

how are we to know, that the utility of truth and justice is not present to the mind of man, when he discharges the obligation of these virtues, and how are we to know, that it is not the undiscoverable thought of this utility, which forms the impellent principle of that undiscoverable volition, by which man is urged to the performance of them?

9. Now we are precluded from replying to this question in any other way, than that the theory which requires such an argument for its support, may be said to fetch all its materials from the region of conjecture. It ventures on the affirmation of what is going on in a terra incognita; and we have not the means within our reach, for meeting it in the terms of a positive contradiction. But we can at least say, that a mere *argumentum ab ignorantia* is not a sufficient basis on which to ground a philosophic theory; and that thus to fetch an hypothesis from among the inscrutabilities of the mind, to speak of processes going on there so quick and so evanescent that the eye of consciousness cannot discover them—is to rear a superstructure not upon the facts which lie within the limit of separation between the known and the unknown, but upon the fancies which lie without this limit. A great deal more is necessary for the establishment of an assertion, than that an adversary cannot disprove it. A thousand possibilities may be affirmed which are susceptible neither of proof nor of disproof; and surely it were the worst of logic to accept as proof, the mere circumstance that they are beyond the reach of disproof. They in fact, lie alike beyond the reach of both; in which