THE PERSONALITY OF GOD.

I was very pleased to see in the October, 1897, number of *The Open Court* a brief notice of some of my criticisms of your views, and I am very sorry that both my work and domestic matters have deprived me of the opportunity of replying before now. There is a very great deal that I would like to say. But I feel that my only chance of finding opportunity to reply at all is in limiting myself strictly to the question at issue.

You are willing to "grant the possibility of the animation of the universe with an ego-consciousness such as is assumed in" my proposition referred to by you, but you would call it, not God, but Brahma, world-soul, or great spirit; and yet you maintain that it would be subject to God. Or if this world-spirit is to be called God, then you maintain that there is something higher than God, and the belief in God is a matter of small concern. *Your* God is Law.

Our difference is to some extent a mere difference in the use of terms. I lean more to the Pantheistic conception of God than you do. The world-consciousness is subject to law, of course. And so is mine. God acts by law. And so does every man. A man's law by which his actions are governed is his character. And all God's behaviour is also of a very definite character.

But I do not limit the term God either to the world-ego and say that this world-ego is yet subject to universal law—neither do I apply the term exclusively to the universal law, and say that that is above all things. My God is both law and ego together. We see in man that his actions appear to be controlled by a conscious power, though that power itself works according to law. Why not in God also? Why divorce activity from consciousness in the macrocosm when in the microcosm they are inseparably united? I, Wilkinson, am not merely the laws that govern my actions, I am the conscious being also. I am I. And what is God? I am that I am. You may say that law is the superior part of my being; but it nevertheless is but a part, it is not the whole. And so with God.

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The belief in Brahma or the world-soul is, you say, a matter of small concern. Be it so, for the sake of argument. It is nevertheless a question of fact. The question is—what is God? what are the attributes of God? Is there law only? or is there consciousness as well?

The answer to this will, I feel, be found in the answer to the question, what is man? And there is one venerable old stumbling-block and one only which obscures the solution of both questions.

What is the relation between man's consciousness and man's actions? Has man's consciousness any power to interfere in the events of his life? If consciousness plays no part in our life, then also we may conclude that the universe could get on quite well without it.

The question is one in which it seems to me there is no room for opinion at all. It is a question to be decided by exact science—by mathematics.

When we find by observation a particular and constant relation between states of consciousness and events that follow them—when we find in an infinite number of instances that an event occurs immediately after the idea of the event had been formed in the mind of a conscious being, then we are justified in inferring that consciousness is a true cause of events—is capable of originating motion. Perhaps the *reductio ad absurdum* argument is even more forcible—try to imagine that all the events of the human world would have taken place just the same if consciousness had not been there.

Mathematicians and scientists generally have objected to this conclusion because it seems to them to be inconsistent with their pet version of the principle of the conservation of energy. That, however, is apriorism—an attitude of mind to be eschewed by scientists.

It is coming to be admitted by scientists, despite their *a priori* convictions that the movements of the animal world would not go on just the same if they were not subject to the control and direction of consciousness. It is coming to be admitted that consciousness is not a mere spectator of a lot of movements which are altogether beyond its control. Are the physical processes, asks Tyndall, complete in themselves, and would they go on just the same if consciousness were not involved? And the answer from which hard-pressed science finds no escape is—"No!"

There is another circumstance which hinders the acceptance of this idea of the connexion between consciousness and motion. At first the idea seems almost unthinkable. And although the unthinkableness of an idea is no proof that the idea is not true, still if any truth does seem unthinkable it is as well in the interests of science to get that unthinkableness removed.

In this case, I think, the unthinkableness arises from a wrong *a priori* notion of what motion actually is. If we make mere motion our first fundamental idea and then try to imagine that consciousness is a mode of motion—it is unthinkable, we can't do it. But it is easier to imagine that it is a property of all motion to be in some relation to or connexion with consciousness.

The idea of *force* as a connecting link between the two ideas of consciousness and motion somewhat assists us in imagining the association of the two.

The common conception of motion is simply change of place, and, truly, in the abstract, that is all it is. But why should any matter ever change its place? Let us give up the idea that it is an inherent property of matter to move. Let us imagine that there can be no motion without force, that is, something to cause motion—that a world could not have any motion in it unless it also had in it something that could cause motion—some force, or forces.

Now it is not difficult to conceive that some force is will—i. e., the effective wish of some conscious being. A conscious being or soul exerts will-force, and

thereby causes matter to move. That statement is intelligible. It expresses relations between mind, matter, force and motion which are thinkable. We do not identify motion and consciousness. We merely say that they have something in common, namely force.

It is not thinkable that a body merely by being first in one place and then in another could become conscious. But given consciousness, it is thinkable that an entity possessed of consciousness could in virtue of that attribute exert a force so as to move itself from one place to another, or so as to impart motion to another entity. Mere change of place is nothing. Why should an atom or entity become conscious by being in one situation in space rather than in another. But suppose that this change from one situation to another cannot be brought about but by the exertion of some definite agency or cause of motion, some x , some entity that corresponds to what we call force. This altered conception of the nature of motion introduces a new factor into the events of the world. We have not merely matter, first in one place and then in another, but besides, a something that causes that change of position from one place to another and without which the change of position could not occur. Motion in the abstract is nothing. It is no distinct entity. To speak of matter and motion only is not to speak of two things, but of one, namely matter, now in one place now in another. We have merely a change of state on the part of the one entity, matter. But to speak of matter and force is to speak of two things—matter and somewhat else. Very well then, given the distinct entity called force, may it not have any other attributes besides the one of causing motion? We can conceive, for instance, of its having some connexion with consciousness.

But admitting this connexion between consciousness and motion, admitting that animal movements can be altered and controlled by consciousness, we cannot halt here. From this conclusion yet another inevitably follows. There is yet another concession which scientists will find themselves forced to make to spiritual philosophy.

If consciousness can control motion then consciousness and motion must have essentially something in common. And it would be unreasonable to regard animal movements as an altogether exceptional case—to suppose that the connexion between motion and consciousness which is apparent in animal organisms is something accidental and at variance with the general order of things. To have a consistent world-conception we must suppose that all motion is either directly or indirectly associated with consciousness—that it has something to do with it—or has had at some previous period of its history, and is capable at any time of being put in connexion with it and brought under its control—that all motion has in it something essentially mental—in short that there never could be any motion which was altogether a thing apart from mind, that in a world in which there was no mind there would in consequence be no motion, as the two entities are parts of one whole.

This is not to say that all finite objects, rocks, stocks, etc., because they are full of internal motions have therefore consciousness such as man has; as you say, there is no consciousness in the planets as such. Yet in any grand system in which there is motion, we must infer that there is mind also which has something to do with that motion. No motion without mind—no motion but what has been and can be again connected with mind. And no mind but what produces motion.

This, to me, is *proof* of the existence of the cosmic soul—the great spirit—Brahma.

The only alternative theory is that some of the motion of the world is produced by mind, and that other motion never has had nor could have anything at all to do with mind. But this is contrary to monism; it gives us an inconsistent world conception; it involves an unwarranted multiplication of hypotheses—two kinds of motion. Either no motion at all has anything to do with mind, or all has.

The problem of spiritualism is to my mind, on its scientific side, principally a problem in mechanics. And it is from that point of view that I criticise the theories of all anti-spiritualists, including yourself.

I think I understand your position. Your God is law. Law governs the universe.

We have first the simple laws of mathematics—the multiplication table, the postulates and axioms of geometry. Then mechanical laws—the postulates and axioms and laws of the science of motion. Then physical laws—the laws of heat, chemistry, electricity, magnetism, gravity, etc. And finally æsthetic laws—or the laws of the operation of consciousness.

But let us just see what law is, from the point of view of mechanics.

Let us consider the universe, to start with, simply as matter in motion. Next we observe the various internal motions of the universe to be subject to certain laws.

Now if in any system of bodies in motion we find that the motions as a whole present a certain definite character—that they appear subject to certain definite laws or limitations and to constantly produce certain definite characteristic results—then we must infer (1) that those motions are subject to some controlling force or power and (2) that that controlling power itself is not dependent on those motions or a result of them, that relatively to them it is purely cause and not at all effect—what you call a *primum movens*—or rather the prime motor that is behind the *primum movens*.

This is a conclusion from which, to my mind, there is no escape; though you, in common as I know with most scientists and philosophers, object to it. But it strikes me with a force of conviction. I feel confident that it will always maintain itself against all attacks. I am not an apriorist. And yet one cannot but feel sometimes what Kant felt so strongly—the tremendous force of an *a priori* conviction. And I think in some cases it is simply the result of a sort of prophetic mental effort, an imperfectly expressed, embodied, or worked out process which exists in a con-

densed form somewhere in the back-ground of the mind—in short what Tyndall refers to as the scientific imagination : Still I want no man to accept proof on these grounds only—however confident I may be inwardly myself of being able to maintain my position. I will justify my confidence.

Now, if I understand you rightly, your contention is that in the case of the physical laws we have an instance of law, or determining influence, without any *primum movens* ; and therefore why not also in the case of consciousness. In its relation to mechanics,—in its relation, I mean, to the movements of bodies,—in the manner in which it determines motion, you place consciousness on the same footing as the physical laws. And you contend that the hypothesis of any *primum movens* is in either case unwarranted.

Now this absence of any *primum movens* in the various movements of unconscious matter is just the very thing that you scientists must prove. So far it is pure assumption ; and, to my mind, all indications are decidedly against it. The mere fact of the movements of matter being subject to any laws at all is to my mind proof that there is a *primum movens* somewhere.

It is true that reason demands that we should reduce the number of assumed causes of motion to the least possible. We must not assume anything more than is really warranted by observed facts. It is in recognition of this principle that philosophers have framed the theory, largely backed up by science, of the interchangeability of all the various forces of nature. We thus do not require a separate cause of motion for each observed physical law. We have not one cause of the movements attributed to electricity, and another cause for the movements attributed to gravity, and another for those which appear to be produced by heat, etc., etc. But all these apparent forces, or causes of motion, are reduced to one—namely motion itself. Heat, electricity, gravity, chemical attraction and repulsion, etc., are all regarded as merely modes of motion—not as causes of motion which are themselves independent of motion. They are most of them regarded as different kinds of ethereal vibration. They have, it is true, certain peculiarities which distinguish them from motion in general. For instance they produce phenomena of attraction and repulsion subject to the law of inverse squares. We have, however, no positive reason for believing that these peculiarities are not explicable as merely the results of motion, or that they do independently condition these motions.

But admitting all that—what is our position ?

We have not completely eliminated all such thing as first cause from the motions of matter. We have largely reduced the number of apparent causes by breaking down the distinction between mechanical laws and physical laws. But it is a false idea to imagine that this leaves us with nothing but matter and motion—matter and change of place—in short, matter only, now in one place and now in another.

It is very evident that there is matter and a very definite something else besides—not mere change of place, something more definite than that. There is this :

The changes of place are *still* subject to certain very definite laws. What about Newton's laws of motion? Why is it that to every action there is an equal and opposite reaction? Why on earth should there be? Where does the reaction come from? Is it caused by the elasticity of bodies? What then is elasticity?—why are bodies more or less elastic? Again, why is it that when elasticity is perfect the angle of incidence is equal to the angle of reflexion? What a coarse complicated jumble of assumptions there is in what passes among mathematicians as the proof of this theorem! There is no proof at all. The movements of matter are found by observation to be subject to certain laws, and it is also found that certain of these laws follow necessarily from certain other laws. But that is not proof. You may take any observed law as an assumption, and deduce the other observed laws from it. But some one of them has to be simply assumed; and whichever one you take, you have no further explanation for it—you have simply to accept it as a fact. In text-books of mechanics the law that the angle of incidence is equal to the angle of reflexion is deduced from the law that every action has an equal and opposite reaction (together with a few other assumptions), and the latter is regarded as too obvious to need demonstration. But it is not at all more obvious why every action should have an equal and opposite reaction than it is why the angle of incidence should equal the angle of reflexion. And we might just as well have started with the latter fact and have deduced the former from it. There is no proof in either case—merely different interrelated facts. The so-called proof of Euclid's prop. 32, book I. stands on a similar footing. All these little glossed-over flaws in our account of the universe point to the existence of hidden things that we know nothing at all about. And the hidden thing in the mechanical universe, to my mind, can be nothing else than your *primum movens*, with some distinct cause of motion behind it.

Something is hidden too behind the first and second laws of motion. What is inertia? Why should it take more force to move a large mass than to move a small one?

At what junctures that cause of motion comes into action, and what it is, might be hard to say. It is not necessary to imagine two distinct causes of motion, one that controls movements in which consciousness is involved, and one which controls movements in which it is not. The latter might be in some way more or less distantly or indirectly connected with, or related to, or arising from, the former. But in any case, the presence of law in the movements of the inanimate world, to my mind, indicates clearly the existence somewhere of some real cause of motion.

But again—let all that alone. Even suppose for the sake of argument that the *primum movens* and the first cause behind it *have* been eliminated from the movements of the inanimate world—how has it been done? Simply by breaking down the barrier between physical law and mechanical law—by reducing all the apparent forces or causes of motion in the physical world to motion pure and simple. If there is no *primum movens* or first cause in the movements of bodies under the in-

fluence of the hypothetical forces, gravity, etc., it is because all such movements are really simply the necessary mechanical resultants of previous movements of some sort in matter. That is the only way in which you can eliminate the *primum movens*. And the peculiarities of these movements can only be attributed to the extremely complex internal structure of these simple looking bodies, and the consequently extremely complex nature of the movements that result in these electric, magnetic, and other phenomena.

But you, for one, I know will not be prepared to explain away the apparent control of consciousness in the movements of conscious beings by any similar process of reasoning. You will not admit that the movements of all conscious beings are in some way, despite appearances, the necessary mechanical resultants of some previous movements of matter. To do that is to deny that consciousness has any control over the movements of conscious beings,—to deny that consciousness determines those movements in any way or has anything to do with them,—to place consciousness, as did Professor Huxley, in the position of a mere spectator.

It is impossible to lump consciousness in the same category with the hypothetical forces, gravity, electricity, heat, etc. The latter may be all mere modes of motion. But nobody can pretend to believe that consciousness is. Consciousness is not a hypothetical force. It is not a hypothetical anything. We do not assume its existence for the sake of argument. It is not an *x* that stands for the imaginary cause of some unexplained phenomena. Our knowledge of its existence is based on independent grounds. Electricity and the rest may all disappear into mere motion, but consciousness will not go into the melting pot. Consciousness is consciousness. We know that it exists. The word stands for a very definite and real idea. The question as to whether or not consciousness is a force—i. e., controls motion—is quite a separate question altogether from the question of its real existence. And to the former question there can be only two answers,—yes or no. There is no wriggling out of the dilemma. - And the many who will persist in trying to do so only make—I say it wholly in sorrow—unedifying spectacles of themselves,—instance, Professor Lloyd Morgan in his article on "Animal Automatism and Consciousness" in the October number of *The Monist* for 1896.

I think people have only got to realise how narrow the issue is to make them choose what I should call the right horn of the dilemma,—i. e., not the wrong one. It is because they do not realise this that they invent all these hollow theories which seem to avoid the question. Professor Huxley and Antonio Llano are, I believe, the only men known to fame who have been brave enough to decisively choose the wrong horn. And even Huxley still retained ideas which were inconsistent with his choice. And I doubt not Antonio Llano does too. In my opinion he was rewarded for the honesty of his choice by a victory over you in your discussion with him on the possibility of ethics. Yet I cannot believe that any man would not draw back when he fully realised where the wrong choice led him to.

And to the man who can see, all the seeming difficulties and objections vanish

away like mist. The principle of the conservation of energy is not at stake. The amount of energy in the universe is still constant, because it is infinite. It appears to us in two forms: (1) Force, which is an attribute of the conscious principle in the universe, whatever that is; and (2) *vis viva*, or mv^2 , which is a property of moving matter. No additions or subtractions caused by a transfer from one to the other can make any difference to either, because both are infinite. We all have constant evidence every day of the transformation of energy from form (1) to form (2); and for aught we know to the contrary there may be somewhere in some utterly unknown departments of the universe transformations from form (2) to form (1). But be that as it may; there is no escape from the conclusion that conscious beings are able to initiate motion. From that it follows that consciousness and motion are, in essence, indissolubly connected. And that is the proof that the God of the universe is more than Law. He is also Brahma—the Great Spirit—the World Soul. And, if by person we mean a being with definite feeling and knowledge and with will, then we have proved the personality of God.

And *is* the existence of Brahma a matter of no concern? I think I am willing to admit just about everything that you assert about God in your article on the Superpersonal God in *The Open Court* for February, 1897. It is in what you deny about him that I cannot agree.

Man is the highest product of evolution; and he is so principally in virtue of his possessing the faculty of consciousness in a very highly developed state. If God is simply Law and not Brahma, he is in that respect something inferior to ourselves. Being the highest types of conscious beings we want something higher still to look up to. Brahma is the ideal prototype of all conscious beings. What are we without him? The children of things inferior to ourselves—the lineal descendants of monkeys, frogs, plants, and rocks. Besides the loneliness of such a situation is there not a ring of something unphilosophical about it? How can there be a progressive evolution towards a high type unless there has been some previous involution from the high type? Can we conceive that conscious organisms could have reached the height of man by evolution unless a real actual perfect type had been in existence from everlasting? Consciousness and law are both attributes of man. He acts by consciousness, and his actions are governed by law. But are the laws of his being the only divine attribute that he has? Is not his consciousness also a spark from the divine? Does not the universal Law from which we derive the laws of our lives also govern a universal consciousness from which our consciousness is derived? Why divorce activity from consciousness in the macrocosm when in the microcosm they are indissolubly united.

I do not see that any of the attributes you ascribe to the superpersonal God are sufficient reason for withholding from him the term personal. I look at it this way. Superpersonal means more than personal,—i. e., personal, only more so. God cannot be more than personal without being personal. I think you almost, if not quite, assent to this yourself, for you say that the superpersonal God is not de-

prived of personality, but embodies all the conditions of personality. In fact if you hold to that statement I think you must give in to me about the consciousness of God ; for I maintain that consciousness is one of the conditions of personality—in fact the chief condition.

I agree that God is not *a* God ; he is God. But when I say that he is personal I do not mean that he is *a* God. Personal does not mean finite, present in one place at one time, transient. Nor does it mean merely definite in character. Rocks and stones are definite in character. The meaning of the word person is to me a being of a definite æsthetic character—a being possessed of definite feeling—definite mind. Such is God. And such, to a less degree is man. We are imperfect persons. Our characters are not so very definite, not crystallised, not solidified. We are changeable. A person of what is called strong personality is less changeable. But God is the perfect person.

And not only do you allow us no real existent Brahma to look up to, but nothing lasting to look forward to—nothing but final absorption into the lower state whence we came. *God* is immortal—the universe is immortal—of course it is ; we all know that. But *we* are all to die. We stand on the summit of evolution with the certain knowledge that in the progress (?) of years every one of our kind on this planet will be as if they never had been. It is sound enough morality, as far as it goes, to say we should all live for each other. But it is the hollowest, shallowest, and most utterly illogical philosophy to seek in that idea an explanation of the problem of life. Why have we been evolved as individuals, why all the pain, what is attained—if we are all to be at last wiped out ? I live for you, and you for me ; but the problem of life is still unsolved. You are preaching a bankrupt philosophy—a philosophy with the bottom knocked out of it. How much longer are you going on imagining that you find satisfaction in it ?

And what about our aspirations for a wider life outside this little globe in space ? There is life like ours in other planets. But that is not much satisfaction to us if we are never to have any direct connexion with it. And the same is true of every inhabitant of every lonely planet. Are none of us ever to know our neighbors. You have no big plan of the universe to offer us, in which each planet fulfils its necessary part and has its own especial *raison d'être*. What are they for, these planets ? There are those of us who seem to have learnt the lessons of the life here on this planet. We can take a broad survey of the whole of it, what it is and what it would seem to lead to. We have gone through the school and reached the highest form. Is there no outer wider life into which we can pass ? Nothing but the certain knowledge of that final death which is—somewhen—to overwhelm our little planet and all in it ?

W. E. AYTON. WILKINSON.

EDITORIAL REMARKS ON MR. WILKINSON'S ARTICLE.

There are a great number of people who are bound to have $\S$ God that is like themselves, an individual being possessed of an ego consciousness, with sentiments

like ours and pursuing plans of his own, which would render his nature a case of exact analogy to our own mental make-up. Mr. Wilkinson is one of them, and his plea for God as possessed of an ego consciousness with an individual organisation is very forcible and impressive. But after all, his theory proves untenable and will only reveal the weak points of anthropotheism, i. e., of that view of God which looks upon God as an ego consciousness, having definite feelings, endowed with knowledge, thinking successive thoughts as we do, and finally arriving at a decision to be carried into effect.

Mr. Wilkinson rightly combats the psychology of the late Professor Huxley who held that consciousness, being a mere spectator, is of no consequence; but he is mistaken when he thinks that consciousness can be regarded as a force, as a cause of motion. The tangled skein of errors can be unravelled by pointing out the truth from which his thoughts start and by searching for the fallacy on which they switch off into the assumption of a metaphysical *primum movens*.

We perfectly agree with Mr. Wilkinson that:

"All motion is either directly or indirectly associated with consciousness."

His arguments, however, become unclear when he speaks of force. He says:

"The idea of force as a connecting link between the two ideas of consciousness and motion somewhat assists us in imagining the association of the two."

Force is defined as "something that could cause motion," and then "consciousness is defined as a force." Mr. Wilkinson says:

"A conscious being or soul exerts will-force and thereby causes matter to move."

We would represent the facts as follows: Consciousness is a term denoting the awareness of certain states of our own existence, and motion means a change of place. Force is measured in terms of motion and mass, being conceived as the state of strain or stress that does or can induce motion. The "force" of a body in motion, as the term is popularly used, is called kinetic energy, the "force" of a body at rest and under a stress is called potential energy. Consciousness, being a state of awareness, is neither potential nor kinetic energy, it is no force at all, but it is simple awareness, a phenomenon of quite a different order. It is no mechanical phenomenon but a psychical condition which is commonly called feeling.

Mr. Wilkinson's mistake consists in confusing two abstractions of a different order. Consciousness is a phenomenon belonging to the subjective phases of our experience, while motion is an objective phenomenon. Feelings can be felt only by the feeling of feelings; and this feeling of feelings is the condition of our self-awareness. Feelings find expression in motions, and these motions can be watched, but the feelings themselves, feelings as feelings, are purely subjective; they cannot be seen, or observed by others. We have good reasons to believe that every feeling is the psychical accompaniment of a definite kind of a brain-motion, and we might, at least in theory, be able to know which brain-motion represents pain, which joy, which calm thoughts, and which any other kind of sentiment. But even then if we

inspected the machinery of the brain, it would be impossible to see feelings; we should see motions only, we should be confronted solely with objective phenomena; we should see no feelings, no sentiments, no joys, no pains, for they are purely subjective. Now we assume, according to the monistic doctrine which is commonly accepted by scientists, that matter, motion, consciousness are abstractions from reality, and not things in themselves, that things possess many qualities, they are material, they are active, i. e., they exhibit mechanical phenomena, and sometimes they are sentient, and the subjective side of sentiency is an exact counterpart of the observable objective phenomena.

Two mistakes have been made by philosophers, they have treated abstract notions as separate beings and believe that there are feelings which exist in ghostlike independence, or they identify the various abstractions where they are found in connexion, and call thoughts brain-motions, imagining that thoughts consist either of matter or are purely mechanical phenomena. The actual state of things is this: While an idea is being thought, the brain is in a state of activity. The idea consists in the significance of a sentiment. The sentiment is the subjective aspect of that which objectively considered is a cerebral motion.

The motion of the brain indicates that a commotion of the soul takes place, the significance of which exactly tallies with the form of the nervous excitement.

After these explanations it is apparent that the mechanical order of things remains continuous and is not interrupted by consciousness as a cause of motion; and yet consciousness is not, for that reason, an irrelevant factor in the world.

We must bear in mind that causation (least of all mental) does not depend upon the amount of mechanical motion but upon its form. A lock is opened not by force but by the right key which fits to the keyhole and lifts the lever. In a similar way, ideas find response in the minds of the people addressed. They are communicated by very simple mechanical means, viz., by air-sounds, called words, the significance of which is the same to all who know the language. Let us illustrate this in the instance pictured in a poetic *genre* picture of Lenau, who portrays the carousal of banditti in an inn of the Hungarian Pusta. Gypsies play the fiddle, some bandits dance, others drink, and the captain watches. But now his ear perceives the trot of distant horses, indicating the approach of soldiers. He gives the signal of alarm, and the noise of the revelling banditti is hushed. They take to their horses and disappear in the darkness of the Pusta. The concatenation of cause and effect is throughout as mechanical as are the motions of a machine, but the efficiency of the signal depends upon its significance which is constituted by all the recollections connected with the word. The mental element, i. e., the significance of words, is not a force that creates energy but is the meaning of the air-sounds, and this meaning wherever understood consists in a state of mind which imparts direction to the energy stored up in brain and muscle. It is not a motion or cause of motion, but corresponds to the form of the key and the lock. The speaking of a word and the listening to it takes a very small amount of energy, but

the significance of the words which is the reason why the words find response depends upon a definite form and is not a force, yet it may be accessory in stirring the energy of a whole nation and all its various dynamic resources of steam-engines and the gun powder of its artillery. Thus the mechanical energy of a spark is insignificant, while the explosion of a powder magazine is exorbitant, yet as the spark does not produce the mechanical energy which it sets free, so an idea does not create the energy to which it gives a new direction.

Ideas which loom up in the consciousness of men are not forces, and consciousness is the subjective aspect of a brain commotion, but for that reason ideas, far from being irrelevant, are the most important realities of life, and consciousness is the reflector in which they are actualised

So much to correct Mr. Wilkinson's view as to the shortcomings of the scientific conception of consciousness and his own theory which assumes that consciousness is capable of originating motion. I might proceed further and show how an idea depends on the form of a sensation or sentiment and not on the atoms in which it is thought; that the continuity of man's personality results from a preservation of form and not from an identity of any substance, and finally, that a reproduction of form means a rebirth of soul, for form is not a nonentity but the all-important factor of the world. Form in itself is the essential condition of things spiritual, and that continuity of form is a reality even in the flux of matter is proved by the continuity of consciousness which is preserved in spite of the constant metabolism of the body. Memory is a preservation of form, and we know ourselves to remain the same although all material particles of our body have changed, and we are obliged to renew constantly the supply of the sources of our energy needed for the sustenance of life. But we cannot discuss these subjects without writing a long essay on psychology. The main question at present is whether or not God is an individual being, a concrete ego-soul of the world, an *anima mundi*, thinking successive thoughts as we do and arriving at decisions like ours in every respect, except that he is greater, wiser, and infinitely more powerful than a man.

The existence of such a world-soul is not very probable, although I am not prepared to say that it is impossible, but granted that it existed, I should not confer on it the name God. The mere thought of it is sufficient for refutation. This world-soul would be an individual creature subject to evolution, conditioned by the eternal laws of existence and bound to respect the unalterable principles of right and wrong. This world-soul, taking now for argument's sake its existence for granted, has apparently enough to do in keeping the whole body of the universe in a state of health and cannot trouble itself about the personal welfare of the innumerable smaller beings that people the various limbs of his organism as bacilli inhabit a human being. The best argument that speaks in favor of this conception of an individual world-soul-god is the discovery of organisms smaller than we ourselves in our own system :

"For little fleas have lesser fleas
 Upon their back to bite 'em,
 And lesser fleas still lesser fleas
 And so *ad infinitum*."

But what comfort can the flea derive from the idea that the world which he inhabits is as much an organism as he himself? Both, after all, are creatures, and neither is a God. An All-being would be an enormously big creature, still it would be a creature subject to error, failure, disappointment, sin, and suffering as much as any minor creature that lives in its bowels.

I do not wish to repeat myself in this reply to Mr. Wilkinson's criticism, especially as the last number of *The Monist* contains an article of mine on the same subject. I would only request the reader to bear in mind, first, that law is a convenient but in certain respects a misleading term, for those eternal uniformities which constitute the cosmic order; secondly, that these uniformities appear in their scientific formulation very dry and abstract, but in reality they are effective realities whose life is not like that of organisms subject to origin and decay, but everlasting and immutable. If they are said to be omnipresent, it means that they are here and everywhere, omnipresence does not mean that they are nowhere. Thirdly, we should mind that those eternal norms of right, of truthfulness, of purity of heart, are not less real than are the laws of gravitation. Fourthly, this omnipresence of God should not be interpreted in the sense of the old-fashioned pantheism which identifies God and the world. Although God and the world are separate, they are not one and the same thing; they are different. The Allhood of existence, its omnipresent formative feature is not tantamount with an All-being, i. e., the sum total of all things. Fifthly, God is not a vague generality but is possessed of a definite and well determined character. He exhibits a clearly pronounced suchness which is the ultimate standard of morality, of goodness, of right. In this sense we see a justification of the traditional dogma of the personality of God. God consists of all those features which constitute the personality of man, endowing him with rationality and moral ideals. But while we may speak of the system of divine eternalities as a person, we must insist that the personality of God does not mean individuality, for which reason we prefer to characterise God as superpersonal. His personality is of a higher kind than man's personality; it is an eternal and omnipresent personality, while man's personality is the personality of an individual being limited in time and space. Finally, consider that man is by dint of his reason a more or less perfect incarnation of the eternal in nature; he has originated in the image of God and is God as reflected in consciousness. Therefore while we may be the lineal descendants of monkeys, frogs, and amoebas, we are still the children of God. The eternal that permeates all transient phenomena has taken abode in man's soul; and this eternal which is in us constitutes our very soul. Our bodies have originated through the modification of the bodies of lower animals; but this modification has been effected through the omnipresent potencies of the eternal in

nature, of the creative and formative Deity, of the Logos that was in the Beginning.

Shall we, being more or less an incarnation of God and an actualisation of the eternal, be afraid of death? No, not when we have understood the full significance of this truth. Death dissolves our bodies; death terminates the activity of our earthly career; it does away with sufferings and all the tribulations of life. But the formal part of our being, the mould in which we have been cast, remains undestroyed.

Now, having stated my view of the situation and having pointed out some of the most flagrant mistakes of Mr. Wilkinson's conception of God, I cannot help adding a postscript in which I would urge Mr. Wilkinson to stick to his God conception so long as he is incapable of perceiving the deeper truth of a more philosophical interpretation of facts. The dogmas of religious tradition are not untrue, but expressed in parables. He who discards the parable as untrue is apt to think that it is meaningless. The babe that cannot as yet digest meat should not become dissatisfied with the milk, else it will starve. And, on the other hand, there is nothing wrong with the milk when the adult is advised to live on a more substantial diet.

P. C.

MR. LUTOSLAWSKI'S "PLATO."

Mr. Lutoslawski's reply raises a different issue from that which I intended to make in the review to which he objects. I am not concerned to deny Mr. Lutoslawski's cleverness, industry, and erudition, and I can cheerfully subscribe to many of the flattering things said by the critics whom he quotes. The true interpretation of the Platonic philosophy and the value of any given attempt at such an interpretation are perhaps matters of subjective opinion. The translation, fair paraphrase, or meaning of particular Platonic *loci* is or should be generally a matter of fact. The "fact," then, of which I spoke is that Mr. Lutoslawski positively misapprehends many Platonic passages and strains or perverts the fair meaning of very many more. In support of this contention I cited by chapter and verse a considerable number of passages. To meet my criticism Mr. Lutoslawski must show that these passages are correctly translated, or, if he prefers the expression, "interpreted" or "applied." But his answer refers to only one passage, *Timaeus* 28 A. He says that he did not intend for a translation the interpretation which he twice gives of this passage. I will not cavil on that point. The interpretation is wrong, and the passage does not tend to establish the thesis in support of which it is cited except on the wrong interpretation. Mr. Lutoslawski remembers his *Gorgias* too well to expect a Platonist to be overcome by a cloud of witnesses, especially if their testimony does not bear on the point in issue, which, I repeat, is the correctness of Mr. Lutoslawski's interpretations of specific passages. I positively affirm that his book contains many misstatements of fact and a large number of interpretations which are erroneous whether they be translations or not. I have cited several of them. It will be easy to cite more when these have been considered.

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO.

PAUL SHOREY.