

**PRINCIPLES OF NATURAL AND
METAPHYSICAL PHILOSOPHY, INTENDED ON
A MORE ANCIENT, COMMON-SENSE, AND
POPULAR PLAN, AND MORE CONSISTENT
ALSO WITH LATER IMPROVEMENTS THAT THE
CARTESIAN OR NEWTONIAN**

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Principles of Natural and Metaphysical Philosophy, Intended on a More Ancient, Common-Sense, and Popular Plan, and More Consistent Also with Later Improvements That the Cartesian or Newtonian by Anonymous

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ANONYMOUS

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COMPRISING

A Review of the prevailing Systems now taught, wherein it is meant to diminish certain Difficulties, which encumber them; more particularly in respect to a First Principle; Skeptical Tendency; the Nature of Light, Electricity, Magnetism, Heat, Caloric, Fire, Galvanism, and Electro-Magnetism; the Principle of Life; and to vindicate the Existence of the Soul, by Showing that there can be no such thing as Spirit, whether Human, Superhuman, or Supreme, unless it have some Corporeity, however simple or immaterial, in Opposition to those Cartesian Principles, which have given such fruitful Rise to Modern Infidelity.

By Marshall Trifts.

That extensive branch of science—metaphysics—has in modern times been unjustifiably separated by many philosophers from the division of physics or natural philosophy.—And I may add, that it is very much in consequence of so unnatural a divorce, that the science of metaphysics has too often licentiously allied itself to imagination, and brought forth a monstrous and chimerical progeny.

Book of Nature, Lect. I. Series 3.

CAMBRIDGE:
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1829.

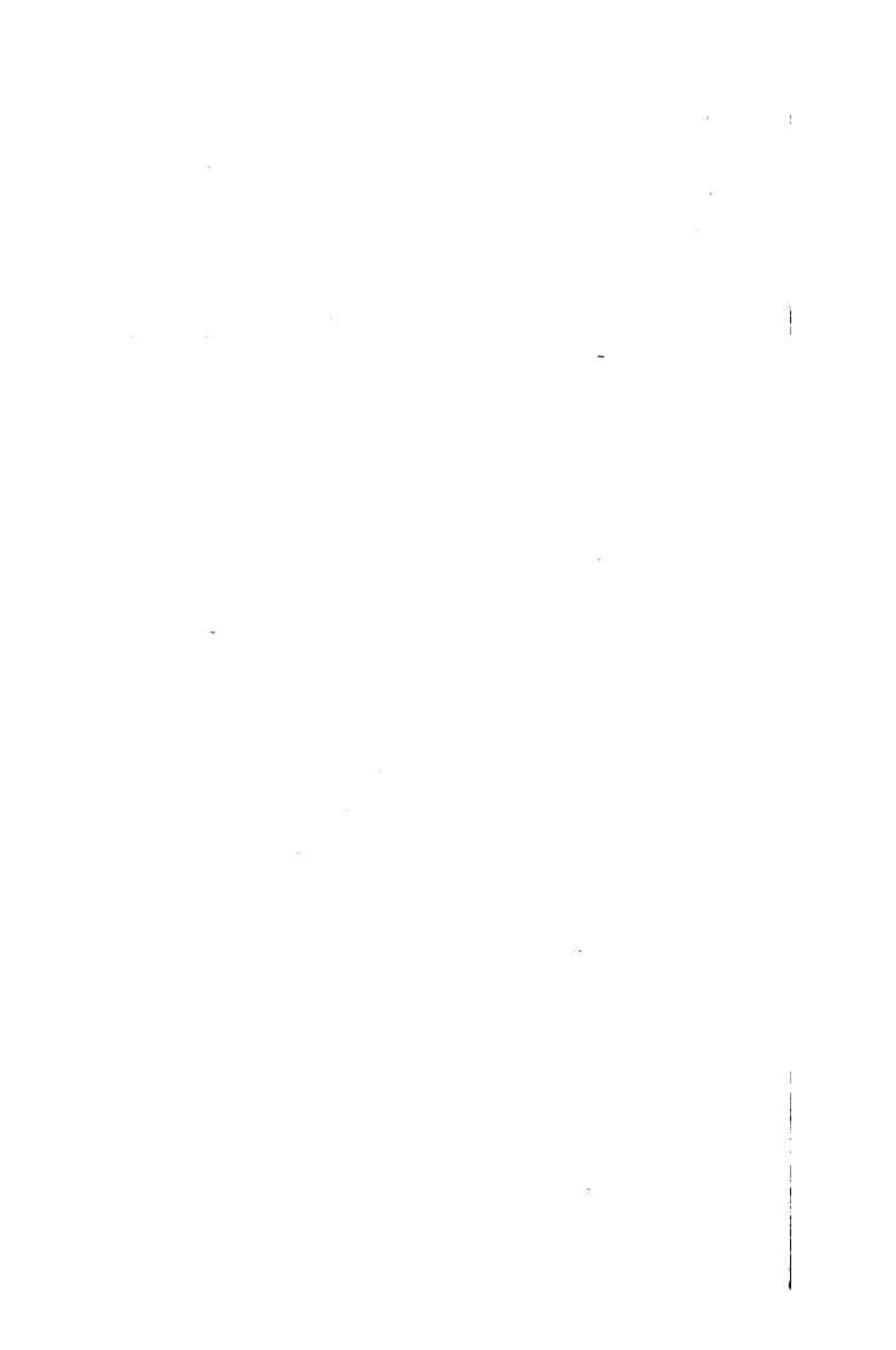
TO THE
MEMBERS OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY,
IS THIS WORK RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED
BY AN
ALUMNUS OF THE SAME,
THE AUTHOR.

Cambridge, May, 1899.

**"Go, little book, from this my solitude ;
I cast thee on the waters ; go thy ways ;
And if, as I believe, thy vein be good,
The world shall find thee after many days."**

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N. B.—Page 1, for 'so enveloped,' read 'more enveloped,' i. e. artificially. Page 5, for 'in,' read, 'is.' Page 9, for 'all other substances,' read, 'all material substances.' In respect to magnetic polarity, the phenomena of the dipping needle may not disconcert our theory, as a diversity of temperature, constituting different degrees of electricity or magnetism, may in a sense be extended into the earth as well as over its surface, the interior of the earth under the torrid zone being cooler than the surface, and under the frigid zones, oftentimes much warmer, or in either case to a degree corresponding to the dip of the needle. Pages 88 and 89, for 'origin of motion,' read 'mechanical motion,' i. e. which is inferior to that caused by spirit, established at creation, and supervised by a general Providence. In the article on Animated Nature, let not the agency of fire encroach too much on that of a higher principle, as too inadvertently intimated from a too great regard at the time to Newton's hypothetical spirit or ether. Fire and animal heat may, indeed, concur in some measure to the production of motion in obedience to the will by preparing the body thereto in rendering it more flexible and susceptible of action; yet the soul must be considered as the principal and immediate cause. Electrical agency may not be at all discoverable in the natural motion of animals. The manner, in which the soul is united to the body and immediately productive of its motions, is indeed, mysterious, yet if we consider it as co-extended with the body, subsisting chiefly in the brain and nerves, and possessed of a certain inherent power of dilatation, contraction, or other motion simultaneous with will, and sufficient to produce a corresponding motion in the body, the mystery is in some degree lessened. The nature of the soul may also have something to do in the production of animal heat, judging from what is often produced by mere passion, as in a flush of shame, anger, or surprise; especially, if as anciently supposed, there be a certain igneous quality in the nature of spirit. Nor even from plants may every other principle of life be excluded but what consists in mere matter. In respect, moreover, to the tides, let not the moon be cast too far into the background. We find on further consideration, that she may be of special use in raising a tide during the sun's absence, the second tide in the course of twenty-five hours, and after the sun's repulsion has passed along with him over the sea; then that of the comparatively stationary moon may follow after; since we can hardly suppose, that the sea is so elastic as to arise from a mere rebound. It is the electric repulsion of the sun and moon combined and acting successively, that may produce the tides. Page 89 'silent, motionless,' omit. And for the pronoun 'I,' in sundry places out of quotations, read 'we;' and for such phraseology, as, 'I think,' read 'perhaps;' It is a Cartesianism, which the author inadvertently fell into, and although somewhat more certainty might possibly be attached to the phrase in certain places, yet, according to general use and consent, by no means the fundamental importance of a *first principle*. Some of these imperfections may be the more pardonable, as this part of the work was written some years since, while a Senior-sophister, after the German custom. (A Treatise on the Nature and Effects of Light, Heat, Electricity, and Magnetism, &c. 1827.) The other parts, being more the result of professional study, are perhaps of more worth.

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