

THE NAKED REALITY

BY HENRI VANDERBYLL

TO THE question, What has man accomplished during the hundred thousand years or so of his planetary existence? there is but a single answer. Tell us not that he has built cities and empires, that he has founded society and government, that he has developed a moral and an aesthetic nature. He has done these things because he has gradually developed from a self-centered creature into a more or less universe-conscious individual. The human soul, in its first budding stages, owned but few material, intellectual and moral paraphernalia. The world in which it was active was altogether too narrow to contain a larger number. It centered about the physical individual. And if there be anything that is satisfied to dwell in narrow places, it is the physical self, provided, of course, the necessary sustenance be within easy reach. When the human soul began to blossom, and the light from a larger external world began to reach it, man scattered the paraphernalia of his self in many and varied directions. The paraphernalia in question revealed the fact that his being had awakened, that it had arisen from not-consciousness, and that it had become capable of hearing the voice of immensity. As a result of that awakening, as a result of his becoming more or less world-conscious, man built his cities and empires, established his laws and his governments, adopted his standards of morals and ethics, counted his atoms and his electrons, and peered through his telescopes into the depths of the universe. His accomplishments in material, scientific and moral directions are of secondary importance, and are necessary expressions belonging to his fundamental achievement, the gradual discovery of the external world. The soul received impressions from surroundings that grew from immediacy to a cosmos as the inner being became more and more capable of vibrating to the presence of a world. After the soul had *felt* its

presence, the intellect proceeded to encase it in a frame of reason. The frame of reason in which man hung the external world constituted the truth of existence. It is hardly necessary to observe that the truth of existence was subject to change as the wider external world of which man became gradually aware needed a larger frame. Nor is it difficult to understand that the self-centered creature, i. e., the physical man, could not possibly approach truth. For it was only a very insignificant part of the external world about which he reasoned. The universe was centered mainly in his self.

The one answer to the question just propounded is this: Man has been constantly busy, whether willingly or unwillingly, whether knowingly or unknowingly, discovering the world that surrounds his self. True, he has been busy doing a great number and variety of other things, of which fact the completely changed face of the earth is witness. But all his activities have been both the effect and the cause of his intellectual journeying in the external world. His inner being with all its varied paraphernalia, important and unimportant, sublime and trashy, has slowly lit its surroundings with the glow of intelligence. And, which is of supreme importance, it has gradually intensified the searchlight of understanding, as a result of which the unintelligent darkness of the universe finally receded to unimaginably far regions. The true story of mankind is the wonderful story of its intellectual excursions into the external world. Historical facts are mere local dashes of color that tend to draw the observer's attention from the color scheme of the whole. From them, alone, we fail to gather hints as to the possible purpose of human life upon this earth, and as to man's ultimate goal and destiny in this universe. Considering them, only, we study waves which we do not know to belong to an ocean.

A remarkable fact about the external world, into the darkness of which man has sent his increasingly penetrating rays of understanding, is the following: One hesitates to assign boundaries to it. We are referring to the *actual* external world, and not merely to the one in which the individual is physically active, nor to the one in which he thinks that he dwells. The average individual's world of physical contact is limited to a state or a province, within the boundaries of which he meets with experiences necessary for his immediate further development. Reason, however, as we have already pointed out, jumps the barriers of the physical, and builds up a world in which the individual thinks that he lives. Now, the world in which the individual thinks that he lives is limited in accordance

with his ability to be aware of not-self. Another name for that which is not-self is, the external world, and still another, the universe. Individual existence upon this planet, whether it represent the first stages of mere physical life or the less immature conditions of human intelligence, is an unconscious attempt at sounding the depths of the thing that lies outside of the self. The schemes of nature rest upon the self-evident truth that the universe does not exist until intelligence discovers it. What, indeed, is an existence which is not known, either by itself or by another self?

The actual external world, i. e., the universe, is a thing of greater mystery than we at first imagine. Few among us accept it at its real value, and most of us fail to place any value whatsoever upon it. We lack the imagination necessary for the realization that it is the thing which knocks at the portals of our soul with the eternal question: What am I? Our view is limited to immediacy, to events that affect us with their direct touch, to objects that are painfully or pleurably near. We say, It is life that causes us to think, meaning the narrow life that reflects and reveals our individuality. But what is life thus conceived? It is a mere abstraction. It is a thing unreal as a result of the independence and the originality with which we endow it. Our limited view cuts out activities, and causes and effects, from an infinite world of activity and of cause and effect. Our reflections on that cut-out portion produce false conclusions and theories that are founded on assumed premises. Whatever is and happens exists and occurs in a mighty large world, provided we place beings and events in their actual setting. The ability to be aware of not-self discovers the immensity of the world, and destroys the imagined boundaries which thought of self causes a handful of beings and an insignificant number of events to be encircled. It hears a shout of anger rise up from the earth, and lose itself in the vastness of the universe. It sees the dim light of false glory vainly reach out for the boundaries of existence. It sees human folly drift like the thinnest, haziest smoke, and soon vanish in an overwhelming preponderance of space. Place that which we call life, and which we so carefully fence in for purposes of analysis and investigation, in a stellar universe, and it becomes something worth studying. Place any thing, being, or event, in the center of a world where a billion suns rise and a billion dawns blush, and the ease with which we generally philosophize is more or less paralyzed in the presence of mystery.

The supreme facts of existence, we fear, do not disturb us much. We do not care to be disturbed by them. We are conveniently deaf to their whispers, preferring to be philosophical in a tiny corner of immensity rather than in immensity itself. But the trouble is, that we cannot be true philosophers and leave the immensity of things out of our considerations. That is exactly what our ancestors, groping in their intellectual darkness, did. The result we, of course, know. Their theories of existence are laughable. They, furthermore, had the peculiar habit of ignoring facts of nature and of replacing them by imaginary ones. They hid the naked reality of the external world with a veil of phantasy-built mythology. As a consequence, they did not behold a real, concrete universe, but a dream-world. That peculiar habit of theirs we, ourselves, have not as yet completely mastered. We very much dislike considering the external world a real something, preferring to hide its nakedness behind a veil similar to that employed by the ancients. But our veil of imagination is immense in view of the fact that the thing which it covers is inconceivably large.

We venture to suggest, however, that the veil in question is a superfluous addition to existence—not merely a superfluous but indeed an impossible one. We arrive at that opinion by allowing our imagination to travel a little beyond the distance which the human intellect has traveled on its journeys through the external world. We say, a little, for our imagination lacks the experience and the courage to proceed much further. It is but a short while ago, comparatively speaking, that the imagination of a Columbus was ridiculed by his contemporaries who were incapable of sending their thoughts as far away from home and from self as he was capable of sending them. It is with difficulty that humanity finally imagined the solar system with its planets circling at inconceivable distances about their central sun. Imagination expresses nothing more nor less than the ability to forget self, and to be aware of the world of not-self. That ability is as yet not very pronounced. It is therefore that only a very small part of the external world is a real and concrete thing for us. The balance of it is an existence whose vague probability we prefer to supplant with the finality of the deity of our conception. Perhaps, too, a false morality prompts us to cover the nakedness of truth at which man has looked, without having seen it, from the very first day that he gazed into the depths of the universe.

The universe, the place in which man actually dwells, should inspire us with interest, if not with reference. Let us liberate our mind for the present from the fetters of preconceived ideas and from those of inherited and dutifully accepted notions. Nothing exists for us, for the present, but the external world, the universe. We are prepared to take a hurried journey through it, for the purpose of obtaining a bird's-eye view of the whole, if such be possible. We start at the point where primordial sealife becomes aware of the existence of dry land. With the newly-created amphibious animal, we enjoy the vastness of a world consisting of both water and land. With the land-animal, we destroy a little more of the darkness that hitherto enveloped the individual being, and roam the many-faced surface of a continent. With man, we extend the boundaries of surroundings, and bit by bit we discover the earth. With him we conquer the air, and peer through telescopes at the stargods of his ancestors. With him we dream of visiting the moon and the planet, Mars, of living a future life on some distant star. Thus, keeping pace with progressing evolution, a larger and larger world gradually unfolds itself. But we do not, as yet, possess an adequate conception of the world's true immensity, and of the true divinity of its nature. We do not, as yet, perceive the possibility of an infinitely extensible external world. Yet, where are the boundaries of man's actual external world?

We make our 250,000-mile trip to the moon, proceed to Mars and to the other outer planets, planning to make a ninety million mile sidetrip to the sun upon our return from our celestial excursion. We reach the limit of our solar system, seeing the sun in our imagination scintillate like a star of inferior magnitude. On the wings of light we are carried to the nearest star, consuming four years of eternity on that expedition. There being no reason whatsoever for terminating our journey, we continue at light-speed towards the thousand light-year limit of the Milky Way. Having arrived there, however, we are able to show cause as to why we should cut short our journey. The fuel that propelled us through immensity, our imagination, has been exhausted. It claims to be incapable of further travel, and it proceeds to build an imaginary wall—something upon which its limited nature may lean—that must surround the section of the universe traversed. But, after having established the support in question, it takes courage, and proceeds to take a peek at what lies on the other side of the wall. It discovers—more universe! And, so, it flies a little further, repeating

its wall-operations at intervals. It soon discovers, however, that it is doomed to build its imaginary walls forever. For should it decide to build its final wall, for the reason that beyond it lies nothing, it will eventually be tempted to have a peek at "nothing." That nothing is indeed something, else it could not be designated by the term nothing.

But this forever-business is something entirely foreign to the nature of man whose very constitution compels him to live in a world of beginnings and ends. We return to earth, therefore, and to the self. The familiar scene of a measurable world sets our disquieted mind at rest again. With renewed vigor we count and calculate, write down our profits and losses, and visualize the proverbial end of the trail. But our journey into the depths of the world has woven a new and subtle strain through the more or less harsh sounding music of life. We must hear that strain forevermore. We hear it on still summer nights when the croak of the frog rips the silence of the deep. And, if music be visible, we see it in the objects of nature that loom up in living black against the silver darkness of the world. Indeed, we hear that indescribable strain in our moments of keenest agony, when it soothes like balm and inspires us to ignore the voice of the self. But we cannot reproduce it. We do not know what it is. We only know *that* it is. That knowledge silences the flimsy arguments of the stay-on-earth philosopher who does not bother with the infinite because mortal man cannot conceive it. Our imagination has but to extend the world that immediately surrounds us in order that we may realize that an infinite world necessarily exists. Or, perhaps it were better to say that we are aware of the existence of a not-limited world, of a world which is not the limited world in which we are accustomed to think and act. The very limitation in which we are steeped, if we will but consider a moment, implies the existence of the unlimited, even as darkness is made possible by its counterpart, light.

The world of not-self presents but few remarkable and startling features when considered in part. The vulgar nature which we, for some unfathomable reason, have assigned to matter, pervades it. It is something at which we may look with some degree of interest, provided we do not place too large a value upon its presence and upon its phenomena. Even when thinking in terms of stellar universes, that silent glory and those brooding depths constitute for us no more than paraphernalia incidental to human existence. However, the worst thing that we can, after all, remark about the uni-

verse is, that it is material. Material means, pertaining to matter. And who knows what matter is that he pronounces it despicable? With science, he dissolves it into atoms and electrons. With science, he concludes that electrons are centers of electrical force. And with science, he faces the veil of mystery which, although willing to recede, nevertheless eternally separates the known from the unknown. The foundation of things is never reached. Like a mirage, it vanishes the more quickly the more speedily we approach it. No matter what deeply hidden point we have reached in our investigations, the question always presents itself: "What is this thing which we at last have found, and how did it come to exist?" Apart from the fact, however, that we do not know what matter is no more than we know what we, ourselves, are, and that we therefore altogether too rashly pronounce it, vulgar, its nature as conceived by us undergoes a decided change for the better when we consider the universe in its totality instead of in part. Let it be granted that the universe is a material immensity, an immensity whose nature is inferior to that of the not-material, or spiritual. The inferiority in question completely disappears when we think of the universe in its totality, i. e., of an *infinite* material immensity. Though, in truth, we do not know what we mean by, spiritual, and merely vaguely refer to that which is not-material, the suspicion is aroused that the terms, infinite, and, material, are contradictory. It would seem that the vulgar nature of the universe disappears in its totality, and exists as a fact only then when limited man perceives a limited part of the whole.

We, for one, do not hesitate in frankly declaring that the external world, as a whole, harbors more divine secrets than man ever will be able to fathom. Our courage in the matter is founded on the knowledge that our star-lit home is infinite. There is, we believe no more soul-overwhelming and mind-staggering fact to be encountered in this or in any other world. The mind, with all its elasticity of conception, humbly acknowledges defeat in its presence, and the soul, for once, ceases to be concerned about self. In that which is infinite we meet with the ultimate of being, with the utmost possibility of existence, with all that is and possibly can be.

Our intellectual journey into the universe results in our viewing the history of developing man from a slightly different angle. We watch his endeavors to burst the shell of self-centeredness which envelops his being in darkness, and which shuts out the external world from his knowledge. We see him bore a little hole through

the wall of his prisonhouse, and we see him marvel at the shaft of light that penetrates into his soul. Wider and wider becomes the surface of contact with the universe, until finally the light promises to fairly flood his being. His ultimate destiny, it would seem, is to stand victorious on the ruins of his self-centeredness, and to face the infinite. The role which his intelligence plays in the whole matter is the one of interpreter. The silence of immensity it translates into thought. That which of itself cannot utter becomes articulate in thinking man. The supremely divine errand which is man's, is to make an unknown existence known.

The question naturally arises: "Why should he?" Being what we are, we seek to link efficiency and useful purpose with the events of the universe. But, although we may be able to discover efficiency and design in any section of the universe, we fail to discover them in the whole. Things that are undeniably real, laws that are immutable, foundations that are unshakable, in a limited part of the world, dissolve into nothingness in the totality of things. Seen from the standpoint of immensity, things are because they are. Man gives speech to the infinite, because he does, and for no other reason. As we shall endeavor to point out later, a designing, scheming infinite is no infinite at all, but, rather, an immense person. Man's intelligence conquers the external world section by section, and his being which preeminently leans towards mathematics and geometry *creates* purpose and design in the universe. For that reason, the whole history of human development reveals a magnificently executed scheme of nature to awaken man to the presence of an infinite existence, and to urge him to give praise to its supreme beauty. Accepting that scheme as a reality which of necessity belongs to our human world, we shall now proceed to estimate how far nature has progressed with the execution of her plans.

We remarked in a previous chapter that the time is ripe to link the ultimate in existence with the universe in all its infinite totality. That remark, we confess, comes in the nature of a shock. But we, ourselves, are the cause. Most of our ideas concerning existence are inherited, many become ours by a sort of falsely moral compulsion, and very few are originally conceived by us. We incline towards following in the footsteps of our ancestors concerning matters divine, fearing to tread where others did not make a trail. We inherit their aversion for the reality that stares us in the face, and superimpose an imaginary one. Never, in the history of man, has the external world received the consideration due it by virtue of its

nature, nor has it been credited with having accomplished the enormous things that it has accomplished. From the very beginning, the thing was supplanted by the spirit, the phenomenon by the miracle. Natural surroundings constituted an unsatisfactory, ignoble reality that deceitfully hid the real and supreme. And, although the veil that deceived and hid grew to an unimaginable size, and the supposedly real and supreme developed proportionally, the principle of dividing the world into the real and the unreal, into the good and the bad, into matter and spirit, is still being desperately clung to. We hear, 't is true, much of a theoretical unity, oneness, and one. But it is only a theoretical oneness. Our morals, our ethics, our religions and our philosophies repeatedly contradict the conception.

Yet is the so-called material universe receiving more attention these days than it ever has received in the entire history of mankind. Giant telescopes point at its shining marvels. Self-forgetting souls virtually renounce a life of comfort and happiness in the patient endeavor to extract facts from its depths. Popularly written newspaper and magazine articles acquaint the average reader with the features of its stupendousness. Indications are that the earth is beginning to be too narrow a place for expanding human intelligence. The latter gropes for the moon and Mars, for distant suns and nebulae, and dreams of traveling unhampered through the infinite world of not-self. There is, we think, nothing shocking, dangerous, or immoral in this taking wing on the part of intelligence. On the contrary, an intellectual survey of immensity is in the highest degree interesting and inspiring. The reflections resulting from such a survey are sufficiently startling to dispel a possible monotony of living. Moreover, the manner in which it subsequently influences our daily actions is desirable from a moral viewpoint, and hints at an intimate relationship between the size of the world in which we think that we live and our behavior upon this earth. Knowledge of bare facts, alone, does not of course benefit the moral nature of man. But the thoughts that it awakens, the reflections that it arouses, and the individual conduct that it suggests, are of priceless value. He who thinks that a scientific study of the universe merely implies the registration of facts in the convolutions of our gray matter, has never felt the sublime afterglow which the light of a newly-realized truth leaves in the soul. Of far-reaching influence upon our moral life are our ignorance and our knowledge concerning the world in which we live. Even when merely acquainted with a few facts relating to distances and sizes of heav-

enly bodies, we unknowingly ever after place our motives, ambitions, and desires against a background of stupendousness. As a result, the shame of our pettiness will inspire us to act more nobly, will raise the level of our hopes, and will color our desires with the hues of sublimity. Would humanity, for example, spend several years crippling and exterminating itself, as it does in a World War, if it were thoroughly sensible to the existence of a universe?

The things which we name, immoral, and, evil, lose their immortality and wickedness when we place them in one of the centers of an infinite world. Instead, they become absurd. Man acts ridiculously rather than wickedly. His selfish schemes are so much piffle, his warlike noises are vanity, and all the pettiness of his self-seeking activities is part of the tragi-comedy which he blindly enacts in a world of which he is not aware. All so-called wickedness is the necessary expression of self-centeredness. It speaks of the belly and the self, and of the absence of a universe. As far as the past is concerned, we speak of ignorance and immaturity. In connection with the present, however, we mention immortality and evil. But we refer to one and the same thing, viz., to the degree of self-centeredness that manifests itself in evil activity. The deeper we penetrate into the past, the more self we encounter and the less universe. The more hair-raising, also, becomes human behavior. Moreover, we are immediately struck by its absurdity, because we know what we know, and because the world in which we live is infinitely larger than the one in which the ancients dwelled. But let us not forget that each of the individuals composing today's highly differentiated humanity possesses his particular degree of self-centeredness with its correspondingly large or small external world. Nor should it be overlooked that, on the whole, we are far from being completely universe-conscious creatures. The existence of evil, therefore, is easily perceived by many in the activities of the persons whose degree of self-centeredness is more intense than their own. Unfortunately, however, they generally fail to perceive that evil is also present in their own beings, unless, of course, they are absolutely universe-conscious beings, in which case they have no business upon this earth. At some future date, when man will think in terms of universes as easily as he does at present in terms of dollars and cents, his present behavior will be considered to have been, let us hope, absurd, and not, evil.

The external world of stars and space-depths is beginning to influence our thoughts and our actions, for an excellent reason, we

believe. Our present explorers of immensity, peering through their giant telescopes, add a few thousand light-years, every now and then, to the diameter of the universe. There is a reluctance, it is true, on the part of the majority, to make our universal home altogether incomprehensibly large. Emphatic statements that the stellar universe is limited alternate with faint suggestions that there exist stellar universes beyond the stellar universe. In the astronomer, patiently watching through his telescope, we behold man unconsciously searching for the ultimate. Although, at present, his eye is attracted mainly by the glory of Sirius and by the glimmering fire of the Lactea, he must eventually face, with humbled soul, the immeasurable thing in which the heavenly glories are suspended. He is still, though to a considerably less extent than his more self-centered ancestor, limiting a limitless external world. But he cannot do that with the consent of reason.

That the external world is infinite in its totality appears to be a self-evident fact. We are referring to the external world of matter *and* space. We do not always make ourselves clear as to what thing we designate by the term, universe. Did Pascal, for instance, refer to the immensity consisting of matter and space when he stated that the universe is an infinite sphere whose center is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere? Assuming that he did, let us imagine if we can, a cluster of stars and a Milky Way that whirl in unutterable solitude in an infinite ocean of space. No matter whether this cluster measures a thousand or a million light-years, the ridiculous insignificance of its size in comparison with that of the world of space immediately tempts us to dismiss the picture from our mind. What business, in view of the limitless space available, has less than a speck of dust in all that immensity? And, as an afterthought, what business has a human less-than-nothing on one of its atoms?

Even more ridiculous appears the idea of a universe which is limited both as regards space and matter. Some thinkers fool themselves into believing that they are capable of imagining such a universe. In reality, they are not. Their imagination, too, insists on peeking beyond the boundaries which it, itself, has imposed upon the universe. It will, at the very least, discover more space. Even when denying that the stellar universe is limitless, we cannot contradict the statement that the ocean of space in which the stellar universe is suspended is boundless. That statement can only be denied in violation of the constitution and of the laws of the human

mind. The fact is, *that the mind cannot think space away*. Imagination is capable of scattering the beauties of the flower, of destroying the sun, of obliterating the starry hordes. But the most elastic imagination cannot eliminate a cubic inch of space, nor space in its totality. It takes away that illimitable vastness merely to find that another infinite vastness has taken its place.

Space, we presume, is an extraordinary thing to philosophize upon. Or is it not a thing? Is it a no-thing? Whatever it may be, it certainly deserves the consideration of thinkers. It is the one curiosity of the universe, the one thing which thought is incapable of limiting. Moreover, we are not merely compelled to admit that it is without limits, the fact of its eternal nature forces itself upon our mind. The latter is absolutely incapable of conceiving a condition of no-space. The history of the development of our solar system is written on the brow of space. Stars and meteors, appearing and disappearing, are dots and flashes of fire kindled and extinguished in an everlasting world of space. Apsu and Tiamat, gods of the ancient Babylonians, brought forth an army of monster-gods that peopled the waters of the "deep." Whence the "deep"? Jehovah created the heaven and the earth, and darkness was on the face of the "deep." Whence the "deep"? It existed before the dawn of creation. It was the indispensable, pre-existing background on which man was to embroider his star-world of gold and silver and blue.

The spatial universe, then, is not only boundless but also eternal in its existence. A condition of no-space, at any time, is unthinkable. But the external world consists, besides a universe of space, of a universe of matter. A billion heavenly bodies dot the infinite with their golden luster. What about the size of this immense star-cluster? Is it measurable, or is it immeasurable? For the present, let us assume that it is measurable, that a boundless emptiness engulfs it, and that within that emptiness the stupendous process of cosmic evolution occurs in a region which is smaller than a pinhead. Our interest is centered in the question, whether or not the external world owns a dual nature. To all appearances, it consists of matter *and* space, the respective natures of which are totally different. Reason, however, will contradict appearances. From the fact that something exists which is infinite in its totality, it immediately follows that nothing but that something exists. That which is infinite is all. Nothing can be added to it, nothing subtracted from it. The suggestion, therefore, that something else exists besides, in separa-

tion from, and independently of, the infinite, is absurd. No matter whether our senses tell us that the so-called material universe is suspended *in* the infinite, the fact remains that it necessarily is *of* the infinite. The two apparently different external worlds of matter and space own a single foundation of being.

We grant, for the present, that the latter fact is difficult to perceive. We shall endeavor, in a future chapter, to explain why the external world presents a dual aspect. At this point, we wish to draw the reader's attention to the following: *if* the external world is one thing and not two things, it should follow that the universe of matter is as eternal and as infinite in its totality as is the universe of space. Now, in our chemical laboratory we come face to face with eternity. Every schoolboy, at the age of sixteen, does when his teacher, with the assistance of scales and a burning candle, demonstrates the truth that matter is indestructible. From the latter truth he concludes that the amount of matter in the universe remains *forever* the same. We particularly note the expression, *forever*. Again, we are dealing with this forever-business, a business which we are rather loathe to handle. We, generally, accept the statement that the amount of matter in the universe remains forever the same, and let it go at that. As a consequence, its staggering importance escapes us. Our idea of forever, moreover, is a one-sided one. We apply it to the future, only, leaving the past completely out of our considerations. We do this very thing on other occasions, for instance when speculating on the possibility of a future existence. The latter should be eternal. As regards the past, we are satisfied with the explanation that our ultimate origin is nothing. But it is a strange immortality which is born. Our own conception of eternity accepts neither a beginning nor an end. The idea of infinite time with a beginning is as ridiculous, we think, as the one of infinite space with a starting point. The universe of matter is eternal in the absolute sense of the word. In its totality it is unchangeable. Its parts are subject to constant change.

Our acceptance of the fact that the universe of matter is both uncreated and indestructible as a whole disposes of the innumerable difficulties involved in the theory of creation. No logical mind actually can conceive of creation. The supreme created the universe either from something or from nothing? If from something, then whence that something? From something else? Then, whence that something else? As far as the idea of creation from nothing is concerned, what is nothing? We can only conceive of nothing in

the sense of its being something. Either of the two following questions therefore presents itself: Whence that something? Whence that nothing? But the matter is immediately disposed of by another argument. The argument is this: if the supreme be infinite, how then can there be question, at any time, of creation? What is there to create? How can anything be added to that which is already infinite? If such addition were possible, then the so-called infinite was not infinite in the first place.

The eternal nature of the material universe as a whole is necessarily linked with its infinite nature. Time and space, everlastingness and the infinite, are inseparably associated. Only that which is infinite is everlastingly unchangeable. It cannot possibly become more than what it is at any time, as it is everything from the beginning of beginnings. It cannot become less than what it is at any moment without something becoming nothing, the idea of which is a logical absurdity. Eternity, therefore, rests upon unchangeability, and unchangeability is the attribute of that which is infinite.

To return to the possible dual nature of the external world, the infinite-eternal nature of the material universe and that of the spatial universe are necessarily identical. It will be immediately agreed that the existence of only a single infinite, as well as that of a single eternity, are logically possible. The conclusion, therefore, forces itself upon us that the external world of matter and space is one thing which is infinite-eternal as a whole.

The latter conclusion loses something of its startling nature when we consider that the idea of body and the idea of space are inseparably associated. When we think of a body, we think of space. We say that matter occupies space, as we say of a person that he occupies a chair. The chair and the person are two entirely different objects, and there exist a multitude of things which a person can occupy. The interesting fact concerning matter is that it can occupy but a single thing: space. Interesting, also, is the apparently simple statement: no space, no matter.