's life was a continual protest against these dogmas. The Provost of Trinity College in 1700 was Dr. Peter Browne, who had already entered the lists against Toland; long after, when Bishop of Cork, he was in controversy with Berkeley about the nature of man's knowledge of God. The Archbishop of Dublin in the early years of the eighteenth century was William King, still remembered as a philosophical theologian, whose book on the *Origin of Evil*, published in 1702, was criticised by Boyle and Leibniz.

Dublin in those years was thus a place in which a studious youth, who had been 'distrustful at eight years old,' might be disposed to entertain grave questions about the ultimate meaning of his visible environment, and of the self-conscious life to which he was becoming awake. Is the universe of existence confined to the visible world, and is matter the really active power in existence? Is God

the root and centre of all that is real, and if so, what is meant by God? Can God be good if the world is a mixture of good and evil? Questions like these were ready to meet the inquisitive Kilkenny youth in his first years at Dublin.

One of his earliest interests at College was mathematical. His first appearance in print was as the anonymous author of two Latin tracts, *Arithmetica* and *Miscellanea Mathematica*, published in 1707. They are interesting as an index of his intellectual inclination when he was hardly twenty; for he says they were prepared three years before they were given to the world. His disposition to curious questions in geometry and algebra is further shewn in his College *Commonplace Book*.

This lately discovered *Commonplace Book* throws a flood of light upon Berkeley's state of mind between his twentieth and twenty-fourth year. It is a wonderful revelation; a record under his own hand of his thoughts and feelings when he first came under the inspiration of a new conception of the nature and office of the material world. It was then struggling to find adequate expression, and in it the sanguine youth seemed to find a spiritual panacea for the errors and confusions of philosophy. It was able to make short work, he believed, with atheistic materialism, and could dispense with arguments against sceptics in vindication of the reality of experience. The mind-dependent existence of the material world, and its true function in the universe of concrete reality, were to be disclosed under the light of a new transforming self-evident Principle. 'I wonder not at my sagacity in discovering the obvious and amazing truth. I rather wonder at my stupid inadvertency in not finding it out before—'tis no witchcraft to see.' The pages of the *Commonplace Book* give vent to rapidly forming thoughts about the things of sense and the 'ambient space' of a youth entering into reflective life, in company with Descartes

and Malebranche, Bacon and Hobbes, above all, Locke and Newton ; who was trying to translate into reasonableness his faith in the reality of the material world and God. Under the influence of this new conception, he sees the world like one awakening from a confused dream. The revolution which he wanted to inaugurate he foresaw would be resisted. Men like to think and speak about things as they have been accustomed to do : they are offended when they are asked to exchange this for what appears to them absurdity, or at least when the change seems useless. But in spite of the ridicule and dislike of a world long accustomed to put empty words in place of living thoughts, he resolves to deliver himself of his burden, with the politic conciliation of a skilful advocate however ; for he characteristically reminds himself that one who 'desires to bring another over to his own opinions must seem to harmonize with him at first, and humour him in his own way of talking.'

In 1709, when he was twenty-four years old, Berkeley presented himself to the world of empty verbal reasoners as the author of what he calls modestly *An Essay towards a New Theory of Vision*. It was dedicated to Sir John Percival, his correspondent afterwards for more than twenty years ; but I have not discovered the origin of their friendship. The *Essay* was a pioneer, meant to open the way for the disclosure of the Secret with which he was burdened, lest the world might be shocked by an abrupt disclosure. In this prelude he tries to make the reader recognise that in ordinary seeing we are always interpreting visual signs ; so that we have daily presented to our eyes what is virtually an intelligible natural language ; so that in all our intercourse with the visible world we are in intercourse with all-pervading active Intelligence. We are reading absent data of touch and of the other senses in the language of their visual signs. And the

visual signs themselves, which are the immediate objects of sight, are necessarily dependent on sentient and perceptive mind; whatever may be the case with the tangible realities which the visual data signify, a fact evident by our experience when we make use of a looking-glass. The material world, so far at least as it presents itself visibly, is *real* only in being *realised* by living and seeing beings. The mind-dependent *visual* signs of which we are conscious are continually speaking to us of an invisible and distant world of *tangible* realities; and through the natural connexion of the visual signs with their tactual meanings, we are able in seeing practically to perceive, not only what is distant in space, but also to anticipate the future. The Book of Vision is in literal truth a Book of Prophecy. The chief lesson of the tentative *Essay on Vision* is thus summed up:—

‘Upon the whole, I think we may fairly conclude that the proper objects of Vision constitute the Universal Language of Nature; whereby we are instructed how to regulate our actions in order to attain those things that are necessary to the preservation and well-being of our bodies, as also to avoid whatever may be hurtful and destructive of them. And the manner wherein they signify and mark out unto us the objects which are at a distance is the same with that of languages and signs of human appointment; which do not suggest the things signified by any likeness or identity of nature, but only by an habitual connexion that experience has made us to observe between them. Suppose one who had always continued blind be told by his guide that after he has advanced so many steps he shall come to the brink of a precipice, or be stopped by a wall; must not this to him seem very admirable and surprising? He cannot conceive how it is possible for mortals to frame such predictions as these, which to him would seem as strange and unaccountable as prophecy does to others. Even

they who are blessed with the visive faculty may (though familiarity make it less observed) find therein sufficient cause of admiration. The wonderful art and contrivance wherewith it is adjusted to those ends and purposes for which it was apparently designed; the vast extent, number, and variety of objects that are at once, with so much ease and quickness and pleasure, suggested by it—all these afford subject for much and pleasing speculation, and may, if anything, give us some glimmering analogous prænotion of things that are placed beyond the certain discovery and comprehension of our present state¹.

Berkeley took orders in the year in which his *Essay on Vision* was published. On February 1, 1709, he was ordained as deacon, in the chapel of Trinity College, by Dr. George Ashe, Bishop of Clogher. Origen and Augustine, Anselm and Aquinas, Malebranche, Fénelon, and Pascal, Cudworth, Butler, Jonathan Edwards, and Schleiermacher, along with Berkeley, are among those who are illustrious at once in the history of philosophy and of the Christian Church. The Church, it has been said, has been for nearly two thousand years the great Ethical Society of the world, and if under its restrictions it has been less conspicuous on the field of philosophical criticism and free inquiry, these names remind us of the immense service it has rendered to meditative thought.

The light of the Percival correspondence first falls on Berkeley's life in 1709. The earliest extant letters from Berkeley to Sir John Percival are in September, October, and December of that year, dated at Trinity College. In one of them he pronounces Socrates 'the best and most admirable man that the heathen world has produced.' Another letter, in March, 1710, accompanies a copy of the second edition of the *Essay on Vision*. 'I have made some alterations and additions in the body of the treatise,' he says, 'and in the appendix have endeavoured to meet the

¹ *Essay on Vision*, sect. 147, 148.

objections of the Archbishop of Dublin ;' whose sermon he proceeds to deprecate, for 'denying that goodness and understanding are more to be affirmed of God than feet or hands,' although all these may, in a metaphorical sense. How far, or whether at all, God is knowable by man, was, as we shall see, matter of discussion and controversy with Berkeley in later life ; but this shews that the subject was already in his thoughts. Returning to the *Essay on Vision*, he tells Sir John that 'there remains one objection, that with regard to the uselessness of that book of mine ; but in a little time I hope to make what is there laid down appear subservient to the ends of morality and religion, in a *Treatise* I have in the press, the design of which is to demonstrate the existence and attributes of God, the immortality of the soul, the reconciliation of God's foreknowledge and the freedom of man ; and by shewing the emptiness and falsehood of several parts of the speculative sciences, to induce men to the study of religion and things useful. How far my endeavours will prove successful, and whether I have been all this time in a dream or no, time will shew. I do not see how it is possible to demonstrate the being of a God on the principles of the Archbishop—that strictly goodness and understanding can no more be assumed of God than that He has feet or hands ; there being no argument that I know for God's existence which does not prove Him at the same time to be an understanding and benevolent being, in the strict, literal, and proper meaning of these words.' He adds, 'I have written to Mr. Clarke to give me his thoughts on the subject of God's existence, but have got no answer.'

The work foreshadowed in this letter appeared in the summer of 1710, as the 'First part' of a *Treatise concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge, wherein the chief causes of error and difficulty in the Sciences, with the grounds of Scepticism, Atheism, and Irreligion, are inquired into*. In this fragment of a larger work, never finished, Berkeley's

spiritual conception of matter and cosmos is unfolded, defended, and applied. According to the *Essay on Vision*, the world, as far as it is visible, is dependent on living mind. According to this book of *Principles* the whole material world, as far as it can have any practical concern with the knowings and doings of men, is real only by being realised in like manner in the percipient experience of some living mind. The concrete world, with which alone we have to do, could not exist in its concrete reality if there were no living percipient being in existence to actualise it. To suppose that it could would be to submit to the illusion of a metaphysical abstraction. Matter unrealised in its necessary subordination to some one's percipient experience is the chief among the illusions which philosophers have been too ready to encourage, and which the mass of mankind, who accept words without reflecting on their legitimate meanings, are ready to accept blindly. But we have only to reflect in order to see the absurdity of a material world such as we have experience of existing without ever being realised or made concrete in any sentient life. Try to conceive an eternally dead universe, empty for ever of God and all finite spirits, and you find you cannot. Reality can be real only in a living form. Percipient life underlies or constitutes all that is real. The *esse* of the concrete material world is *percipi*. This was the 'New Principle' with which the young Dublin Fellow was burdened—the Secret of the universe which he had been longing to discharge upon mankind for their benefit, yet without sign of desire to gain fame for himself as the discoverer. It is thus that he unfolds it:—

'Some truths there are so near and obvious to the mind that a man need only open his eyes to see them. Such I take this important one to be, viz. that all the choir of heaven and furniture of the earth, in a word, all those bodies which compose the mighty frame of the world, have not

any subsistence without a Mind ; that their *being* is to be perceived or known ; that consequently so long as they are not actually perceived by me, or do not exist in my mind, or that of any other created spirit, they must either have no existence at all, or else subsist in the mind of some Eternal Spirit: it being perfectly unintelligible, and involving all the absurdity of abstraction, to attribute to any single part of them an existence independent of a Spirit¹.

This does not mean denial of the existence of the world that is daily presented to our senses and which includes our own bodies. On the contrary, it affirms, as intuitively true, the existence of the only real matter which our senses present to us. The only material world of which we have any experience consists of the appearances (misleadingly called *ideas* of sense by Berkeley) which are continually rising as real objects in a passive procession of interpretable signs, through means of which each finite person realises his own individual personality ; also the existence of other finite persons ; and the sense-symbolism that is more or less interpreted in the natural sciences ; all significant of God. So the material world of concrete experience is presented to us as mind-dependent and in itself powerless: the deepest and truest reality must always be spiritual. Yet this mind-dependent material world is the occasion of innumerable pleasures and pains to human percipients, in so far as they conform to or contradict its customary laws, commonly called the laws of nature. So the sense-symbolism in which we live is found to play an important part in the experience of percipient beings. But it makes us sceptics and atheists when, in its name, we put a supposed dead abstract matter in room of the Divine Active Reason of which all natural order is the continuous providential expression.

Accordingly, God must exist, because the material world, in order to be a real world, needs to be continually

¹ *Principles*, sect. 6.

realised and regulated by living Providence ; and we have all the certainty of sense and sanity that there *is* a (mind-dependent) material world, a boundless and endlessly evolving sense-symbolism.

In the two years after the disclosure of his *New Principle* we see Berkeley chiefly through his correspondence with Percival. He was eager to hear the voice of criticism ; but the critics were slow to speak, and when they did speak they misconceived the question, and of course his answer to it. 'If when you receive my book,' he writes from Dublin, in July, 1710, to Sir John, who was then in London, 'you can procure me the opinion of some of your acquaintances who are thinking men, addicted to the study of natural philosophy and mathematics, I shall be extremely obliged to you.' He also asks Percival to present the book of *Principles* to Lord Pembroke, to whom he had ventured to dedicate it, as Locke had done his *Essay*. The reply was discouraging.

'I did but name the subject-matter of your book of *Principles* to some ingenuous friends of mine,' Percival says, 'and they immediately treated it with ridicule, at the same time refusing to read it ; which I have not yet got one to do. A physician of my acquaintance undertook to describe your person, and argued you must needs be mad, and that you ought to take remedies. A bishop pitied you, that a desire and vanity of starting something new should put you upon such an undertaking ; and when I justified you in that part of your character, and added other deserving qualities you have, he could not tell what to think of you. Another told me an ingenious man ought not to be discouraged from exerting his wit, and said Erasmus was not worse thought of for writing in praise of folly ; but that you are not gone as far as a gentleman in town, who asserts not only that there is no such thing as Matter, but that we ourselves have no being at all.'

It is not surprising that a book which was supposed to deny the existence of all that we see and touch should be ridiculed, and its author called a madman. What vexed the author was, 'that men who had never considered my book should confound me with the sceptics, who doubt the existence of sensible things, and are not positive of any one thing, not even of their own being. But whoever reads my book with attention will see that I question not the existence of anything we perceive by our senses. Fine spun metaphysics are what on all occasions I declaim against, and if any one shall shew anything of that sort in my *Treatise* I will willingly correct it.' A material world that was real enough to yield physical science, to make known to us the existence of other persons and of God, and which signified in very practical ways happiness or misery to sentient beings, seemed to him sufficiently real for human science and all other purposes. Nevertheless, in the ardour of youth Berkeley had hardly fathomed the depths into which his *New Principle* led, and which he hoped to escape by avoiding the abstractions of 'fine-spun metaphysics.'

In December Percival writes from London that he has 'given the book to Lord Pembroke,' who 'thought the author an ingenious man, and to be encouraged'; but for himself he 'cannot believe in the non-existence of Matter'; and he had tried in vain to induce Samuel Clarke, the great English metaphysician, either to refute or to accept the *New Principle*. In February Berkeley sends an explanatory letter for Lord Pembroke to Percival's care. In a letter in June he turns to social questions, and suggests that if 'some Irish gentlemen of good fortune and generous inclinations would constantly reside in England, there to watch for the interests of Ireland, they might bring far greater advantage than they could by spending their incomes at home.' And so 1711 passes, with responses of ignorant critics; vain endeavours to draw

worthy criticism from Samuel Clarke; the author all the while doing work as a Tutor in Trinity College on a modest income; now and then on holidays in Meath or elsewhere in Ireland. Three discourses on *Passive Obedience* in the College Chapel in 1712, misinterpreted, brought on him the reproach of Jacobitism. Yet they were designed to shew that society rests on a deeper foundation than force and calculations of utility, and is at last rooted in principles of an immutable morality. Locke's favourite opinion, that morality is a demonstrable, seems to weigh with him in these *Discourses*.

But Berkeley was not yet done with the exposition and vindication of his new thought, for it seemed to him charged with supreme practical issues for mankind. In the two years which followed the publication of the *Principles* he was preparing to reproduce his spiritual conception of the universe, in the dramatic form of dialogue, convenient for dealing popularly with plausible objections. The issue was the *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous*, in which Philonous argues for the absurdity of an abstract matter that is unrealised in the experience of living beings, as against Hylas, who is put forward to justify belief in this abstract reality. The design of the *Dialogues* is to present in a familiar form 'such principles as, by an easy solution of the perplexities of philosophers, together with their own native evidence, may at once recommend themselves as genuine to the mind, and rescue philosophy from the endless pursuits it is engaged in; which, with a plain demonstration of the Immediate Providence of an all-seeing God, should seem the readiest preparation, as well as the strongest motive to the study and practice of virtue'.¹

When the *Dialogues* were completed, at the end of 1712, Berkeley resolved to visit London, as he told Percival, 'in order to print my new book of Dialogues,

¹ Preface to the *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous*.

and to make acquaintance with men of merit.' He got leave of absence from his College 'for the recovery of his health,' which had suffered from study, and perhaps too he remembered that Bacon commends travel as 'to the younger sort a part of education.'

Berkeley made his appearance in London in January, 1713. On the 26th of that month he writes to Percival that he 'had crossed the Channel from Dublin a few days before,' describes adventures on the road, and enlarges on the beauty of rural England, which he liked more than anything he had seen in London. 'Mr. Clarke' had already introduced him to Lord Pembroke. He had also called on his countryman Richard Steele, 'who desired to be acquainted with him. Somebody had given him my *Treatise on the Principles of Human Knowledge*, and that was the ground of his inclination to my acquaintance.' He anticipates 'much satisfaction in the conversation of Steele and his friends,' adding that 'there is lately published a bold and pernicious book, a *Discourse on Free-thinking*'¹. In February he 'dines often with Steele in his house in Bloomsbury Square,' and tells in March 'that you will soon hear of Mr. Steele under the character of the *Guardian*; he designs his paper shall come out every day as the *Spectator*.' The night before 'a very ingenious new poem upon "Windsor Forest" had been given to him by the author, Mr. Pope. The gentleman is a Papist, but a man of excellent wit and learning, one of those Mr. Steele mentions in his last paper as having writ some of the *Spectator*.' A few days later he has met 'Mr. Addison, who has the same talents as Steele in a high degree, and is likewise a great philosopher, having applied himself to the speculative studies more than any of the wits I know. I breakfasted with him at Dr. Swift's lodgings. His coming in while I was there, and the good

¹ By Anthony Collins.

temper he showed, was construed by me as a sign of the approaching coalition of parties. A play of Mr. Steele's, which was expected, he has now put off till next winter. But *Cato*, a most noble play of Mr. Addison, is to be acted in Easter week.' Accordingly, on April 18, he writes that 'on Tuesday last *Cato* was acted for the first time. I was present with Mr. Addison and two or three more friends in a side box, where we had a talk and two or three flasks of Burgundy and Champagne, which the author (who is a very sober man) thought necessary to support his spirits, and indeed it was a pleasant refreshment to us all between the Acts. Some parts of the prologue, written by Mr. Pope, a Tory and even a Papist, were hissed, being thought to savour of Whiggism; but the clap got much the better of the hiss. Lord Harley, who sat in the next box to us, was observed to clap as loud as any in the house all the time of the play.' Swift and Pope have described this famous first night of *Cato*; now for the first time we have Berkeley's report. He adds, 'This day I dined at Dr. Arbuthnot's lodging in the Queen's Palace.'

His countryman, Swift, was among the first to welcome him to London, where Swift had himself been for four years, 'lodging in Bury Street,' and sending the daily journal to Stella, which records so many incidents of that memorable London life. Mrs. Vanhomrigh and her daughter, the unhappy Vanessa, were living in rooms in the same street as Swift, and there he 'loitered, hot and lazy, after his morning's work,' and 'often dined out of mere listlessness.' Berkeley was a frequent visitor at Swift's house, and this Vanhomrigh connexion with Swift had an influence on Berkeley's fortune long afterwards. On a Sunday in April we find him at Kensington, at the Court of Queen Anne, in the company of Swift. 'I went to Court to-day,' Swift's journal records, 'on purpose to present Mr. Berkeley, one of the Fellows of

Trinity College, to Lord Berkeley of Stratton. That Mr. Berkeley is a very ingenious man, and a great philosopher, and I have mentioned him to all the ministers, and have given them some of his writings, and I will favour him as much as I can.' In this, Swift was as good as his word. 'Dr. Swift,' he adds, 'is admired both by Steele and Addison, and I think Addison one of the best natured and most agreeable men in the world.'

One day about this time, at the instance of Addison, it seems that a meeting was arranged between Berkeley and Samuel Clarke, the metaphysical rector of St. James's in Piccadilly, whose opinion he had in vain tried to draw forth two years before through Sir John Percival. Berkeley's personal charm was felt wherever he went, and even 'the fastidious and turbulent Atterbury,' after intercourse with him, is reported to have said: 'So much understanding, so much knowledge, so much innocence, and such humility, I did not think had been the portion of any but angels till I saw this gentleman.' Much was expected from the meeting with Clarke, but Berkeley had again to complain that although Clarke had neither refuted his arguments nor disproved his premisses, he had not the candour to accept his conclusion.

It was thus that Berkeley became known to 'men of merit' in that brilliant society. He was also brought among persons on whom he would hardly have conferred this title. He tells Percival that he had attended several free-thinking clubs, in the pretended character of a learner, and that he there heard Anthony Collins, author of 'the bold and pernicious book on free-thinking,' boast 'that he was able to demonstrate that the existence of God is an impossible supposition.' The promised 'demonstration' seems to have been Collins' *Inquiry Concerning Human Liberty*, which appeared two years later, according to which all that happens in mind and matter is the issue of natural necessity. Steele invited Berkeley to contribute

to the *Guardian* during its short-lived existence between March and September, 1713. He took the *Discourse* of Collins for the subject of his first essay. Three other essays are concerned with man's hope of a future life, and are among the few passages in his writings in which his philosophy is a meditation upon Death.

In May, Percival writes to him from Dublin that he hears the 'new book of Dialogues is printed, though not yet published, and that your opinion has gained ground among the learned; that Mr. Addison has come over to your view; and that what at first seemed shocking is become so familiar that others envy you the discovery, and make it their own.' In his reply in June, Berkeley mentions that 'a clergyman in Wiltshire has lately published a treatise wherein he advances something published three years ago in my *Principles of Human Knowledge*.' The clergyman was Arthur Collier, author of the *Clavis Universalis*, or demonstration of the impossibility of an external world¹.

Berkeley's *Three Dialogues* were published in June. In the middle of that same month he was in Oxford, 'a most delightful place,' where he spent two months, 'witnessed the Act and grand performances at the theatre, and a great concourse from London and the country, amongst whom were several foreigners.' The Drury Lane Company had gone down to Oxford, and *Cato* was on the stage for several nights. The Percival correspondence now first discloses this prolonged visit to Oxford in the summer of 1713, that ideal home from whence, forty years after, he departed on a more mysterious journey than any on this planet. In a letter from thence to Percival, he had claimed Arbuthnot as one of the converts to the 'new Principle.' Percival replied that Swift demurred to this, on which Berkeley rejoins: 'As to what you say of Dr. Arbuthnot not being of my opinion, it is true there

¹ See vol. III, Appendix B.

has been some difference between us concerning some notions relating to the necessity of the laws of nature; but this does not touch the main points of the non-existence of what philosophers call material substance; against which he acknowledges he can assert nothing.' One would gladly have got more than this from Berkeley, about what touched his favourite conception of the 'arbitrariness' of law in nature, as distinguished from the 'necessity' which some modern physicists are ready vaguely to take for granted.

The scene now changes. On October 15 Berkeley suddenly writes from London: 'I am on the eve of going to Sicily, as chaplain to Lord Peterborough, who is Ambassador Extraordinary on the coronation of the new king.' He had been recommended by Swift to the Ambassador, one of the most extraordinary characters then in Europe, who a few years before had astonished the world in the war of the Succession in Spain, and afterwards by his genius as a diplomatist: in Holland, nearly a quarter of a century before, he had formed an intimate friendship with John Locke. Ten months in France and Italy in the suite of Lord Peterborough brought the young Irish metaphysician, who had lately been introduced to the wits of London and the dons of Oxford, into a new world. It was to him the beginning of a career of wandering and social activity, which lasted, with little interruption, for nearly twenty years, during which metaphysics and authorship were in the background. On November 25 we find him in Paris, writing letters to Percival and Prior. 'From London to Calais,' he tells Prior, 'I came in company of a Flamand, a Spaniard, a Frenchman, and three English servants of my Lord. The three gentlemen, being of three different nations, obliged me to speak the French language (which is now familiar), and gave me the opportunity of seeing much of the world in little

compass. . . . On November 1 (O. S.) I embarked in the stage-coach, with a company that were all perfect strangers to me. There were two Scotch, and one English gentleman. One of the former happened to be the author of the *Voyage to St. Kilda* and the *Account of the Western Isles*¹. We were good company on the road; and that day se'ennight came to Paris. I have since been taken up in viewing churches, convents, palaces, colleges, &c., which are very numerous and magnificent in this town. The splendour and riches of these things surpasses belief; but it were endless to descend to particulars. I was present at a disputation in the Sorbonne, which indeed had much of the French fire in it. I saw the Irish and the English Colleges. In the latter I saw, enclosed in a coffin, the body of the late King James. . . . To-morrow I intend to visit Father Malebranche, and discourse him on certain points.'

The Abbé D'Aubigné, as he informs Percival, was to introduce him to Malebranche, then the chief philosopher of France, whose Vision of the world in God had some affinity with Berkeley's own thought. Unfortunately we have no record of the intended interview with the French idealist, who fourteen years before had been visited by Addison, also on his way to Italy, when Malebranche expressed great regard for the English nation, and admiration for Newton; but he shook his head when Hobbes was mentioned, whom he ventured to disparage as a 'poor silly creature.' Malebranche died nearly two years after Berkeley's proposed interview; and according to a story countenanced by Dugald Stewart, Berkeley was the 'occasional cause' of his death. He found the venerable Father, we are told, in a cell, cooking, in a pipkin, a medicine for a disorder with which he was troubled. The conversation naturally turned on Berkeley's system, of which

¹ Murdoch Martin, a native of *the Western Islands of Scotland* Skye, author of a *Voyage to St. (1703).*
Kilda (1698), and a *Description of*

Malebranche had received some knowledge from a translation. The issue of the debate proved tragical to poor Malebranche. In the heat of disputation he raised his voice so high, and gave way so freely to the natural impetuosity of a man of genius and a Frenchman, that he brought on a violent increase of his disorder, which carried him off a few days after¹. This romantic tale is, I suspect, mythical. The Percival correspondence shews that Berkeley was living in London in October, 1715, the month in which Malebranche died, and I find no trace of a short sudden visit to Paris at that time.

After a month spent in Paris, another fortnight carried Berkeley and two travelling companions to Italy through Savoy. They crossed Mont Cenis on New Year's Day in 1714—'one of the most difficult and formidable parts of the Alps which is ever passed over by mortal man,' as he tells Prior in a letter from Turin. 'We were carried in open chairs by men used to scale these rocks and precipices, which at this season are more slippery and dangerous than at other times, and at the best are high, craggy, and steep enough to cause the heart of the most valiant man to melt within him.' At the end of other six weeks we find him at Leghorn, where he spent three months, 'while my lord was in Sicily.' He 'prefers England or Ireland to Italy: the only advantage is in point of air.' From Leghorn he writes in May a complimentary letter to Pope, on the occasion of the *Rape of the Lock*: 'Style, painting, judgment, spirit, I had already admired in your other writings; but in this I am charmed with the magic of your invention, with all those images, allusions, and inexplicable beauties which you raise so surprisingly, and at the same time so naturally, out of a trifle. . . . I remember to have heard you mention some

¹ See Stewart's *Works* (ed. Hamilton), vol. I. p. 161. There is a version of this story by De Quincey, in his quaint essay on *Murder considered as one of the Fine Arts*.

half-formed design of coming to Italy. What might we not expect from a muse that sings so well in the bleak climate of England, if she felt the same warm sun and breathed the same air with Virgil and Horace.' In July we find Berkeley in Paris on his way back to England. He had 'parted from Lord Peterborough at Genoa, where my lord took post for Turin, and thence designed passing over the Alps, and so through Savoy, on his way to England.' In August they are in London, where the aspect of English politics was changed by the death of the Queen in that month. He seems to have had a fever soon after his return. In October, Arbuthnot, in one of his chatty letters to Swift, writes thus: 'Poor philosopher Berkeley has now the *idea* of health, which was very hard to produce in him, for he had an *idea* of a strange fever upon him, so strange that it was very hard to destroy it by introducing a contrary one.'

Our record of the two following years is a long blank, first broken by a letter to Percival in July, 1715, dated at London. Whether he spent any time at Fulham with Lord Peterborough after their return from Italy does not appear, nor whether he visited Ireland in those years, which is not likely. We have no glimpses of brilliant London society as in the preceding year. Steele was now in Parliament. Swift had returned to Dublin, and Addison was the Irish chief secretary. But Pope was still at Binfield, among the glades of Windsor, and Berkeley congratulated him after receiving the first volume of his *Homer*. Of his own literary pursuits we hear nothing. Perhaps the Second Part of the *Principles*, which was lost afterwards in his travels, engaged him. In the end of July he wrote to Lord Percival¹ from Flaxley² on the Severn; and in August, September, October, and November he wrote from London, chiefly interested in

¹ Sir John became Lord Percival in that year.

² A place more than once visited by Berkeley.

reports about 'the rebels in Scotland,' and 'the forces under Lord Mar, which no doubt will languish and disperse in a little time. The Bishop of Bristol assured me the other day that the Court expect that the Duke of Orleans would, in case of need, supply them with forces against the Pretender.' Our next glimpse of him is in May, 1716, when he writes to Lord Percival that he is 'like soon to go to Ireland, the Prince of Wales having recommended him to the Lords Justices for the living of St. Paul's in Dublin.' This opening was soon closed, and the visit to Ireland was abandoned. A groundless suspicion of Jacobitism was not overcome by the interest of Caroline, Princess of Wales. In June, 1716, Charles Dering wrote from Dublin, that 'the Lords Justices have made a strong representation against him.' He had to look elsewhere for the immediate future.

We find him at Turin in November, 1716, with a fresh leave of absence for two years from his College. It seems that Ashe, Bishop of Clogher, had engaged him as travelling tutor to his son, a means not then uncommon for enabling young authors of moderate fortune to see new countries and mix with society. Addison had visited Italy in this way sixteen years before, and Adam Smith long afterwards travelled with the young Duke of Buccleuch. With young Ashe, Berkeley crossed Mont Cenis a second time. They reached Rome at the beginning of 1717. His *Journal in Italy* in that year, and occasional letters to Percival, Pope, and Arbuthnot, shew ardent interest in nature and art. With the widest views, 'this very great though singular sort of man descended into a minute detail, and begrudged neither pains nor expense for the means of information. He travelled through a great part of Sicily on foot; clambered over the mountains and crept into the caverns, to investigate its natural history and discover the causes of its volcanoes; and I have known him sit for hours in forges and foundries to inspect their

successive operations¹. If the *Journal* had been transformed by his own hand into a book, his letter to Pope from Inarime shews that the book might have rivalled Addison's *Remarks on Parts of Italy* in grace of style and large human interest.

In the summer of 1720 we find the travellers at Florence, afterwards for some time at Lyons, and in London at the beginning of the next year. On the way home his metaphysical inspiration was revived. The 'Cause of Motion' had been proposed by the French Academy as the subject of a prize dissertation. The subject gave an opportunity for further unfolding his early thought. In the *Principles* and the *Dialogues* he had argued for the necessary dependence of matter, for its concrete substantial reality, upon living percipient mind. He would now shew its powerlessness as it is presented to us in sense. The material world, chiefly under the category of substance, inspired the *Principles*. The material world, under the category of cause or power, inspired the *De Motu*. This Latin Essay sums up the distinctive thought of Berkeley, as it appears in the authorship of his early life. *Moles evoluit et agitat mentes* might be taken as the formula of the materialism which he sought to dissolve. *Mens percipit et agitat molem significantem, cujus esse est percipi* expresses what Berkeley would substitute for the materialistic formula.

The end of the summer of 1721 found Berkeley still in London. England was in the social agitation and misery consequent upon the failure of the South Sea Company, a gigantic commercial speculation connected with British trade in America. A new inspiration took possession of him. He thought he saw in this catastrophe signs of a decline in public morals worse than that which followed the Restoration. 'Political corruption,' 'decay of religion,' 'growth of atheism,' were descriptive words used by the

¹ Bakewell's *Memoirs of the Court of Augustus*, vol. II. p. 177.

thoughtful. Berkeley's eager imagination was apt to exaggerate the evil. He became inspired by social idealism, and found vent for his fervour in *An Essay towards preventing the Ruin of Great Britain*, which, as well as the *De Motu*, made its appearance in 1721. This *Essay* is a significant factor in his career. It was the Cassandra wail of a sorrowful and indignant prophet, prepared to shake the dust from his feet, and to transfer his eye of hope to other regions, in which a nearer approach to Utopia might be realised. The true personality of the individual is unrealisable in selfish isolation. His favourite *non sibi, sed toti mundo* was henceforward more than ever the ruling maxim of his life.

II

MIDDLE LIFE (1722-34).

In October, 1721, Berkeley was in Dublin. The register of the College shews that 'on November 14, 1721, Mr. Berkeley had the grace of the House for the Degree of Bachelor and Doctor of Divinity.' There is no ground for the report that he returned to Ireland at this time as Chaplain to the Duke of Grafton, the Lord Lieutenant¹. But preferment in the Church seemed within his reach. 'I had no sooner set foot on shore,' he wrote to Percival in that October, 'than I heard that the Deanery of Dromore was vacant.' Percival used his influence with the Lord Lieutenant, and in February, 1722, Berkeley's patent was

¹ A letter in Berkeley's *Life and Letters*, p. 93, which led me to a different opinion, I have now reason to believe was not written by him, nor was it written in 1721. The research of Dr. Lorenz, confirmed by internal evidence, shews that it was written in October, 1684, before Berkeley the philosopher was born, and when the Duke of

Ormond was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. The writer was probably the Hon. and Rev. George Berkeley, a Prebendary of Westminster in 1687, who died in 1694. The wife of the 'pious Robert Nelson' was a daughter of Earl Berkeley, and this 'George' was her younger brother.

'passing the Seals for the Deanery of Dromore.' But the Bishop of Dromore claimed the patronage, and this led to a protracted and ineffectual lawsuit, which took Berkeley to London in the following winter, 'to see friends and inform himself of points of law,' and he tells that 'on the way he was nearly drowned in crossing to Holyhead'.¹

Berkeley's interest in church preferment was not personal. He saw in it only means to an end. In March, 1723, he surprised Lord Percival by announcing, in a letter from London, a project which it seems for some time had occupied his thoughts. 'It is now about ten months,' he says, 'since I have determined to spend the residue of my days in Bermuda, where I trust in Providence I may be the mean instrument of doing great good to mankind. Whatever happens, so I am resolved, if I live. Half a dozen of the most ingenious and agreeable men in our College are with me in this project, and since I came hither I have got together about a dozen Englishmen of quality, who intend to retire to those islands.' He then explains the project, opening a vision of Christian civilisation radiating from those fair islands of the West, whose idyllic bliss poets had sung, diffused over the New World, with its magnificent possibilities in the future history of mankind.

I find no further record of the origin of this bright vision. As it had become a practical determination 'ten months' before March, 1723, one is carried back to the first months after his return to Dublin and to the *Essay* that was called forth by the South Sea catastrophe. One may conjecture that despair of England and the Old World—'such as Europe breeds in her decay'—led him to look westward for the hopeful future of mankind, moved, perhaps, by the connexion of the catastrophe with America. His active imagination pictured a better Republic than Plato's, and a grander Utopia than More's,

¹ Percival MSS.

emanating from a College in the isles of which Waller had sung.

In the meantime a curious fortune unexpectedly favoured him. Swift's unhappy Vanessa, associated with Bury Street in 1713, had settled on her property at Marley Abbey near Dublin; and Swift had privately married Stella, as she confessed to Vanessa, who thereafter revoked the bequest of her fortune to Swift, and left it to be divided between Berkeley and Marshal, afterwards an Irish judge. Vanessa died in May, 1723. A few days after Berkeley wrote thus to Lord Percival: 'Here is something that will surprise your lordship as it doth me. Mrs. Hester Vanhomrigh, a lady to whom I was a perfect stranger, having never in the whole course of my life exchanged a word with her, died on Sunday. Yesterday her Will was opened, by which it appears that I am constituted executor, the advantage whereof is computed by those who understand her affairs to be worth £3000. . . . My Bermuda scheme is now stronger in my mind than ever; this providential event having made many things easy which were otherwise before.' Lord Percival in reply concludes that he would 'persist more than ever in that noble scheme, which may in some time exalt your name beyond that of St. Xavier and the most famous missionaries abroad.' But he warns him that, 'without the protection of Government,' he would encounter insurmountable difficulties. The Vanessa legacy, and the obstructions in the way of the Deanery of Dromore, were the subjects of a tedious correspondence with his friend and business factotum, 'Tom Prior,' in 1724 and the three following years. In the end, the debts of Vanessa absorbed most of the legacy. And as to the Deanery of Dromore, he tells Percival, on September 19, 1723: 'I despair of seeing it end to my advantage. The truth is, my fixed purpose of going to Bermuda sets me above soliciting anything with earnestness in this part

of the world. It can be of no use to me, but as it may enable me the better to prosecute that design; and it must be owned that the present possession of something in the Church would make my application for an establishment in those islands more considered.'

Nevertheless, he got a Deanery at last. In May, 1724, he informs Lord Percival from Trinity College: 'Yesterday I received my patent for the best Deanery in the kingdom, that of Derry. It is said to be worth £1500 per annum. But as I do not consider it with an eye to enriching myself, so I shall be perfectly contented if it facilitates and recommends my scheme of Bermuda, which I am in hopes will meet with a better reception if it comes from one possessed of so great a Deanery.' In September he is on his way, not to Derry, but to London, 'to raise funds and obtain a Charter for the Bermuda College from George the First,' fortified by a remarkable letter from Swift to Lord Carteret, the new Lord Lieutenant, who was then in Bath¹. As Swift predicted in this letter, Berkeley's conquests spread far and fast in England, where he organised his resources during the four following years. Nothing shews more signally the magic of his personality than the story of his life in London in those years of negotiation and endeavour. The proposal met with a response wonderful in a generation represented by Walpole. The subscriptions soon reached five thousand pounds, and Walpole was among the subscribers. The Scriblerus Club, meeting at Lord Bathurst's, agreed to rally Berkeley, who was among them, on his Bermuda scheme. He asked to be heard in defence, and presented the case with such force of enthusiasm that the company 'were struck dumb, and after a pause simultaneously rose and asked leave to accompany him.' Bermuda for a time inspired London.

¹ For the letter, see Editor's *College in Bermuda*, vol. IV. pp. Preface to the *Proposal for a* 343-44.

Berkeley was not satisfied with this. He remembered what Lord Percival had said about failure without help from Government. Accordingly he obtained a Charter from George the First early in 1726, and after canvassing the House of Commons, secured a grant of £20,000, with only two dissentient votes, in May of that year. This was the beginning of his difficulties. Payment was indefinitely delayed, and he was kept negotiating; besides, with the help of Prior, he was unravelling legal perplexities in which the Vanessa legacy was involved. It was in these years that he was seen at the receptions of Caroline at Leicester Fields, when she was Princess of Wales, and afterwards at St. James's or at Kensington, when she became Queen in 1727; not, he says, because he loved Courts, but because he loved America. Clarke was still rector of St. James's, and Butler had not yet migrated to his parsonage at Stanhope; so their society was open to him. The Queen liked to listen to a philosophical discussion. Ten years before, as Princess of Wales, she had been a royal go-between in the famous correspondence between Clarke and Leibniz. And now, Berkeley being in London, he too was asked to her weekly reunions, when she loved to hear Clarke arguing with Berkeley, or Berkeley arguing with Hoadley. Also in 1726 Voltaire made his lengthened visit to England, a familiar figure in the circle of Pope's friends, attracted to the philosophy of Locke and Newton; and Voltaire mentions that he met 'the discoverer of the true theory of vision' during his stay in London.

From the summer of 1727 until the spring of 1728 there is no extant correspondence either with Percival or 'Tom Prior' to throw light on his movements. In February, 1728, he was still in London, but he 'hoped to set out for Dublin in March, and to America in May.' There is a mystery about this visit to Dublin. 'I propose to set out for Dublin about a month hence,' he writes to 'dear

Tom,' 'but of this you must not give the least intimation to anybody. It is of all things my earnest desire (and for very good reasons) not to have it known that I am in Dublin. Speak not, therefore, one syllable of it to any mortal whatsoever. When I formerly desired you to take a place for me near the town, you gave out that you were looking for a retired lodging for a friend of yours; upon which everybody surmised me to be the person. I must beg you not to act in the like manner now, but to take for me an entire house in your own name, and as for yourself; for, all things considered, I am determined upon a whole house, with no mortal in it but a maid of your own putting, who is to look on herself as your servant. Let there be two bed-chambers: one for you, another for me; and, as you like, you may ever and anon lie there. I would have the house, with necessary furniture, taken by the month (or otherwise, as you can), for I propose staying not beyond that time; and yet perhaps I may. Take it as soon as possible. . . . Let me entreat you to say nothing of this to anybody, but to do the thing directly. . . . I would of all things . . . have a proper place in a retired situation, where I may have access to fields and sweet air provided against the moment I arrive. I am inclined to think one may be better concealed in the outermost skirt of the suburbs, than in the country or within the town. . . . A house quite detached in the country I should have no objection to, provided you judge that I shall not be liable to discovery in it. The place called Bermuda I am utterly against. Dear Tom, do this matter cleanly and cleverly, without waiting for further advice. . . . To the person from whom you hire it (whom alone I would have you speak of it to) it will not seem strange you should at this time of the year be desirous, for your own convenience or health, to have a place in a free and open air.' This mysterious letter was written in April. From April till September Berkeley again disappears. There is in all

this a curious secretiveness of which one has repeated examples in his life. Whether he went to Dublin in that spring, or why he wanted to go, does not appear.

But in September he emerges unexpectedly at Gravesend, newly married, and ready to sail for Rhode Island, 'in a ship of 250 tons which he had hired.' The marriage, according to Stock, took place on August 1, whether in Ireland or in England I cannot tell. The lady was Anne, daughter of John Forster, late Chief Justice, and then Speaker of the Irish House of Commons. She shared his fortune when he was about to engage in the most romantic, and ideally the grandest, Christian mission of the eighteenth century. According to tradition she was a devoutly religious mystic: Fénelon and Madame Guyon were among her favourites. 'I chose her,' he tells Lord Percival, 'for her qualities of mind and her unaffected inclination to books. She goes with great thankfulness, to live a plain farmer's life, and wear stuff of her own spinning. I have presented her with a spinning-wheel.' A letter to Prior, dated 'Gravesend September 5, 1728,' thus describes the little party on the eve of their departure:—'To-morrow, with God's blessing, I set sail for Rhode Island, with my wife and a friend of hers, my Lady Handcock's daughter, who bears us company. I am married since I saw you to Miss Forster, whose humour and turn of mind pleases me beyond anything that I know in her whole sex. Mr. James¹, Mr. Dalton, and Mr. Smibert² go with us on this voyage. We are now all together at Gravesend, and are engaged in one view.' We are further told³ that they carried stores and goods to a great value, and that the Dean 'embarked 20,000 books, besides what the two gentlemen carried. They

¹ Afterwards Sir John James.

² Smibert the artist, who made a picture of Berkeley in 1725, and afterwards in America of the

family party then at Gravesend.

³ *Historical Register*, vol. XIII, p. 289 (1728).

sailed in September for Rhode Island, where the Dean intends to winter, and to purchase an estate, in order to settle a correspondence and trade between that island and Bermudas.' Berkeley was in his forty-fourth year, when, full of glowing visions of Christian Empire in the West, 'Time's noblest offspring,' he left England, on his way to Bermuda, with the promise of Sir Robert Walpole that he should receive the promised grant after he had made an investment. He bought land in America, but he never reached Bermuda.

Towards the end of January, in 1729, the little party, in the 'hired ship of 250 tons,' made their appearance in Narragansett Bay, on the western side of Rhode Island. 'Blundering about the ocean,' they had touched at Virginia on the way, whence a correspondent, sceptical of the enterprise, informs Lord Percival that the Dean 'had dined with the Governor, and visited our College,' but thinks that 'when the Dean comes to put his visionary scheme into practice, he will find it no better than a religious frenzy,' and that 'he is as much a Don Quixote in zeal as that renowned knight was in chivalry. I wish the good Dean may not find out at last that Waller really kidnapt him over to Bermuda, and that the project he has been drawn into may not prove in every point of it poetical.'

We have a picture of the landing at Newport, on a winter day early in 1729. 'Yesterday arrived here Dean Berkeley of Londonderry, in a pretty large ship. He is a gentleman of middle stature, of an agreeable, pleasant, and erect aspect. He was ushered into the town with a great number of gentlemen, to whom he behaved himself after a very complaisant manner. 'Tis said he proposes to tarry here with his family about three months¹.' Newport was then a flourishing town, nearly a century old, an emporium of American commerce, in those days the rival of Boston and New York. He was 'never more

¹ *New England Weekly Courier*, Feb. 3, 1729.

agreeably surprised,' he says, than 'at the size of the town and harbour.' Around him was some of the softest rural and grandest ocean scenery in the world, which had fresh charms even for one whose boyhood was spent in the valley of the Nore, who had lingered in the Bay of Naples, and wandered in Inarime and among the mountains of Sicily. He was seventy miles from Boston, and about as far from Newhaven and Yale College. A range of hills crosses the centre of the island, whence meadows slope to the rocky shore. The Gulf Stream tempers the surrounding sea. 'The people,' he tells Percival, 'are industrious; and though less orthodox have not less virtue, and I am sure they have more regularity, than those I left in Europe. They are indeed a strange medley of different persuasions.' The gentry retained the customs of the squires in England: tradition tells of a cheerful society: the fox chase, with hounds and horses, was a favourite recreation. The society, for so remote a region, was well informed. The family libraries and pictures which remain argue culture and refinement. Smibert, the artist of the missionary party, who had moved to Boston, soon found employment in America, and his pictures still adorn houses in Rhode Island¹.

The Dean and his young wife lived in Newport for some months after their arrival. Mr. Honeyman, a missionary of the English Society, had been placed there, in Trinity Church, in 1704. The church is still a conspicuous object from the harbour. Berkeley preached in it three days after his arrival, and occasionally afterwards. Notes of his sermons are included in this edition among his *Miscellaneous Works*.

In the summer of 1729 he moved from Newport to a quiet valley in the interior of the island, where he

¹ For valuable information about Rhode Island, reproduced in *Berkeley's Life and Correspondence* and here, I am indebted to Colonel

Higginson, to whom I desire to make this tardy but grateful acknowledgement.

bought a farm, and built a house. In this island-home, named Whitehall, he lived for more than two years—years of domestic happiness, and of resumed study, much interrupted since he left Dublin in 1713. The house may still be seen, a little aside from the road that runs eastward from Newport, about three miles from the town. It is built of wood. The south-west room was probably the library. The ocean is seen in the distance, while orchards and groves offer the shade and silence which soothed the thinker in his recluse life. No invitations of the three companions of his voyage¹, who had migrated to Boston, could allure him from this retreat, where he diverted his anxieties about Bermuda by the thoughts which found expression in the dialogues of *Alciphron*, redolent of Rhode Island and the invigorating breezes of its ocean shore. Tradition tells that much of *Alciphron* was the issue of meditation in the open air, at a favourite retreat, beneath the Hanging Rocks, which commands an extensive view of the beach and the ocean; and the chair in which he sat in this alcove is still preserved with veneration.

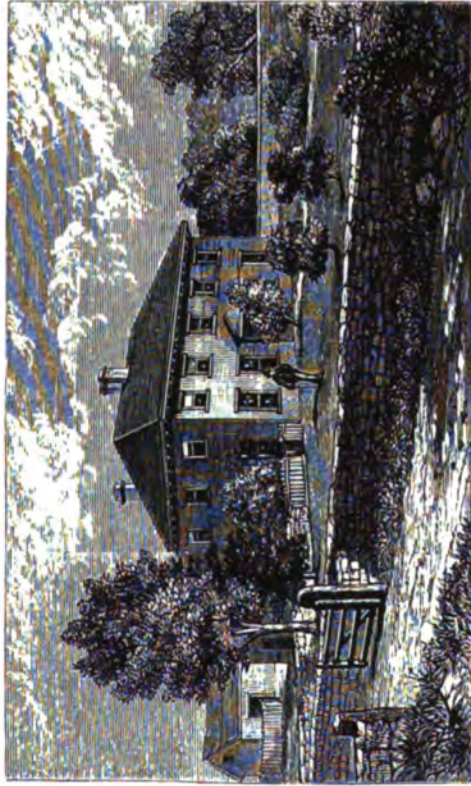
While Berkeley loved domestic quiet at Whitehall² and the 'still air of delightful studies,' he mixed occasionally in the society of Newport. He found it not uncongenial, and soon after he was settled at Whitehall he led the way in forming a club, which held occasional meetings, the germ of the Redwood Library, still a useful Newport institution. His own house was a place of meeting for the New England missionaries.

Soon after his arrival in Rhode Island, Berkeley was visited by the Reverend Samuel Johnson, missionary at Stratford, an acute and independent thinker, one of the two contemporary representatives of philosophy in America.

¹ James, Dalton, and Smibert.

² Whitehall, having fallen into decay, has been lately restored by the pious efforts of Mrs. Livingston Mason, in concert with the

Rev. Dr. E. E. Hale, and others. This good work was completed in the summer of 1900; and the house is now as nearly as possible in the state in which Berkeley left it.



WHITEHALL, BERKELEY'S RESIDENCE IN RHODE ISLAND

Berkeley's Works, Vol. I.

To face p. lvi.

The other was Jonathan Edwards, at that time Congregational minister at Northampton on the Connecticut river. They had both adopted a conception of the meaning and office of the material world in the economy of existence that was in many respects similar to Berkeley's¹. It seems that Berkeley's book of *Principles* had before this fallen into Johnson's hands. He hastened to visit the author when he heard of his arrival. A succession of visits and a life-long correspondence followed. The 'non-existence of Matter,' interpreted as a whimsical and even insane paradox, was found by Johnson to mean the absence of unrealisable Substance behind the real material world that is presented to our senses, and of unrealisable Power in the successive sense-presented appearances of which alone we are percipient. He came to see the real existence of the things of sense in the constant order of the data of sense, through which we gain our knowledge of the existence of our fellow men, and of the omnipresent constant Providence of God; whose Ideas are the true archetypes of the visible world. He adopted and applied this conception with a lucidity and force which give him a high place among American thinkers.

All the while a cloud darkened the recluse life at Whitehall. In June, 1729, Berkeley explains to Percival the circumstances and secrecy of his departure from England:—

'Before I left England I was reduced to a difficult situation. Had I continued there, the report would have obtained (which I had found beginning to spread) that I had dropped the design, after it had cost me and my friends so much trouble and expense. On the other hand, if I had taken leave of my friends, even those who assisted and approved my undertaking would have condemned my coming abroad before the King's bounty was

¹ See vol. III, Appendix C.

received. This obliged me to come away in the private manner that I did, and to run the risque of a tedious winter voyage. Nothing less would have convinced the world that I was in earnest, after the report I knew was growing to the contrary.'

Months passed, and Walpole's promise was still unfulfilled. 'I wait here,' he tells Lord Percival in March, 1730, 'with all the anxiety that attends suspense, until I know what I can depend upon, or what course I am to take. On the one hand I have no notion that the Court would put what men call a *bite* upon a poor clergyman, who depended upon charters, grants, votes, and the like engagements. On the other hand, I see nothing done towards payment of the money.' Later on he writes—'As for the raillery of European wits, I should not mind it, if I saw my College go on and prosper; but I must own the disappointments I have met with in this particular have nearly touched me, not without affecting my health and spirits. If the founding a College for the spread of religion and learning in America had been a foolish project, it cannot be supposed the Court, the Ministers, and the Parliament would have given such public encouragement to it; and if, after all that encouragement, they who engaged to endow and protect it let it drop, the disappointment indeed may be to me, but the censure, I think, will light elsewhere.'

The suspense was at last ended. Gibson, the Bishop of London, pressed Walpole for a final answer. 'If,' he replied, 'you put this question to me as a Minister, I must, and can, assure you that the money shall most undoubtedly be paid, as soon as suits with public convenience; but if you ask me as a friend, whether Dean Berkeley should continue in America expecting the payment of twenty thousand pounds, I advise him by all means to return home to Europe, and to give up his present expectations.' It was thus that in 1731 the Prime Minister of England



BERKELEY'S ALCOVE, RHODE ISLAND

Berkeley's Works, Vol. I.

To face p. lviii.

crushed the project conceived ten years before, and to which the intervening period had, under his encouragement, been devoted by the projector with a singular enthusiasm.

A few months after this heavy blow, Berkeley, with his wife, and Henry their infant child, bade farewell to the island home. They sailed from Boston in the late autumn of 1731, and in the following February we find them in London. Thus ended the romantic episode of Rhode Island, with its ideal of Christian civilisation, which so moves the heart and touches the imagination in our retrospect of the eighteenth century. Of all who have ever landed on the American shore, none was ever moved by a purer and more self-sacrificing spirit. America still acknowledges that by Berkeley's visit on this mission it has been invested with the halo of an illustrious name, and associated with religious devotion to a magnificent ideal, even if it was sought to be realised by impracticable means. To reform the New World, and mankind at last, by a College on an island in the Atlantic, six hundred miles from America, the Indians whom it was intended to civilise being mostly in the interior of the continent, and none in Bermuda, was not unnaturally considered Quixotic; and that it was at first supported by the British Court and Parliament is a wonderful tribute to the persuasive genius of the projector. Perhaps he was too much influenced by Lord Percival's idea, that it could not be realised by private benevolence, without the intervention of the Crown. But the indirect influence of Berkeley's American inspiration is apparent in many ways in the intellectual and spiritual life of that great continent, during the last century and a half, especially by the impulse given to academical education. It is the testimony of an American author that, 'by methods different from those intended by Berkeley, and in ways more manifold than even he could have dreamed, he has since accomplished, and through all coming time, by a thousand ineffaceable

influences, he will continue to accomplish, some portion at least of the results which he had aimed at in the founding of his university. It is the old story over again; the tragedy of a Providence wiser than man's foresight; God giving the victory to His faithful servant even through the bitterness of overruling him and defeating him'.¹ American Empire, as we now see it with its boundless beneficent influence, is at least an imperfect realisation of Berkeley's dream.

Berkeley's head quarters were in London, in Green Street, for more than two years after the return to England in the beginning of 1732. Extant correspondence with Lord Percival ends in Rhode Island, and our picture of the two years in London is faintly formed by letters to Prior and Johnson. These speak of ill-health, and breathe a less sanguine spirit. The brilliant social life of former visits was less attractive now, even if old friends had remained. But Swift had quitted England for ever, and Steele had followed Addison to the grave. Gay, the common friend of Berkeley and Pope, died soon after the return from Rhode Island, and Arbuthnot was approaching his end at Hampstead. Samuel Clarke had passed away when Berkeley was at Whitehall; but Secker now held the rectory of St. James's, and Butler was in studious retirement on the Wear; while Pope was at Twickenham, publishing his *Essay on Man*, receiving visits from Bolingbroke, or visiting Lord Bathurst at Cirencester Park. Queen Caroline, too, was holding her receptions at Kensington; but 'those who imagine (as you write),' he tells Prior in January, 1734, 'that I have been making my court here all this time, would never believe (what is most true) that I have not been at the Court or at the Minister's but once these seven years. The care of my health and

¹ *Three Men of Letters*, by Moses Coit Tyler (New York, 1895). He records some of the American

academical and other institutions that are directly or indirectly, due to Berkeley

the love of retirement have prevailed over whatsoever ambition might have come to my share.' There is a hint of a visit to Oxford, at Commemoration in 1733, when his friend Secker received the honorary degree.

Soon after he had settled in London, the fruit of his studies in Rhode Island was given to the world in the Seven Dialogues of *Alciphron, or The Minute Philosopher*. Here the philosophical inspiration of his early years is directed to sustain faith in Divine Moral Order, and in the Christian Revelation. *Alciphron* is the longest, and in literary form perhaps the most finished of his works, unsurpassed in lively strokes of irony and satire. Yet if it is to be regarded as a philosophical justification of religion, as against modern agnosticism, one may incline to the judgment of Mr. Leslie Stephen, that it is 'the least admirable of all its author's admirable works.' As we have seen, the sect of free-thinkers was early the object of Berkeley's ridicule and sarcasm. They claimed for themselves wide intellectual vision, yet they were blind to the deep realities of the universe; they took exclusive credit for freedom of thought, although their thinking was confined within the narrow compass of our data in sense. The book of *Principles*, the *Dialogues*, and the *De Motu* of his early years, were designed to bring into clear light the absolute dependence of the world that is presented to our senses on Omnipresent Spirit; and the necessary subjection of all changes in our surroundings to the immediate agency or providence of God. Boasted 'free-thinking' was really a narrow atheism, so he believed, in which meaningless Matter usurped the place that belonged in reason to God, and he employed reason to disclose Omnipotent Intelligence in and behind the phenomena that are presented to the senses in impotent natural sequence.

The causes of the widespread moral corruption of the Old World, which had moved Berkeley so profoundly,

seem to have been pondered anew during his recluse life in Rhode Island. The decline of morals was explained by the deification of Matter: consequent life of sensuous pleasure accounted for decay of religion. That vice is hurtful was argued by free-thinkers like Mandeville to be a vulgar error, and a fallacious demonstration was offered of its utility. That virtue is intrinsically beautiful was taught by Shaftesbury; but Berkeley judged the abstract beauty, with which 'minute philosophers' were contented, unfit to move ordinary human beings to self-sacrificing action; for this involves devotion to a Perfect Person by whom goodness is finally distributed. Religion alone inspires the larger and higher life, in presenting distributive justice personified on the throne of the universe, instead of abstract virtue.

The turning-point in *Alciphron* is in man's vision of God. This is pressed in the Fourth Dialogue. The free-thinker asserts that 'the notion of a Deity, or some invisible power, is of all prejudices the most unconquerable; the most signal example of belief without reason for believing.' He demands proof—'such proof as every man of sense requires of a matter of fact. . . . Should a man ask, why I believe there is a king of Great Britain? I might answer, Because I had seen him. Or a king of Spain? Because I had seen those who saw him. But as for this King of kings, I neither saw Him myself, nor any one else that ever did see Him.' To which Euphranor replies, 'What if it should appear that God really speaks to man; would this content you? What if it shall appear plainly that God speaks to men by the intervention and use of arbitrary, outward, sensible signs, having no resemblance or necessary connexion with the things they stand for and suggest; if it shall appear that, by innumerable combinations of these signs, an endless variety of things is discovered and made known to us; and that we are thereby instructed or informed in their different natures; that we are taught

and admonished what to shun and what to pursue; and are directed how to regulate our motions, and how to act with respect to things distant from us, as well in time as place: will this content you?' Euphranor accordingly proceeds to shew that Visible Nature is a Language, in which the Universal Power that is continually at work is speaking to us all, in a way similar to that in which our fellow men speak to us; so that we have as much (even more) reason to believe in the existence of the Universal Person who is the Speaker, as we have to believe in the existence of persons around us; who become known to us, when they too employ sense-symbols, in the words and actions by which we discover that we are not alone in the universe. For men are really living spirits: their *bodies* are only the sign of their spiritual personality. And it is so with God, who is also revealed in the visible world as a Spirit. 'In a strict sense,' says Euphranor, 'I do not see Alciphron, but only such visible signs and tokens as suggest and infer the being of that invisible thinking principle or soul. Even so, in the self-same manner, it seems to me that, though I cannot with eyes of flesh behold the invisible God, yet I do, in the strictest sense, behold and perceive, by all my senses, such signs and tokens . . . as suggest, indicate, and demonstrate an invisible God as certainly, and with the same evidence, at least, as any other signs, perceived by sense, do suggest to me the existence of *your* soul, spirit, or thinking principle; which I am convinced of only by a few signs or effects, and the motions of one small organised body; whereas I do, at all times, and in all places, perceive sensible signs which evince the being of God.' In short, God is the living Soul of the Universe; as you and I are the living souls that keep our bodies and their organs in significant motion. We can interpret the character of God in the history of the universe, even as we can interpret the

character of our neighbour by observing his words and outward actions.

This overwhelmed Alciphron. 'You stare to find that God is not far from any one of us, and that in Him we live and move and have our being,' rejoins Euphranor. 'You who, in the beginning of this conference, thought it strange that God should leave Himself without a witness, do now think it strange the witness should be so full and clear.' 'I must own I do,' was the reply. 'I never imagined it could be pretended that we saw God with our fleshly eyes, as plain as we see any human person whatsoever, and that He daily speaks to our senses in a manifest and clear dialect.'

Although this reasoning satisfied Alciphron, others may think it inconclusive. How one is able to discover the existence of other persons, and even the meaning of finite personality, are themselves questions full of speculative difficulty. But, waiving this, the analogy between the relation of a human spirit to its body, and that of the Omnipresent and Omnipotent Spirit to the Universe of things and persons, fails in several respects. God is supposed to be continually creating the world by constant and continuous Providence, and His Omniscience is supposed to comprehend all its concrete relations: a man's body is not absolutely dependent on the man's own power and providence; and even his scientific knowledge of it, in itself and in its relations, is scanty and imperfect, as his power over it is limited and conditioned. Then the little that a man gradually learns of what is going on in the surrounding universe is dependent on his senses: Omniscience comprehends Immensity and Eternity (so we suppose) in a single intuition. Our bodies, moreover, are visible things: the universe, this organism of God, is crowded with *persons*, to whom there is nothing corresponding within the organism which reveals one man to another.

But this is not all. After Euphranor has found that the Universal Power is Universal Spirit, this is still an in-

adequate God ; for what we want to know is what *sort* of Spirit God is. Is God omnipotent or of limited power, regarded ethically, fair or unfair in His treatment of persons ; good or evil, according to the highest yet attained conception of goodness ; a God of love, or a devil omnipotent ? I infer the *character* of my neighbour from his words and actions, patent to sense in the gradual outward evolution of his life. I am asked to infer the *character* of the Omnipresent Spirit from *His* words and actions, manifested in the universe of things and persons. But we must not attribute to the Cause more than it reveals of itself in its effects. God and men alike are known by the effects they produce. The Universal Power is, on this condition, righteous, fair, and loving to the degree in which those conceptions are implied in His visible embodiment : to affirm more or other than this, on the basis of analogy *alone*, is either to indulge in baseless conjecture, or to submit blindly to dogma and authority.

Now the universe, as far as it comes within the range of human experience on this planet, is full of suffering and moral disorder. The 'religious hypothesis' of a perfectly righteous and benevolent God is here offered to account for the appearances which the universe presents to us. But do these signify exact distributive justice ? Is not visible nature apparently cruel and unrelenting ? If we infer cruelty in the character of a man, because his bodily actions cause undeserved suffering, must we not, by this analogy, infer in like manner regarding the character of the Supreme Spirit, manifested in the progressive evolution of the universal organism ?

We find it impossible to determine with absolute certainty the character even of our fellow men, from their imperfectly interpreted words and actions, so that each man is more or less a mystery to his fellows. The mystery deepens when we try to read the character of animals, —to interpret the motives which determine the overt acts

of dogs or horses. And if we were able to communicate by visible signs with the inhabitants of other planets, with how much greater difficulty should we draw conclusions from their visible acts regarding *their* character? But if this is so when we use the data of sense for reading the character of finite persons, how infinite must be the difficulty of reading the character of the Eternal Spirit, in and through the gradual evolution of the universe of things and persons, which in this reasoning is supposed to be His body; and the history of that universe the facts of His biography, in and by which He is eternally revealing Himself! For we know nothing about the unbeginning and unending. The universe of persons is assumed to have no *end*; and I know not why its evolution must be supposed to have had a *beginning*, or that there ever was a time in which God was unmanifested, to finite persons.

Shall we in these circumstances turn with Euphranor, in the Fifth and Sixth Dialogues, to professed revelation of the character of the Universal Mind presented in miraculous revelation, by inspired prophets and apostles, who are brought forward as authorities able to speak infallibly to the *character* of God? If the whole course of nature, or endless evolution of events, is the Divine Spirit revealed in omnipresent activity, what room is there for any other less regular revelation? The universe of common experience, it is implied by Berkeley, is essentially miraculous, and therefore absolutely perfect. Is it consistent with fairness, and benevolence, and love of goodness in all moral agents for its own sake, that the Christian revelation should have been so long delayed, and be still so incompletely made known? Is not the existence of wicked persons on this or any other planet, wicked men or devils, a dark spot in the visible life of God? Does not perfect goodness in God mean restoration of goodness in men, for its own sake, apart from their merit; and must not Omnipotent Goodness, infinitely opposite to all evil, either

convert to goodness all beings in the universe who have made themselves bad, or else relieve the universe of their perpetual presence in ever-increasing wickedness?

Sceptical criticism of this sort has found expression in the searching minute philosophy of a later day than Berkeley's and Alciphron's; as in David Hume and Voltaire, and in the agnosticism of the nineteenth century. Was not Euphranor too ready to yield to the demand for a visible God, whose character had accordingly to be determined by what appears in nature and man, under the conditions of our limited and contingent experience? Do we not need to look below data of sensuous experience, and among the presuppositions which must consciously or unconsciously be taken for granted in all man's dealings with the environment in which he finds himself, for the root of *trustworthy* experience? On merely physical reasoning, like that of Euphranor, the righteous love of God is an unwarranted inference, and it even seems to be contradicted by visible facts presented in the history of the world. But if Omnipotent Goodness must *a priori* be attributed to the Universal Mind, as an indispensable condition for man's having reliable intercourse of any sort with nature; if this is the primary postulate necessary to the existence of truth of any kind—then the 'religious hypothesis' that God is Good, according to the highest conception of goodness, is no groundless fancy, but the fundamental faith-venture in which man has to live. It *must* stand in reason; unless it can be *demonstrated* that the mixture of good and evil which the universe presents, necessarily contradicts this fundamental presupposition: and if so, man is lost in pessimistic Pyrrhonism, and can assert nothing about anything¹.

The religious altruism, however inadequate, which

¹ The thought implied in this paragraph is pursued in my *Philosophy of Theism*, in which the ethical perfection of the Universal Mind is taken as the fundamental postulate

in all human experience. If the Universal Mind is not ethically perfect, the universe (including our spiritual constitution) is radically untrustworthy.

Berkeley offered in *Alciphron* made some noise at the time of its appearance, although its theistic argument was too subtle to be popular. The conception of the visible world as Divine Visual Language was 'received with ridicule by those who make ridicule the test of truth,' although it has made way since. 'I have not seen Dean Berkeley,' Gay the poet writes to Swift in the May following the Dean's return, and very soon after the appearance of *Alciphron*, 'but I have been reading his book, and like many parts of it; but in general think with you that it is too speculative.' Warburton, with admiration for Berkeley, cannot comprehend his philosophy, and Hoadley shewed a less friendly spirit. *A Letter from a Country Clergyman*, attributed to Lord Hervey, the 'Sporus' of Pope, was one of several ephemeral attacks which the *Minute Philosopher* encountered in the year after its appearance. Three other critics, more worthy of consideration, are mentioned in one of Berkeley's letters from London to his American friend Johnson at Stratford: 'As to the Bishop of Cork's book, and the other book you allude to, the author of which is one Baxter, they are both very little considered here; for which reason I have taken no public notice of them. To answer objections already answered, and repeat the same things, is a needless as well as disagreeable task. Nor should I have taken notice of that Letter about Vision, had it not been printed in a newspaper, which gave it course, and spread it through the kingdom. Besides, the theory of Vision I found was somewhat obscure to most people; for which reason I was not displeas'd at an opportunity to explain it'. The explanation was given in *The Theory of Visual Language Vindicated*, in January, 1733, as a supplement to *Alciphron*. Its blot is a tone of polemical bitterness directed against Shaftesbury¹.

¹ *Life and Letters of Berkeley*, p. 222.

² The third Earl of Shaftesbury, the pupil of Locke, and author

Although Berkeley 'took no public notice' of 'the Bishop of Cork's book' it touched a great question, which periodically has awakened controversy, and been the occasion of mutual misunderstanding among the controversialists in past ages. 'Is God knowable by man; or must religion be devotion to an object that is unknowable?' In one of his first letters to Lord Percival, as we saw, Berkeley animadverted on a sermon by the Archbishop of Dublin, which seemed to deny that there was goodness, or understanding God, any more than feet or hands. An opinion somewhat similar had been attributed to Bishop Browne, in his answer to Toland, and afterwards in 1728, in his *Procedure and Limits of Human Understanding*.

This touched to the quick Berkeley's ultimate conception of the universe, as realisable only in, and therefore necessarily dependent on, living mind. We are reminded of the famous analogy of Spinoza¹. If the omnipotent and omniscient Mind, on which Euphranor rested, can be called 'mind' only metaphorically, and can be called 'good' only when the term is used without human meaning, it may seem to be a matter of indifference whether we have unknowable Matter or unknowable Mind at the root of things and persons. Both are empty words. The Power universally at work is equally unintelligible, equally unfit to be the object of worship in the final venture of faith, whether we use the term Matter or the term Mind.

of the *Characteristics*. In addition to the well-known biography by Dr. Fowler, the present eminent Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, Shaftesbury has been interpreted in two other lately published works—a *Life* by Benjamin Rand, Ph.D. (1900), and an edition of the *Characteristics*, with an Introduction and Notes, by John M. Robertson (1900).

¹ The title of this book is—*Things Divine and Supernatural conceived*

by Analogy with Things Natural and Human, by the Author of *The Procedure, Extent and Limits of the Human Understanding*. The *Divine Analogy* appeared in 1733, and the *Procedure* in 1728.

² Spinoza argues that what is called 'understanding' and 'will' in God, has no more in common with human understanding and will than the dog-star in the heavens has with the animal we call a dog. See Spinoza's *Ethica*, I. 17, *Scholium*.

The universe is neither explained nor sustained by a 'mind' that is mind only metaphorically. To call this 'God' is to console us with an empty abstraction. The minutest philosopher is ready to grant with Alciphron that 'there is a God in this indefinite sense'; since nothing can be inferred from such an account of God about conduct or religion.

The Bishop of Cork replied to the strictures of Euphranor in the *Minute Philosopher*. He qualified and explained his former utterances in some two hundred dull pages of his *Divine Analogy*, which hardly touch the root of the matter. The question at issue is the one which underlies modern agnosticism. It was raised again in Britain in the nineteenth century, with deeper insight, by Sir William Hamilton; followed by Dean Mansel, in controversy with F. D. Maurice, at the point of view of Archbishop King and Bishop Browne, in philosophical vindication of the mysteries of Christian faith; by Mr. Herbert Spencer and by Huxley in a minute philosophy that has been deepened by Hume's criticism of the rationale of theism in Berkeley¹.

Andrew Baxter's *Inquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul*, referred to in Berkeley's letter to Johnson, appeared in 1733. It has a chapter on 'Dean Berkeley's Scheme against the existence of Matter and a Material World,' which is worthy of mention because it is the earliest elaborate criticism of the New Principle, although it had then been before the world for more than twenty years. The title of the chapter shews Baxter's imperfect comprehension of the proposition which he attempts to refute. It suggests

¹ The question of the knowableness of God, or Omnipotent Moral Perfection in the concrete, enters largely into recent philosophical and theological discussion in Britain. Calderwood, in his *Philosophy of the Infinite* (1854), was one of the earliest, and not the least acute,

of Hamilton's critics in this matter. The subject is lucidly treated by Professor Andrew Seth (Pringle-Pattison) in his *Lectures on Theism* (1897) and in a supplement to Calderwood's *Life* (1900). So also Huxley's *David Hume*, and Professor Iverach's *Is God Knowable?*

that Berkeley argued for the non-existence of the things we see and touch, instead of for their necessary dependence on, or subordination to, realising percipient Mind, so far as they are concrete realities. Baxter, moreover, was a Scot; and his criticism is interesting as a foretaste of the protracted discussion of the 'ideal theory' by Reid and his friends, and later on by Hamilton. But Baxter's book was not the first sign of Berkeley's influence in Scotland. We are told by Dugald Stewart, that 'the novelty of Berkeley's paradox attracted very powerfully the attention of a set of young men who were then prosecuting their studies at Edinburgh, who formed themselves into a Society for the express purpose of soliciting from him an explanation of some parts of his theory which seemed to them obscurely or equivocally expressed. To this correspondence the amiable and excellent prelate seems to have given every encouragement; and I have been told on the best authority that he was accustomed to say that his reasoning had been nowhere better understood than by this club of young Scotsmen¹.' Thus, and afterwards through Hume and Reid, Berkeley is at the root of philosophy in Scotland.

The two years of indifferent health and authorship in London sum up what may be called the American period of Berkeley's life. Early in 1734 letters to Prior open a new vista in his history. He was nominated to the bishopric of Cloyne in the south of Ireland, and we have now to follow him to the remote region which was his home for eighteen years. The interest of the philosophic Queen, and perhaps some compensation for the Bermuda disappointment, may explain the appearance of the metaphysical and social idealist in the place where he shone as a star of the first magnitude in the Irish Church of the eighteenth century.

¹ Stewart's *Works*, vol. I. pp. 350-1.

III

LATER YEARS (1734-53).

In May, 1734, Berkeley was consecrated as Bishop of Cloyne, in St. Paul's Church, Dublin. Except occasional visits, he had been absent from Ireland for more than twenty years. He returned to spend eighteen years of almost unbroken seclusion in his remote diocese. It suited a growing inclination to a recluse, meditative life, which had been encouraged by circumstances in Rhode Island. The eastern and northern part in the county of Cork formed his diocese, bounded on the west by Cork harbour, and on the east by the beautiful Blackwater and the mountains of Waterford; the sea, which was its southern boundary, approached within two miles of the episcopal residence in the village of Cloyne.

As soon as he was settled, he resumed study 'with unabated attention,' but still with indifferent health. Travelling had become irksome to him, and at Cloyne he was almost as much removed as he had been in Rhode Island from the thinking world. Cork took the place of Newport; but Cork was twenty miles from Cloyne, while Newport was only three miles from Whitehall. His episcopal neighbour at Cork was Bishop Browne, the critic of *Alciphron*. Isaac Gervais, afterwards Dean of Tuam, often enlivened the 'manse-house' at Cloyne by his wit and intercourse with the great world. Secker, the Bishop of Bristol, and Benson, the Bishop of Gloucester, now and then exchanged letters with him, and correspondence was kept up as of old with Prior at Dublin and Johnson at Stratford. But there is no trace of intercourse with Swift, who was wearing out an unhappy old age, or with Pope, almost the only survivor of the brilliant society of other years. We are told, indeed, that the beauty of Cloyne

was so described to the bard of Twickenham, by the pen which in former days had described Ischia, that Pope was almost moved to visit it. And a letter from Secker in February, 1735¹, contains this scrap: 'Your friend Mr. Pope is publishing small poems every now and then, full of much wit and not a little keenness'. 'Our common friend, Dr. Butler,' he adds, 'hath almost completed a set of speculations upon the credibility of religion from its analogy to the constitution and course of nature, which I believe in due time you will read with pleasure.' Butler's *Analogy* appeared in the following year. But I have found no remains of correspondence between Berkeley and their 'common friend'; the two most illustrious religious thinkers of the Anglican communion.

When he left London in 1734 Berkeley was on the eve of what sounded like a mathematical controversy, although it was in his intention metaphysical, and was suggested by the Seventh Dialogue in *Alciphron*. In one of his letters to Prior, early in that year, he told him that though he 'could not read, owing to ill health,' yet his thought was as distinct as ever, and that for amusement 'he passed his early hours in thinking of certain mathematical matters which may possibly produce something'. This turned, it seems, upon a form of scepticism among contemporary mathematicians, occasioned by the presence of mysteries of religion. The *Analyst* was the issue. It was followed

¹ Berkeley MSS. possessed by Archdeacon Rose.

² Pope's poetic tribute to Berkeley belongs to this period—

'Even in a bishop I can spy desert;
Secker is decent; Rundle has a heart:
Manners with candour are to Benson given,
To Berkeley—every virtue under heaven.'

Epilogue to the Satires.

Also his satirical tribute to the critics of Berkeley—

'Truth's sacred fort th' exploded laugh shall win;
And Coxcombs vanquish Berkeley with a grin.'

Essay on Satire, Part II.

³ Berkeley's *Life and Letters*, p. 210.

by a controversy in which some of the most eminent mathematicians took part. *Mathematica exeunt in mysteria* might have been the motto of the *Analyst*. The assumptions in mathematics, it is argued, are as mysterious as those of theologians and metaphysicians. Mathematicians cannot translate into perfectly intelligible thought their own doctrines in fluxions. If man's knowledge of God is rooted in mystery, so too is mathematical analysis. Pure science at last loses itself in propositions which usefully regulate action, but which cannot be comprehended. This is the drift of the argument in the *Analyst*; but perhaps Berkeley's inclination to extreme conclusions, and to what is verbally paradoxical, led him into doubtful positions in the controversy to which the *Analyst* gave rise. Instead of ultimate imperfect comprehensibility, he seems to attribute absolute contradiction to the Newtonian fluxions. Baxter, in his *Inquiry*, had asserted that things in Berkeley's book of *Principles* forced the author 'to suspect that even mathematics may not be very sound knowledge at the bottom.' The metaphysical argument of the *Analyst* was obscured in a cloud of mathematics.

The social condition of Ireland attracted Berkeley almost as soon as he was settled in Cloyne. He was surrounded by a large native Irish population and a small group of English colonists. The natives, long governed in the interest of the stranger, had never learned to exert and govern themselves. The self-reliance which Berkeley preached fifteen years before, as a mean for 'preventing the ruin of Great Britain,' was more wanting in Ireland, where the simplest maxims of social economy were neglected. It was a state of things fitted to move one who was too independent to permit his aspirations to be confined to the ordinary routine of the Irish episcopate, and who could not forget the favourite moral maxim of his life.

The social chaos of Ireland was the occasion of what

to some may be the most interesting of Berkeley's writings. His thoughts found vent characteristically in a series of penetrating practical queries. The First Part of the *Querist* appeared in 1735, anonymously, edited by Dr. Madden of Dublin, who along with Prior had lately founded a Society for promoting industrial arts in Ireland. The Second and Third Parts were published in the two following years. *A Discourse to Magistrates occasioned by the Enormous Licence and Irreligion of the Times*, which appeared in 1736, was another endeavour, with like philanthropic intention. And the only important break in his secluded life at Cloyne, in eighteen years of residence, was when he went for some months to Dublin in 1737, to render social service to Ireland in the Irish House of Lords.

His metaphysic, at first encountered by ridicule, was now beginning to receive more serious treatment. A Scotsman had already recognised it. In 1739 another and more famous Scotsman, David Hume, refers thus to Berkeley in one of the opening sections of his *Treatise of Human Nature*: 'A very material question has been started concerning abstract or general ideas—whether they be general or particular in the mind's conception of them. A great philosopher, Dr. Berkeley, has disputed the received opinion in this particular, and has asserted that all general ideas are nothing but particular ones, annexed to a certain term which gives them a more extensive signification, and makes them recall upon occasion other individuals which are similar to them. I look upon this to be one of the greatest and most valuable discoveries that has been made of late years in the republic of letters.' It does not appear that Berkeley heard of Hume.

A curious interest began to engage him about this time. The years following 1739 were years of suffering in the

Irish diocese. It was a time of famine followed by widespread disease. His correspondence is full of allusions to this. It had consequences of lasting importance. Surrounded by disease, he pondered remedies. Experience in Rhode Island and among American Indians suggested the healing properties of tar. Further experiments in tar, combined with meditation and much curious reading, deepened and expanded his metaphysical philosophy. Tar seemed to grow under his experiments, and in his thoughts, into a Panacea for giving health to the organism on which living mind in man is meanwhile dependent. This natural dependence of health upon tar introduced thoughts of the interdependence of all things, and then of the *immediate* dependence of all in nature upon Omnipresent and Omnipotent Mind. The living Mind that underlies the phenomena of the universe began to be conceived under a new light. Since his return to the life of thought in Rhode Island, he had been immersed in Platonic and Neoplatonic literature, and in books of mystical Divinity, encouraged perhaps by the mystical disposition attributed to his wife. An eccentric ingenuity connected the scientific experiments and prescriptions with the Idealism of Plato and Plotinus. The natural law according to which tar-water was universally restorative set his mind to work about the immanence of living Mind. He mused about a medicine thus universally beneficial, and the thought occurred that it must be naturally charged with 'pure invisible fire, the most subtle and elastic of bodies, and the vital element in the universe'; and water might be the natural cause which enables this elementary fire to be drawn out of tar and transferred to vegetable and animal organisms. But the vital fire could be only a natural cause; which in truth is no efficient cause at all, but only a sign of divine efficiency transmitted through the world of sense: the true cause of this and all other natural effects must be the immanent Mind or Reason in which

we all participate; for in God we live and move and have our being.

It is thus that Berkeley's thought culminates in *Siris*, that *Charm of Philosophical Reflexions and Inquiries concerning the Virtues of Tar-water, and divers other subjects connected together and arising one from another*, which appeared in 1744. This little book made more noise at the time of its appearance than any of his books; but not because of its philosophy, which was lost in its medicinal promise to mankind of immunity from disease. Yet it was Berkeley's last attempt to express his ultimate conception of the universe in its human and divine relations. When *Siris* is compared with the book of *Principles*, the immense difference in tone and manner of thought shews the change wrought in the intervening years. The sanguine argumentative gladiatorship of the *Principles* is exchanged for pensive speculation, which acknowledges the weakness of human understanding, when it is face to face with the Immensities and Eternities. Compare the opening sections of the Introduction to the *Principles* with the closing sections of *Siris*. The contingent data of our experience are now felt to be insufficient, and there is a more or less conscious grounding of the Whole in the eternal and immutable Ideas of Reason. 'Strictly, the sense knows nothing. We perceive, indeed, sounds by hearing and characters by sight. But we are not therefore said to understand them. . . . Sense and experience acquaint us with the course and analogy of appearances and natural effects: thought, reason, intellect, introduce us into the knowledge of their causes. . . . The principles of science are neither objects of sense nor imagination: intellect and reason are alone the sure guides to truth.' So the shifting basis of the earlier thought is found to need support in the intellectual and moral faith that must be involved in all reasonable human intercourse with the phenomena presented in the universe.

The inadequate thought of God, as only a Spirit or Person supreme among the spirits or persons, in and through whom the material world is realised, a thought which pervades *Alciphron*, makes way in *Siris* for the thought of God as the infinite omnipresent Ground, or final sustaining Power, immanent in Nature and Man, to which Berkeley had become accustomed in Neoplatonic and Alexandrian metaphysics. 'Comprehending God and the creatures in One general notion, we may say that all things together (God and the universe of Space and Time) make One Universe, or τὸ Πᾶν. But if we should say that all things make One God, this would be an erroneous notion of God; but would not amount to atheism, as long as Mind or Intellect was admitted to be τὸ ἡγεμονικόν, or the governing part. . . . It will not seem just to fix the imputation of atheism upon those philosophers who hold the doctrine of τὸ Ἐν.' It is thus that he now regards God. Metaphysics and theology are accordingly one.

No attempt is made in *Siris* to articulate the universe in the light of unifying Mind or Reason. And we are still apt to ask what the truth and goodness at the heart of all really mean; seeing that, as conceived in human minds, they vary in the gradual evolution of intellect and conscience in men. *Omnia exeunt in mysteria* is the tone of *Siris* at the end. The universe of reality is too much for our articulate intellectual digestion: it must be left for omniscience; it transcends finite intelligence and the *via media* of human understanding. Man must be satisfied to pass life, in the infinitesimal interval between birth and death, as a faith-venture, which he may convert into a growing insight, as the generations roll on, but which can never be converted into complete knowledge. 'In this state we must be satisfied to make the best of those glimpses within our reach. It is Plato's remark in his *Theatetus*, that while we sit still we are never the wiser; but going into the river, and moving up and down,

is the way to discover its depths and shallows. If we exercise and bestir ourselves, we may even here discover something. The eye by long use comes to see even in the darkest cavern; and there is no subject so obscure but we may discern some glimpse of truth by long poring on it. Truth is the cry of all, but the game of a few. Certainly where it is the chief passion it doth not give way to vulgar cares and views; nor is it contented with a little ardour in the early time of life: a time perhaps to pursue, but not so fit to weigh and revise. He that would make a real progress in knowledge must dedicate his age as well as his youth, the later growth as well as the first-fruits, at the altar of Truth.' Such was Berkeley, and such were his last words in philosophy. They may suggest the attitude of Bacon when, at a different view-point, he disclaims exhaustive system: 'I have made a beginning of the work: the fortune of the human race will give the issue. For the matter in hand is no mere felicity of speculation, but the real business and fortunes of the human race¹.'

While Berkeley's central thought throughout his life is concerned with God as the one omnipresent and omnipotent Providential Agent in the universe, he says little about the other final question, of more exclusively human interest, which concerns the destiny of men. That men are born into a universe which, as the visible expression of Moral Providence, must be scientifically and ethically trustworthy; certain not to put man to confusion intellectually or morally, seeing that it could not otherwise be trusted for such in our ultimate venture of faith—this is one thing. That all persons born into it are certain to continue living self-consciously for ever, is another thing. This is not obviously implied in the former presupposition, whether or not it can be deduced

¹ Bacon's *Novum Organum*. Distributio Operis.

from it, or else discovered by other means. Although man's environment is essentially Divine, and wholly in its smallest details Providential, may not his body, in its living organisation from physical birth until physical death, be the measure of the continuance of his self-conscious personality? Is each man's immortal existence, like God's, indispensable?

Doubt about the destiny of men after they die is, at the end of the nineteenth century, probably more prevalent than doubt about the underlying Providence of God, and His constant creative activity; more perhaps than it was in the days of Toland, and Collins, and Tindal. Future life had been made so familiar to the imagination by the early and mediaeval Church, and afterwards by the Puritans, as in Milton, Bunyan, and Jonathan Edwards, that it then seemed to the religious mind more real than anything that is seen and touched. The habit wholly formed by natural science is apt to dissipate this and to make a human life lived under conditions wholly strange to its 'minute philosophy' appear illusory.

A section in the book of *Principles*¹ in which the common argument for the 'natural immortality' of the human soul is reproduced, strengthened by his new conception of what the reality of body means, is Berkeley's metaphysical contribution for determining between the awful alternatives of annihilation or continued self-conscious life after physical death. The subject is touched, in a less recondite way, in two of his papers in the *Guardian*, and in the *Discourse* delivered in Trinity College Chapel in 1708, in which a revelation of the immortality of men is presented as the special gospel of Jesus Christ. To argue, as Berkeley does in the *Principles*, that men cannot be annihilated at death, because they are spiritual substances having powers independent of the sequences of nature, implies assumptions regarding finite persons which are

¹ Section 141.

open to criticism. The justification in reason for our venture of faith that Omnipotent Goodness is at the heart of the universe is—that without this presupposition we can have no reasonable intercourse, scientific or otherwise, with the world of things and persons in which we find ourselves; for reason and will are then alike paralysed by universal distrust. But it can hardly be maintained *a priori* that men, or other spiritual beings in the universe, are equally with God indispensable to its natural order; so that when they have once entered on conscious existence they must *always* continue to exist consciously. Is not the philosophical justification of man's hope of endless life ethical rather than metaphysical; founded on that faith in the justice and goodness of the Universal Mind which has to be taken for granted in every attempt to interpret experience, with its mixture of good and evil, in this evanescent embodied life? Can a life such as this be *all* for men, in a universe that, because it is essentially Divine, must operate towards the extinction of the wickedness which now makes it a mystery of Omnipotent Goodness?

A cheerful optimism appears in Berkeley's habit of thought about death, as we have it in his essays in the *Guardian*: a sanguine apprehension of a present preponderance of good, and consequent anticipation of greater good after death; unlike those whose pessimistic temperament induces a lurid picture of eternal moral disorder. But his otherwise active imagination seldom makes philosophy a meditation upon death. He does not seem to have exercised himself in the way those do who find in the prospect of being in the twenty-first century as they were in the first, what makes them appalled that they have ever come at all into transitory percipient life; or as those others who recoil from an unbodied life after physical death, as infinitely more appalling than the thought of being transported *in this body* into another planet, or

even to a material world outside our solar system. In one of his letters to Johnson¹ he does approach the un bodied life, and in a characteristic way:—

‘I see no difficulty in conceiving a change of state, such as is vulgarly called *death*, as well without as with material substance. It is sufficient for that purpose that we allow sensible bodies, i.e. such as are immediately perceived by sight and touch; the existence of which I am so far from questioning, as philosophers are used to do, that I establish it, I think, upon evident principles. Now it seems very easy to conceive the *soul* to exist in a separate state (i.e. divested from those limits and laws of motion and perception with which she is embarrassed here) and to exercise herself on new ideas, without the intervention of these tangible things we call *bodies*. It is even very possible to apprehend how the soul may have ideas of colour without an eye, or of sounds without an ear².’

But while we may thus be supposed to have all our present sensuous experience in an un bodied state, this does not enable one to conceive how un bodied persons can communicate with one another in the absence of *all* sense signs; whether of the sort derived from our present senses, or from other senses of whose data we can in this life have no imagination.

Berkeley’s tar-water enthusiasm lasted throughout the rest of his life, and found vent in letters and pamphlets in support of his Panacea, from 1744 till 1752. Notwithstanding this, he was not forgetful of other interests—ecclesiastical, and the social ones which he included in his large meaning of ‘ecclesiastical.’ The Rising under Charles Edward in 1745 was the occasion of a *Letter to the Roman Catholics of Cloyne*, characteristically humane

¹ See ‘Editor’s Preface to Alciphron.’

² Compare Essay II in the *Guardian* with this.

and liberal. It was followed in 1749 by an *Exhortation to the Roman Catholic Clergy of Ireland* in a similar spirit; and this unwonted courtesy of an Irish Protestant bishop was received by those to whom it was addressed in a corresponding temper.

It is difficult to determine Berkeley's relation to rival schools or parties in Church and State. His disposition was too singular and independent for a partisan. Some of his early writings, as we have seen, were suspected of high Tory and Jacobite leanings; but his arguments in the suspected *Discourse* were such as ordinary Tories and Jacobites failed to understand, and the tenor of his words and actions was in the best sense liberal. In religious thought *Siris* might place him among latitudinarians; perhaps in affinity with the Cambridge Platonists. His true place is foremost among the religious philosophers of the Anglican Church; the first to prepare the religious problem for the light in which we are invited to look at the universe by modern agnostics, and under the modern conception of natural evolution. He is the most picturesque figure in that Anglican succession which, in the seventeenth century, includes Hooker and Cudworth; in the eighteenth, Clarke and Butler; and in the nineteenth, may we say Coleridge, in lack of a representative in orders; although Mansel, Maurice, Mozley, and Jowett are not to be forgotten, nor Isaac Taylor among laymen¹: Newman and Arnold, illustrious otherwise, are hardly representatives of metaphysical philosophy.

A more pensive tone runs through the closing years at Cloyne. Attempts were made in vain to withdraw him from the 'remote corner' to which he had been so long confined. His friends urged his claims for the Irish Primacy. 'I am no man's rival or competitor in this matter,' were his words to Prior. 'I am not in love with feasts,

¹ Taylor, in later life, conformed to the Anglican Church.

and crowds, and visits, and late hours, and strange faces, and a hurry of affairs often insignificant. For my own private satisfaction, I had rather be master of my time than wear a diadem.' Letters to his American friends, Johnson and Clap, shew him still moved by the inspiration which carried him over the Atlantic, and record his influence in the development of American colleges¹. The home education of his three sons was another interest. We are told by his widow that 'he would not trust his sons to mercenary hands. Though old and sickly, he performed the constant tedious task himself.' Of the fruit of this home education there is little to tell. The death of William, his favourite boy, in 1751, 'was thought to have struck too close to his father's heart.' 'I am a man,' so he writes, 'retired from the amusements, politics, visits, and what the world calls pleasure. I had a little friend, educated always under mine own eye, whose painting delighted me, whose music ravished me, and whose lively gay spirit was a continual feast. It has pleased God to take him hence.' The eldest son, Henry, born in Rhode Island, did not long survive his father. George, the third son, was destined for Oxford, and this destiny was connected with a new project. The 'life academico-philosophical,' which he sought in vain to realise in Bermuda, he now hoped to find for himself in the city of colleges. on the Isis. 'The truth is,' he wrote to Prior as early as September 1746, 'I have a scheme of my own for this long time past, in which I propose more satisfaction and enjoyment to myself than I could in that high station², which I neither solicited, nor so much as wished for. A greater income would not tempt me to remove from Cloyne, and set aside my Oxford scheme; which, though delayed by the illness of my son³, yet I am as intent upon it and as much resolved as ever.'

¹ See Berkeley's *Life and Letters*, chap. viii.

² The Primacy.

³ This seems to have been his eldest son, Henry.

The last of Berkeley's letters which we have is to Dean Gervais. It expresses the feeling with which in April, 1752, he was contemplating life, on the eve of his departure from Cloyne.

'I submit to years and infirmities. My views in this world are mean and narrow; it is a thing in which I have small share, and which ought to give me small concern. I abhor business, and especially to have to do with great persons and great affairs. The evening of life I choose to pass in a quiet retreat. Ambitious projects, intrigues and quarrels of statesmen, are things I have formerly been amused with, but they now seem to be a vain, fugitive dream.'

Four months after this, Berkeley saw Cloyne for the last time. In August he quitted it for Oxford, which he had long pictured in imagination as the ideal home of his old age. When he left Cork in the vessel which carried his wife, his daughter, and himself to Bristol, he was prostrated by weakness, and had to be taken from Bristol to Oxford on a horse-litter. It was late in August when they arrived there¹.

Our picture of Berkeley at Oxford is dim. According to tradition he occupied a house in Holywell Street, near the gardens of New College and not far from the cloisters of Magdalen. It was a changed world to him. While he was exchanging Ireland for England, death was removing old English friends. Before he left Cloyne he must have heard of the death of Butler in June, at Bath, where Benson, at the request of Secker, affectionately watched the last hours of the author of the *Analogy*. Benson followed Butler in August.

¹ His son George was already settled at Christ Church. Henry, the eldest son, born in Rhode Island, was then 'abroad in the south of France for his health,' as one of his brother George's letters tells us, found among the Johnson MSS.

We hear of study resumed in improved health in the home in Holywell Street. In October a *Miscellany, containing several Tracts on various Subjects*, 'by the Bishop of Cloyne,' appeared simultaneously in London and Dublin. The Tracts were reprints, with the exception of *Further Thoughts on Tar-water*, which may have been written before he left Ireland. The third edition of *Alciphron* also appeared in this autumn. But *Siris* is the latest record of his philosophical thought. A comparison of the *Commonplace Book* and the *Principles* with the *Analyst* and *Siris* gives the measure of his advancement. After the sanguine beginning perhaps the comparison leaves a sense of disappointment, when we find metaphysics mixed up with mathematics in the *Analyst*, and metaphysics obscurely mixed up with medicine in *Siris*.

It is curious that, although in 1752 David Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature* had been before the world for thirteen years and his *Inquiry concerning Human Understanding* for four years, there is no allusion to Hume by Berkeley. He was Berkeley's immediate successor in the eighteenth-century evolution of European thought. The sceptical criticism of Hume was applied to the dogmatic religious philosophy of Berkeley, to be followed in its turn by the abstractly rational and the moral reconstructive criticism of Kant. *Alciphron* is, however, expressly referred to by Hume; indirectly, too, throughout the religious agnosticism of his *Inquiry*, also afterwards in the *Dialogues on Natural Religion*, in a vindication of minute philosophy by profounder reasonings than those which satisfied Lysicles and Alciphron. Berkeley, Hume, and Kant are the three significant philosophical figures of their century, each holding the supreme place successively in its beginning, middle, and later years. Perhaps Reid in Scotland did more than any other in his generation to make Berkeley known; not, however, for his true work in constructive

religious thought, but for his supposed denial of the reality of the things we see and touch¹.

The ideal life in Oxford did not last long. On the evening of Sunday, January 14, 1753, Berkeley was suddenly confronted by the mystery of death. 'As he was sitting with my mother, my sister, and myself,' so his son wrote to Johnson at Stratford, in October, 'suddenly, and without the least previous notice or pain, he was removed to the enjoyment of eternal rewards; and although all possible means were instantly used, no symptom of life ever appeared after; nor could the physicians assign any cause for his death. He arrived at Oxford on August 25, and had received great benefit from the change of air, and by God's blessing on tar-water, insomuch that for some years he had not been in better health than he was the instant before he left us².'

Six days later he was buried in Oxford, in the Cathedral of Christ Church³, where his tomb bears an appropriate inscription by Dr. Markham, afterwards Archbishop of York.

¹ See Appendix D. Reid, like Berkeley, held that 'matter cannot be the cause of anything,' but this not as a consequence of the new conception of the world presented to the senses, through which alone Berkeley opens *his* way to its powerlessness; although Reid supposes that in his youth he followed Berkeley in this too. See *Thomas Reid* (1898), in 'Famous Scots Series,' where I have enlarged on this.

² Johnson MSS.

³ That Berkeley was buried in Oxford is mentioned in his son's letter to Johnson, in which he says: 'His remains are interred in the Cathedral of Christ Church, and next week a monument to his memory will be erected with an inscription by Dr. Markham, a Student of this College.' As the son was present at, and superintended the arrangements for his father's funeral, it can be no

stretch of credulity to believe that he knew where his father was buried. It may be added that Berkeley himself had provided in his Will 'that my body be buried in the churchyard of the parish in which I die.' The Will, dated July 31, 1752, is given *in extenso* in my *Life and Letters* of Berkeley, p. 345. We have also the record of burial in the Register of Christ Church Cathedral, which shews that 'on January ye 20th 1753, ye Right Reverend John (*sic*) Berkeley, L^d Bishop of Cloyne, was buried' there. This disposes of the statement on p. 17 of Diprose's *Account of the Parish of Saint Clement Danes* (1868), that Berkeley was buried in that church.

I may add that a beautiful memorial of Berkeley has lately been placed in the Cathedral of Cloyne, by subscriptions in this country and largely in America.

ERRATA

VOL. I

- Page 99, line 3 *for* 149-80 *read* 149-60
99, line 22 *for* —and to be 'suggested,' not signified *read* —
instead of being only suggested
100, line 10 *for* hearing *read* seeing
103, note, lines 5, 6 *for* pp. 111, 112 *read* p. 210
200, note, line 14 *for* Adam *read* Robert
364, line 8 from foot *for* and *read* which
512, note 6, line 3 *for* imminent *read* immanent

VOL. II

- Page 194, note, line 3 *for* Tyndal *read* Tindal
207, line 1, insert 13. before *Alc.*
377, line 6, *for* antethesis *read* antithesis.

VOL. IV

- Page 285, lines 4, 5 *for* Thisus Alus Cujus, &c. *read* Ursus. Alus.
Cuius. &c. The inscription, strictly speaking, appears on the Palace of
the Counts Orsini, and is dated MD.