THE ARGUMENT, A PRIORI, FOR THE BEING AND THE ATTRIBUTES OF THE ABSOLUTE ONE, AND THE FIRST CAUSE OF ALL THINGS

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649062041

The Argument, a Priori, for the Being and the Attributes of the Absolute One, and the First Cause of All Things by William Honyman Gillespie

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

WILLIAM HONYMAN GILLESPIE

THE ARGUMENT, A PRIORI, FOR THE BEING AND THE ATTRIBUTES OF THE ABSOLUTE ONE, AND THE FIRST CAUSE OF ALL THINGS

Trieste

THE

ARGUMENT, *A PRIORI*,

FOR

THE BEING AND THE ATTRIBUTES

OF

THE ABSOLUTE ONE,

AND THE

FIRST CAUSE OF ALL THINGS.

BY

WILLIAM HONYMAN GILLESPIE,
OF TORBANEHILL, F.R.G.S., ETC.;
AUTHOR OF
"THE NECESSARY EXISTENCE OF GOD,"
ETC., ETC.

Fifth Edition.

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

LONDON;
HOULSTON AND SONS,
65, PATERNOSTER ROW:
AND ALL BOOKSELLERS.

MDCCCLXXI.

141. j. 140.

—Ο ΘΕΟΣ ὁ ποιήσας τὸν κόσμον καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ, οὗτος οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς Κύριος ὑπάρχων, οὐκ ἐν χειροποιήτοις ναοῖς κατοικεῖ, οὐδὲ ὑπὸ χειρῶν ἀνθρώπων θεραπεύεται προσδεόμενός τινος, αὐτὸς διδοὺς πᾶσι ζωὴν καὶ πνοὴν καὶ τὰ πάντα· ἐποίησέ τε ἐξ ἑνὸς αἵματος πᾶν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων, κατοικεῖν ἐπὶ πᾶν τὸ πρόσωπον τῆς γῆς, ὁρίσας προστεταγμένους καιροὺς καὶ τὰς ὁροθεσίας τῆς κατοικίας αὐτῶν· ζητεῖν ΤΟΝ ΘΕΟΝ, εἰ ἄραγε ψηλαφήσειαν αὐτὸν καὶ εὕροιεν, καίτοιγε ΟΥ ΜΑΚΡΑΝ ΑΠΟ ΕΝΟΣ ΕΚΑΣΤΟΥ ΗΜΩΝ ΥΠΑΡΧΟΝΤΑ. ΕΝ ΑΥΤΩ ΓΑΡ ΖΩΜΕΝ ΚΑΙ ΚΙΝΟΥΜΕΘΑ ΚΑΙ ΕΣΜΕΝ· ὡς καί τινες τῶν καθ' ὑμᾶς ποιητῶν εἰρήκασι·

Τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμέν.

Γένος οὖν ὑπάρχοντες ΤΟΥ ΘΕΟΥ, οὐκ ὀφείλομεν νομίζειν χρυσῷ ἢ ἀργύρῳ ἢ λίθῳ, χαράγματι τέχνης καὶ ἐνθυμήσεως ἀνθρώπου, ΤΟ ΘΕΙΟΝ εἶναι ὅμοιον.—St Paul.

Entered at Stationers' Hall.

CONTENTS.

PREFACE TO THE FIFTH EDITION.

THE present is the first complete edition of "The Argument, *à priori*,"—or, the Argument as consisting of Divisions III. and IV., as well as of Divisions I. and II. This is, in other words, the Argument as embodying the whole of the Moral Attributes, from *Goodness* onwards to *Holiness*, the apex of the construction, as well as containing that preceding portion which may be regarded as the immutable foundation and solid basement-story of the whole edifice, however high it may be carried. For true it is, that hitherto the demonstrations for the Moral Attributes (corresponding generally with Divisions III. and IV.) have been procurable only in separate volumes, though the volumes were but small. But to exhibit a brief historical survey of things from the commencement: First of all, there appeared, as the original demonstration, what (barring alterations) is now comprised within the limits of Divisions I. and II. No greater were the dimensions of that first edition of the Argument. After a period of some length, during which the work was, in various ways, much before the public, and much too upon its trial in all respects, the Propositions (relating to the *Happiness* and the *Goodness*) represented by the 1st Sub-Division of Division III., were added, and came out in the Torbanehill edition (1843.) After, again, a much longer interval,

in which events of moment to the fate of the demonstration were proceeding, the Relative Moral Attributes, as corresponding with the 2nd Sub-Division of Division III., were published, in a little volume, by themselves (1865.) Lastly, the Complex or Compound Moral Attributes, comprehended in Division IV., were, in a minute volume, given to the public in the beginning of this year (1870.) Such has been the course of events, and the progress of the demonstration to consolidation and completion.

From its very first appearance, the "Argument" was doomed to meet with opposition of every kind, or from believer and unbeliever alike. But on the present occasion, our view shall be confined within the limits occupied by the Infidel objectors and opponents.

In another quarter,* it has been my business to record a survey, by epitome, of the operations conducted by the opponents of the atheistical class against the reasonings employed in the demonstration treated of. With a view to the object immediately before us, it will suffice to mention, that the "Argument" had been no long time in existence when it was assailed by an enemy to all Theistical ratiocination, of whom it may be truthfully said, that, on the side of the Atheists, his equal in metaphysical and logical powers, and general grasp of his subject, has not since arisen. Yet even the celebrated "*Antitheos*" (for it is of him I speak) was obliged to lower his ensign, by virtually acknowledging overwhelming defeat at his own weapons. After him, a shoal of small fry sailed, in pursuit, in the wake of the offensive conqueror: but (as was to be expected) the puny efforts

* *Debate*, referred to below.

availed but little, save only to keep up, and support at a certain elevation, the interest by that time created in the discussion.

For a dozen, or for perhaps a score, of years after *Antitheos's* day, the Atheists of the East, no less than of the West, and of the South as well as the North, tried to find a weak spot in the coat-of-mail endued by the author of the "Argument": but an unprotected joint in the armour became obvious to the eye of no atheist, how keenly soever he might peer. All the scrutiny was in vain. The reader will understand that it is of the "Argument," as it originally stood (or Divisions I. and II.,) that these assertions are made. But the original portion is the essential.

With regard to the succeeding portion, being that corresponding with the 2nd Sub-Division of Division III. (comprised in the publication of 1865;) it has been pronounced, by a not incompetent student, to constitute "a course of severe reasoning, as strict, indeed, as that of Euclid." ("Laws of Thought," 1868.)

In fine, it may safely be prophesied, that, as the Atheists have not hitherto been able to agree as to any one vulnerable point in the whole demonstration; so, they will never be able to lay their fingers on a single place where is any radical fallacy. The atheist being yet to be born, will therefore never be born, who will succeed in discovering the defenceless and indefensible spot.

Should it be objected, that the atheists, until comparatively lately, have had to do only with the early part of the entire ratiocination; the reply to be made lies ready at hand: the portion in question is indubitably the back-bone of the structure, the rest being merely educed elongations of the skeleton, or pure additions to the great axis of the vertebral column. Or if we