

all-wise, and all-powerful Creator,—a God immanent in nature, by whom all things exist and are upheld, and in whom all creatures live, move, and have their being. Evolution as a mode of the Creator may be a tenable hypothesis, and will doubtless be proven true in some form; but it can teach us nothing of the causes which underlie nature; it may give us the "how," but is silent as to the "why." The old question of the ancients, "Which was first, the egg or the hen?" is as pertinent to-day as ever. The difficulty is not eliminated, though it may be obscured, by separating antecedent from consequent by an infinite series of means and by infinite time. *Ex nihilo, nihil fit.*

I would say in conclusion, that it is possible that I have misunderstood some of the views expressed by Doctor Carus in his article; and, if so, allow me here to disavow any intention of misstating his position. Some statements, indeed, I have been unable to reconcile as consistent with other positions taken. For example, he says:

"When we understand whence we come we learn also whither we shall fare. We come from the souls of the past, and our soul will continue in the souls of the future. There is the same identity between the souls of the past and the future as there is between the soul-life of my own yesterday and of my own to-morrow. There is a continuity of form, and there is a preservation and transference of the various particular forms which constitute our suchness, our character, our personality. Former souls are not strangers to me. They are soul of my soul and parts of the same spirit-life which at the present day pulses in my brain. Nor shall I remain a stranger to the souls to come. There, within the souls of future generations, not somewhere in the sky, is the kingdom of God of which Christ spoke. Heaven is not local, not material, but spiritual. In the soul-life of mankind are the mansions in which there is room immeasurable for all of us. There we shall be preserved with all our peculiar idiosyncrasies in our personal identity."

If consciousness and memory be extinguished at death, how can there be the "same identity between the souls of the past and the future that there is between the soul-life of my own yesterday and my own to-morrow"? As applied to individuals, this would seem impossible. If applied to nature or a people as a whole, it would likewise seem impossible. I can imagine something of an analogy between the birth, growth, decay of a nation or people and that of an individual; but it is a mere analogy. I cannot imagine a national consciousness, except in a figurative sense, as applied to the sum of the individual consciousness of all the members of the state. Likewise of memory and will, as applied to national life,—the mere synchronous action of individual wills and consciousnesses. And that "we shall be preserved with all our peculiar idiosyncrasies in our personal identity," seems inconsistent with the destruction of consciousness, will, and memory, the very essentials of personality.

CHARLES H. CHASE.

#### IN REPLY TO JUDGE CHARLES H. CHASE.

Judge Charles H. Chase enters into a great number of questions of physics and metaphysics into which I do not dare to follow him; nor do I care to, for these questions have nothing whatever to do with the philosophical problem as to the

nature of God and soul. We may define matter as the sense-perceived, and in that sense would have to deny the law of the conservation of matter. For we can very well understand that this crude sense-perceptible material, viz., gross matter, has originated by condensation from some thinner material, such as we understand ether to be. Whether or not the ultimate unit of material bodies can be analysed into atoms, I do not know. I have my grave doubts as to the existence of these philosophical atoms. I only know that the atom of the chemist is a unit representing the proportions in which the elements combine. The chemical atom as an arithmetical unit of proportion is an undeniable fact, but the philosophical atom as a concrete little body, be it in the shape of a mathematical figure or of an ether vortex, is a pure assumption which for certain purposes recommends itself, but is after all purely fictitious and a product of the scientific imagination. I am very careful to avoid all these hypotheses of modern science, and if ever I should introduce them I would do so only as illustrations or as statements subject to revision.

However careful I try to be in avoiding positive statements concerning hypothetical physics and fictitious metaphysics, I would not hesitate to reject such traditional views of matter and spirit as reify abstract terms, by distinguishing between imaginary things-in-themselves and the properties with which these things are said to be endowed.<sup>1</sup> Judge Chase believes that when we take from matter the properties which we ascribe to it, matter would be no more, but still he adds, "there is the substance (*sub-stans*) remaining." Similarly Judge Chase believes force to be some independent thing different from energy of any kind, and this force is mysteriously supposed to be the cause of motion, whatever that may mean. My views of physics are so radically different that I should have to stop Judge Chase on the definition of almost every word he uses.

The main question on which every religious and philosophical difficulty hinges is the nature of the ego. I am far from minimising the importance of the ego. But I understand that my conception of the ego differs from that of Judge Chases, and I must insist that the importance of the ego is not constituted by its mere concrete existence, by its "thisness," but by its character and nature, viz., by its "suchness." Whether or not an ego or a human personality has any moral worth or not, depends on the motives by which it is swayed and the purposes which it pursues. That is to say, the worth of any personality depends on its form, and form is suchness, not thisness.

Consciousness, no doubt, is, as Judge Chase claims, "the fundamental fact of all knowledge." But consciousness is not an unanalysable fact. Consciousness is of a greatly complex nature; and the subjectivity which appears in consciousness is undoubtedly too of paramount importance; but we can learn to appreciate the nature of consciousness only by studying the objective forms of which the subjective processes of consciousness are concomitant phenomena. Introspection is

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<sup>1</sup> See the author's article "On Things in Themselves" in *The Monist*, Vol. 2, p. 225.

very valuable for a comprehension of objective events. But *vice versa*, observation of objective phenomena is the best method for acquiring a clear interpretation of our own subjective nature.

The main contention of practical importance of Judge Chase is that "one person by mere effort of will may call another who is miles away"; that he can transfer his soul and examine carefully distant premises, etc., etc.; in a word, that phenomena such as have been investigated by the members of the Society for Psychical Research are taken for granted. Here I cannot follow Judge Chase and can only say I must wait until some actual evidence of such facts has been forthcoming. All I can say at present is that all the cases which I took the trouble to investigate were either founded on insufficient evidence, or were made by men who, judging from the accounts, were themselves obviously uncritical. Even famous men such as Wallace, Crookes, and others, have occasionally developed an astounding credulity. The best cases that have come to my knowledge are instances of palpable self-delusion in which chance coincidences enter now and then.

I conclude these remarks by stating that I should have to repeat an exposition of my whole philosophy in order to show all the differences which obtain between my own views and Judge Chase's arguments. If we understand the "how," we know the "why." There is no other "why." The question as to the priority of the egg and the chicken has in my opinion been answered long ago and does not contain any metaphysical puzzle;<sup>1</sup> that the effects should be greater than the causes producing them is quite natural as soon as we understand that the law of causation is a law of transformation. The equation between cause and effect is merely an equation of the total amount of matter and energy before and after, but it is not an equation between the worth of the product and the labor by which the result has been gained. It is true that the stream cannot rise higher than its source, but it is also true that evolution is not a stream, for evolution is constantly rising higher and higher. The labor of the present generation is added to former generations and thus an actual progress is produced in the most natural way.

It may or may not be that Judge Chase has misunderstood some of the views expressed by me in former articles, but one thing is sure that unless he understands the makeup of our present consciousness from the soul-life of the past, and unless he realises that we to-day are the product of the exertions of past generations, he will not be able to understand how the present will continue in the future as an indelible factor of all the times to come. So long as he still adheres to his wish of having a soul that consists of spiritual substance I do not venture to expect him to appreciate the deep importance of the preservation of the soul in the sense in which I understand it. So long as his conception of the soul is its thisness, not suchness, and its existence as a substance, he will not appreciate that the preservation of its suchness will involve the preservation of its idiosyncrasy and personal identity. P. C.

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<sup>1</sup> See *The Open Court*, No. 31.