external preliminary description of the object to which it is applied.@@1

So our wealth of material narrows down in the ordinary handling to a single question. God, the world, the soul, free will, immortality, optimism; *What* then is God? All these questions, and perhaps others, tend to conceal themselves behind a single discussion: Does God exist? But further still. Either the fuller or the narrower way of dealing with theism will differ according to the philosophical stand­point of the particular theist who speaks to the ques­tion. As long as the battle of the philosophies endures, theism can hardly be unified. Its history is not so much that of a single evolving doctrine, but rather the history of many and diverse theistic schemes.

III. It may help us if we rapidly review at this point the leading types of philosophy in their application to the theistic problem. Grouping and naming are fixed here for one special purpose. From other points of view they may perhaps appear open to blame; but it is hoped they will throw light upon our present study.

The simplest basis for philosophy@@2 is empiricism. Such a philosophy makes little serious attempt at constructive work in antiquity; but, upon the first great victories of physical science in modem times, a desire arose to extend the new and wonderfully fruitful method to the ultimate problems of speculation. Let us take experience as our teacher! Let us stand upon realities—upon facts! Difficulty may be found in carrying out this empiricist programme; but at the outset no one dreams of failure. Beginning with the certainties of everyday experience, it reaches theism at last by means of an analogical argument. Many objects in nature, organisms especially, seem to resemble the works of human *design;* there­fore with high probability we infer a designing mind behind nature, adequate to the production of these special results.@@3’ Having got such a mind, we may next inquire whether, on the principle of parsimony, it will not account for more; perhaps for everything in nature! But the starting-point of the argument in question is the purely empirical evidence of a single fact or set of facts; it proceeds by way of analogy, not of strict demonstration; and it claims for its results nothing more than probability. From Socrates, in Xenophon’s *Memorabilia,* downwards, the argument is toler­ably common; it is notable in Cicero; in the modem discussion it dominates the r8th-century mode of thought, is confidently appealed to though not worked out by Butler, and is fully stated by Paley. The argument does not necessarily imply empiricism in philosophy; still, it is peculiarly characteristic of empiricism. In ethics empiricism begins by recognizing that man possesses sensations, and so is liable to pleasures and pains. Hence, early empiricism makes ethics simply a calculus of pleasures (“ hedonism ”). We may doubt, with W. E. H. Lecky,@@4 whether such a philosophy affords a basis for natural theology at all; but the attempt is made. As J. S. Mill tried to reconcile criminal law and its punishments with his very hard type of determinism by saying that law was needed in order to weight the scale, and in order to hold out a prospect of penalties which might deter from crime and impel towards good citizenship, so Paley held that virtue was not merely obedience to God but obedience “ for

the sake of eternal happiness.” A second type of hedonism— less ignoble, but perhaps also less logical—calls men to seek the happiness of *others.* Paley includes that too; virtue is “ doing good to mankind,” in obedience to God, for the sake of heaven.

The second type of philosophy, for our purpose, is intuition­alism. It finds its chance in the misadventures of empiricism. The Scottish philosophy of Thomas Reid and his successors believed that David Hume’s scepticism was no more than the genuine outcome of Locke’s sensationalist appeal to experience when ripened or forced on by the im- matcrialism of Bishop Berkeley—God and the soul alone; not God, world and soul. And so the Scotsmen fell back upon the witness of consciousness. They did not make much use of the word “ intuition,” which may indeed be taken in different senses, *e.g.* of visionary experiences as well as of the principles of “ common sense ” (i.e. universal beliefs). They spoke of “ natural realism ” and a “ natural dualism ” of mind and matter (reinstating here the element which Berkeley had struck out). Still, they do not repudiate the word “ intuition,” and kindred writers make it prominent. The term is borrowed from Sight, of all the physical senses the one which most rapidly instructs the mind. You see, at a glance, that things arc so. Indeed, there is a further implication, when the term intuition is borrowed for mental vision; you sec at a glance that things *must be* so. Here then characteristically intuitionalism occupies a half-way house between empiricism, with its appeal to real given fact, and idealism, with its appeal to necessity. The senses, in perception as contrasted with sensation, are held to give immediate knowledge. We perceive, beyond all possi­bility of doubt, that things *are* so and so. This is Reid’s first reply to Hume. Define more carefully than Locke did, with his blunder about “ideas,” the process of perception, and you cut up scepticism by the roots! So far, this philosophy has little bearing upon theism. But Intuitionalism has further arguments for the doubter. Besides testimony from outer sense, we have testimony and teachings from consciousness within—“ first principles,” as Reid generally calls them. There are some principles which, as soon as they are presented to the mind and correctly grasped, must be assented to; we *see* the truth! Two regions become prominent in the working out of intuitionalism, if still more prominent in the widely differing philosophy of Kant— the regions of mathematics and of morals. Though J. S. Mill boldly affirmed that there might be remote realms in space where 2 + 2 did not make 4 but some different total, even empiricists may hestitatc to concur; and yet Mill’s assertion is at least the most obvious empiricist reading of the situation. If all knowledge is drawn from experience, state­ments universal in form are but generalizations, holding within the limits of actual experience, or advanced beyond them at our peril. Geometry again is regarded by thoroughgoing empiricists as hypothetical. It deals, according to Mill, with arbitrary and imaginary constructions. If there were such a thing as a triangle contained by absolutely straight lines, its three angles would no doubt measure what Euclid says; but straight lines and true triangles nowhere exist *in rerum nalura.* Kant’s point is ignored, that deductions from these “ imaginary ” figures *apply* to the “ real ” world of experience. Every time we survey a field, we go upon the principles, not of special experience, but of *a priori* necessity. Given certain linear and angular measurements, the area *must* be so and so. Great as is the difference when we pass from mathematics to morality, yet there are striking similarities, and here again intuitionalism claims to find much support. If we accept moral ideals at all, we are no longer in the world of mere phenomenal sequences, but in a new world. It is a problem for empiricism; given a world where nothing but phenomenal sequences exist, to account for moral ideals. Vulgar materialism sneers at the problem; duty is a fraud or hobgoblin, a mere superstition. Even Jeremy Bentham, restive under appeals to vague and in­tangible standards, breaks out in despairing indignation against the word “ ought ” as “ the talisman of arrogance, indolence

@@@1 Criticism of the scheme, from the point of view of an idealist theism, will be found in John Caird’s *Introduc to the Phil. of Religion,* chap. viii. Yet the formula is serviceable. Perhaps it is even indispensable as a preliminary statement. We find it substanti­ally revived in the opening sentence and general scheme of a useful book, A. Caldecott’s study of *The Phil. of Relig. in England and America.*

@@@2 An outline of the history of theism is reserved for Section IV.; but it has not proved possible to sketch the types of philosophy without introducing references to the history of philosophy and sometimes even to the history of theism as well.

@@@3 Of course the Design Argument is well known in antiquity, but not the type of philosophy which stands or falls by that line of “ proof.”

@@@4 Cf. *Hist. of European Morals,* pp. 58, 59.