The Foundations of Hume's Notion of Causality

Donald Edward Ryan

Loyola University Chicago

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THE FOUNDATIONS OF HUME'S NOTION OF CAUSALITY

by

Donald Edward Ryan, S.J.

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LIFE

Donald Edward Ryan, S.J., was born in Rockford, Illinois, December 15, 1927.

He was graduated from St. Thomas High School, Rockford, Illinois, June, 1945. After attending Loras College, Dubuque, Iowa, for the academic year 1945-1946, he entered the Society of Jesus at Milford, Ohio, in 1946. At that time he enrolled at Xavier University, Cincinnati. After two years of Novitiate, he spent two years in the Juniorate studying Latin, Greek, and English Literature. In September, 1950, he transferred to West Baden College, affiliated with Loyola University, and received the degree of Bachelor of Arts, June, 1951. He is now enrolled in the graduate school of Loyola University, working for a degree of Master of Arts in Philosophy.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Treatise of Human Nature stands as an important date in the history of epistemology. For many, David Hume, even more than Descartes, represents modern philosophy at the crossroads. Some believe that Hume symbolizes the suicide of sensationalism and that his work has lead to a crude and dubi empiricism. Others regard Hume as the intellectual revolution and pioneer spirit who first had the courage to sever the ties which bound all previous philosophy to the philosophia perennis. For these, the work of Hume is not an epilogue appended to the story of Locke and Berkeley, but a prologue to the drama of modern philosophy.

One and all admit the immense influence of the Scottish philosopher. Despite many obituary notices and more than a century marked by the dominance of German idealism, empiricism of the Humean stamp is very much alive today. "Not merely Kant with his idealism and Reid with his realism but also

1 David Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge, Oxford, 1946. Hereafter the Treatise will be referred to by the letter T.
pragmatism and contemporary logical positivism—not an insignifi-
cant progeny—find in Hume a progenitor."²

The Treatise is itself the classical statement of the
empiricist philosophy. Consequently, in the age of Absolute
Idealism, it was the duty of all self-respecting philosophers
to refute Hume. Today, in an era of the dominance of a positiv-
ism conceived in the spirit of Hume, Hume is revered as a Found-
ing Father, the precursor of positivism, and his works are
consulted as a wellspring of wisdom.

Because of this profound influence, Hume cannot be by-
passed by the serious student of the history of philosophy. The
challenge he represents must be met, and a carefully reasoned
assent or disapproval recorded. Although a remarkable number of
books appears regularly on Hume, his importance is sufficient to
merit another study, especially since the author of this thesis
is not in full accord with the present trend of Humean inter-
pretation.

T. H. Green³ and Leslie Stephen⁴ exemplify a strong

² B. M. Laing, "Great Thinkers: David Hume,"

³ T. H. Green, Introduction to Hume's Treatise of

⁴ Leslie Stephen, English Thought In the Eighteenth
and traditional interpretation of Hume which asserts that Hume's philosophy is chiefly negative and that Hume merely reduces the principles of Locke and Berkeley to their logical—and absurd—conclusion. For them, Hume has contributed nothing positive to philosophy, but has merely inserted within it a debunking attitude. The tradition has its origin in the writing of Reid, Beattie, and Huxley. Both Reid and Beattie were quick to read Hume's work as a final chapter in the story of Locke and Berkeley.

Today, this traditional mode of interpretation is very much out of favor. The modern who is at one with Hume on a number of essentials does not like to hear his position described as "absurdity." Ralph W. Church contends that Hume's main conclusions on causality are independent of his chief psychological dogmas. Church insists that an interpretation in the pattern of Reid:

misses not only the actual conclusion of Hume's critical analysis of causation, but also his arguments to that conclusion from the impotence of apagogic reasoning in the matter, as well as the analytic efficacy of the further principle that what is distinguishable is separable; in effect, the substance of Hume's position in this regard.  

From a somewhat different viewpoint, N. Kemp Smith


also attests the inadequacy of the Reid-Beattie interpretation. Smith's thesis is that Hume entered philosophy through the gateway of morals and under the influence of Frances Hutcheson, and that the central contention of Hume is that reason must be the servant of the passions. 7 Other writers of today, who, though they may not accept the writings of Church and Smith in detail, fall within the general pattern, are: MacNabb, Maund, Jessop, Hobart, and H. H. Price. 8

This thesis will concentrate on Hume's doctrine of causality. The main purpose of the thesis is to present a clear exposition of Hume's doctrine of causality, its place in Hume's philosophy, and consequently the exact foundations or premises on which Hume's conclusions concerning causality rest. The chief problem will be to discover how many distinct lines of argument are involved in Hume's apparent rejection of causality and how deeply Hume's premises are rooted in his copy theory of ideas, his atomism, his phenomenalism, and his view of human reason.

As to procedure, the Treatise will be the main source followed in the positive exposition of Hume's doctrine. That


8 The pertinent writings of these authors are listed in the bibliography.
Hume did not change his doctrine in any of its essentials after the Treatise is assumed in this thesis, as it is commonly assumed today. The assumption rests on the findings of Fr. Vinding Kruse.9 The Enquiry,10 which frequently overshadows the Treatise in clarity and conciseness of statement, will be employed largely as a reinforcement of the Treatise.

In general, the exposition will follow the order of the Treatise. Chapter II will present Hume's critique of causality and causation. Chapter III presents a dominant feature of Hume's theory, the doctrine on belief. This theory of belief is a necessary basis for the positive theory of causal inference propounded in Book I of the Treatise. The chapter is intended to put in focus Hume's usually overstressed rejection of causality by relating this rejection to his positive proposal. Chapter IV is a criticism of the positive doctrine posed in Chapter III. The chapter centers on three topics: various objections to Hume's analysis of cause, the association mechanism, and the critical acceptance of custom. Chapter V attempts to determine the foundations, the assumptions and premises, which ground


10 David Hume, An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, in Essays, Moral, Political, And Literary, ed. by T. H. Green and T. H. Grose, London, 1889, II, 3-135. Hereafter the Enquiry will be referred to by the letter E.
Hume's negative arguments in Chapter II. Finally, Chapter VI assumes the form of an epilogue containing a positive theory of causality to complement the criticism made of Hume in Chapter V.

Throughout this treatment, two questions recur: What underlies the denial of the knowability of causality? And, even granting that Hume developed a positive theory of belief, was the rejection of the knowability of real causality the necessary preliminary to this theory of belief?
CHAPTER II

HUME'S CRITIQUE OF CAUSALITY AND CAUSATION

Hume's most extensive discussion of causality occurs in Book I of the Treatise. The ostensive purpose of that work is to investigate human nature, especially in relation to moral philosophy. Book I is a psychological and epistemological inquiry into human understanding. It stands as a necessary framework preliminary to the treatment of the passions and of morals in Books II and III of the Treatise.

Hume begins his analysis of the understanding with successive inquiries into the origin of ideas, kinds of ideas, association of ideas in the imagination, relations, and abstract ideas. The whole of Part II of Book I is devoted to the ideas of space and time. Having thus outlined the elements of his philosophy, Hume proceeds to the crucial question of the causal relation.

This analysis and explanation of causality is Hume's most famous effort in the field of theoretical philosophy. For Hume, the relation of cause and effect was the source and basis for all our statements of fact, all our knowledge of real things not immediately present to the senses. Hence, outside present
experience, a few intuitive propositions, and the proofs in geometry, the whole scope of knowledge hinged on the causal relation. Causality is extremely important in such a view and its validity needed careful testing.

Hume's entire investigation was intended to be a search for the elusive impression from which the idea of causal connection arose. But neither the qualities nor the relations of objects contained the required impression. Hume then leaves the "direct survey" and turns to two questions: why we assent to the general causal maxim, and why we believe in particular causal laws.

The response to these questions provides a division of the contents of this chapter. First, Hume asserts that the causal maxim is neither self-evident nor can it be proved. Secondly, the inference or transition involved in the mind's proceeding from a given \( x \) to a related but absent \( y \) is not based on rational demonstration. The inference is based on custom or the constant association of impressions and ideas in the imagination. Thirdly, the idea of necessary connection between cause and effect results from an internal impression or propensity to pass from an object to the idea of its usual attendant.

This in brief is the movement of Hume's argumentation and the scope of this chapter. To shorten the synopsis would
be to spoil the effect of this sustained philosophical argument. The present chapter will delineate Hume's sinuous argument in some detail, while following in large part the tortuous order of the Treatise. The beginning and end of the argument present a fairly clear logical structure. The middle ground is almost unavoidably circumambient.

Hume begins his argument by indicating the peculiar place causality holds as a species of reasoning. Reasoning can be divided broadly into two classes: reasoning concerning the relations of ideas and reasoning concerning factual relationships. Reasonings concerning the relations of ideas give intuitive certainty (and then are not properly reasoning processes), or demonstrative certainty.

Reasonings which concern the relations between objects do not, suggests Hume, provide knowledge or certainty strictly so-called. The causal relation is the unique basis for all reasoning about factual relationships. By means of the causal relation alone can we attain existing objects not present to the senses or memory. The reason is that the other two factual relationships, identity and contiguity in space and time, are

1 The sections in the Treatise corresponding to this chapter are: Book I, Part iii, Sections 1 through 6 (69-94) and Section 14 (155-172).

2 T, I, iii, 2 (74); E, IV, 1 (24).
either reducible to cases of direct perception or are dependent upon the relation of cause and effect. Observations concerning identity and the relations of time and place are not reasonings but instances of direct perception. However, if the observation concludes to some constancy or invariability in the relations of time and place, it is because we have introduced the factor of some secret cause as uniting or separating them. The same is true of identity. Permanence or continuing identity ascribed to an object results from our presumption of causes sustaining the object during the intermim between perceptions.

Causality is, therefore, the principle of all inferences about matters of fact. It is only the relation of causality which informs us of existences and objects not present, which can carry the mind from a present impression to one absent. It is upon this relation then that Hume will concentrate all his critical skill.

According to Hume, every idea is an exact copy of an impression. And Hume, following out the methodological

3 More properly, perhaps, causality is the foundation of a relation of dependence. Causality itself can be referred to the category of action. Hume's terminology, nonetheless, will be retained.

4 The alleged priority of causality to substantial identity will be considered in Chapter V.

5 T, I, i, 1 (4, 5); E, II (14-17). Chapter V includes a discussion of the copy theory.
principle suggested by his theory of impressions and ideas, proceeds to search for the impression from which the idea of causation arises. There is no one quality or impression common to all objects called causes. The idea of causation must be derived then from some relation between objects.

The first and most obvious relation existing between causes and effects is that of contiguity in time and place. At this point in the Treatise both contiguity and the temporal priority of cause to effect are considered essential to causality.

Yet contiguity and succession do not exhaust the idea of causation. Hume refuses to take a merely "uniformity view" of causation. "There is a NECESSARY CONNEXION to be taken into consideration, and that relation is of much greater importance than any of the other two above mentioned." It is this initial refusal to reduce causality to uniformity which launches Hume on the intricate path along which his arguments will lead him. For Hume fails to discover any known qualities in the objects upon which the relation of cause and effect could depend; he further fails to discover any impression or impressions of

6 T, I, iii, 2 (75). Hereafter all references to the Treatise are to Book I of the Treatise unless otherwise indicated.

7 Smith, Philosophy of D. Hume, 369.

8 T, iii, 2(77).
necessary connection. He is unwilling to cast aside so lightly his "fundamental" assumption that every idea is a copy of a preceding impression. At the least, this firmly established principle must be given credence until the present case is examined.

Neither the qualities of the objects nor the relations observed between "causes" and "effects" contained the required impression. Thus failing in his attempt to discover in sense and by experience the source of the idea of necessary connection, Hume determined upon a reversal of method: to investigate the idea first instead of the impression. This indirect method leads him to a division of his topic into two questions: first, why we judge that everything that begins to be must have a cause, and why we conclude that such particular causes have such particular effects. Hume distinguishes between the principle of causality and the law of univocal causation. These two laws exhaust the intelligibility of the necessary connection among events.

Concerning the first question: "'Tis a general maxim in philosophy, that whatever begins to exist, must have a cause of existence." This assumption, or maxim, is not a matter of

9 Ibid., (78)
10 Ibid., 111, 3 (78).
knowledge. It is neither intuitively nor demonstratively certain:

All certainty arises from the comparison of ideas, and from the discovery of such relations as are unalterable, so long as the ideas continue the same. These relations are resemblance, proportions in quantity and number, degrees of any quality, and contrariety; none of which are imply'd in this proposition, Whatever has a beginning has also a cause of existence. That proposition therefore is not intuitively certain.11

This analysis is a direct corollary from Hume's view of knowledge as based on the four philosophical relations named above. Aside from instances of immediate de facto perception, Hume accords knowledge or certainty only to propositions regarding universal ideal contents. Only propositions expressing the relations between ideas can remain unalterably fixed, for the relations "depend entirely on the ideas."12 But propositions concerning factual relationships are not so unalterably fixed. It was always conceivable for Hume that an object might come into or go out of existence without having been caused to do so. A contingent fact can always be otherwise. When a man sees smoke he is forced to admit he sees smoke. But there is no immediate external evidence forcing him to admit there is also a fire there which he does not see.

Knowledge and certitude have been eliminated from the

11 Ibid., (79).
12 Ibid., iii, 1 (69).
area of existents. The assertion that the principle of causality is self-evident or of intuitive certainty involves the denial of Hume's four relations as the sole sources of certain knowledge.

The causal maxim is not self-evident. Further it cannot be proved. The assumptions underlying the exclusion of certitude from the world of existence is more clearly evidenced in Hume's proof that the principle of causality does not admit of demonstration. For the causal principle to be demonstrably certain, the following proposition must be proved: it is impossible that anything can ever begin to exist without a cause.

If this proposition were true, the ideas of cause and effect would be necessarily connected. If necessarily connected, the ideas would not be separable. But the fact is that the ideas of cause and effect are distinct. Consequently these ideas are separable. One can think of a thing as non-existent at one moment and existent the next moment without introducing the idea of a cause. The contradictory of the law of causality is that something can begin to be without a cause. This proposition, according to the above analysis, is not self-contradictory. The causal maxim cannot be demonstrated since its opposite is possible.  

13 "Now that the latter proposition is utterly
Syllogistically, Hume's argument might be put in this fashion:

All certitude arises from the relation of ideas.
But cause and effect is not a relation between ideas but between existents.
Hence, there is not certitude arising from the relation of cause and effect.

This syllogism, which assumes that matters of fact are indemonstrable, rests on the following:

The demonstrable implies the contradiction of the opposite.
But what we conceive as existent, we can conceive as non-existent.
.: There is no being whose non-existence implies a contradiction.
.: There is no being whose existence is demonstrable.

If the principle of causality is certain, it must be self-evident or demonstrable. If it is self-evident, it must be at least negatively, though not properly, demonstrable by reduction to the principle of contradiction, i.e., by pointing incapable of a demonstrative proof, we may satisfy ourselves by considering, that as all distinct ideas are separable from each other, and as the ideas of cause and effect are evidently distinct, 'twill be easy for us to conceive any object to be non-existent this moment, and existent the next, without conjoining to it the distinct idea of a cause or productive principle. The separation, therefore, of the idea of a cause from that of a beginning of existence, is plainly possible for the imagination; and consequently the actual separation of these objects is so far possible, that it implies no contradiction nor absurdity; and is therefore incapable of being refuted by any reasoning from mere ideas; without which 'tis impossible to demonstrate the necessity of a cause." T. iii, 3 (79-80).

The underlying argument is presented even more succinctly in the Enquiry: "The contrary of every matter of fact is still possible; because it can never imply a contradiction, and is conceived by the mind with the same facility and distinctness, as if ever so conformable to reality." E. IV, i (23).
out the impossibility of the opposite. Hume grasps this clearly and rests his case on two points: the insufficiency of demonstrative reasoning in the matter, and his principle of atomism, that what is distinguishable is separable. On first glance both of these principles appear independent of the copy theory of ideas. Whether they are actually so independent is matter for a later chapter.

Hume adduces and disposes of three arguments for causality brought forward by his predecessors.\textsuperscript{14} The arguments of Hobbes\textsuperscript{15} and Clarke\textsuperscript{16} are refuted as a preliminary step toward exposing the petitio in the argument of Locke. Hobbes argues that a cause is required to determine an object to exist at some one time and at one place, rather than at any other. Clarke asserts that if there were no causes, an object would have to produce itself. The obvious objection to either argument is that it assumes what is to be proved, namely, the

\textsuperscript{14} T, iii, 3 (80-81).


\textsuperscript{16} Samuel Clarke was a very influential thinker in England in the early eighteenth century. He was interested in applications of physics in theological matters and regarded Newton's cosmology as the grand vindication of natural theology. Clarke, A Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God, 5th ed., London, 1719, 125. This reference for the argument Hume cites is given by John Laird, Hume's Philosophy of Human Nature, New York, 1931, 97.
necessity of a cause at all. Locke argues: "Whatever is produced without any cause is produced by nothing: or in other words, has nothing as a cause. But nothing can never be a cause, no more than it can be something." This falls under the same objection. When we exclude all causes we really exclude them, and do not suppose the object or anything else to be the cause of its existence. Hume's objections here are well grounded. Each of his adversaries attempts to prove something indemonstrable. Locke's argument, if it were more felicitously worded to avoid dispute hinging on the word produced, might have escaped the objection.

Hume's indirect method led to two questions. The first asked why we judge that everything that begins to be must have a cause. Hume concluded that this causal maxim was not self-evident, nor could it be proved. Yet we hold this maxim

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17 In arguing with Locke, perhaps Hume had a passage like the following in mind: "In the next place, man knows, by an intuitive certainty, that bare nothing can no more produce any real being, than it can be equal to two right angles. If a man knows not that nonentity, or the absence of all being, cannot be equal to two right angles, it is impossible he should know any demonstration in Euclid ... What was not from eternity had a beginning; and what had a beginning must be produced by something else." John Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, IV, x, 3, ed. Alexander C. Fraser, Oxford, 1894, II, 307-308.

18 T. iii, 3 (81).

19 Hume has shown that some alleged proofs are invalid. Other explanations are still possible.
with conviction and make particular inferences with assurance. Our assurance or opinion, Hume tells us, must rest on "observation and experience." The two sources of knowledge previously discussed are intuition and deductive reasoning. By observation and experience, Hume must mean some sort of induction.

The second question then is how this causal principle arises from experience. This general question is particularized into the form: "Why we conclude, that such particular causes must necessarily have such particular effects, and why we form an inference from one to another?" Every inference must begin with some impression, some actual given, since it cannot begin from nothing or go on indefinitely. In reasonings concerning cause and effect, the mind always goes from the impression present to the idea of the absent but correlative object. There are then three things to explain: "First, The original impression. Secondly, The transition to the idea of the connected cause or effect. Thirdly, The nature and qualities of that idea."

Concerning the first element to be explained, impressions of sensation are perfectly inexplicable for Hume; whether they come from the object, the mind, or God is an

20 T, iii, 3 (82).
21 Ibid.
22 Ibid., iii, 5 (84).
apparently insoluble question. Impressions of memory are distinguished from fancies of the imagination only by their force and vivacity.²³

The following remarks concentrate on the second member of the tripartite division, the transition or inference. Stated in its simplest terms Hume's problem concerning the transition or inference is as follows:

Let us now see upon what our inference is founded, when we conclude from the one [a cause] that the other [its effect] has existed or will exist. Suppose I see a ball moving in a straight line towards another, I immediately conclude, that they will shock, and that the second will be in motion. This is the inference from cause to effect; and of this nature are all our reasonings in the conduct of life: on this is founded all our belief in history: and from hence is derived all philosophy, excepting only geometry and arithmetic. If we can explain the inference from the shock of two balls, we shall be able to account for this operation of the mind in all instances.²⁴

The first observation is that the inference is not based on a penetration into the essences which might reveal

²³ Ibid., (84-86).

²⁴ David Hume, An Abstract of a Treatise of Human Nature, 1740, reprinted with an Introduction by J. M. Keynes and P. Sraffa, Cambridge, 1938, 13. This pamphlet, called the Abstract, was hitherto unknown to Hume's biographers. Only recently was a copy discovered by Keynes and Sraffa, who argue convincingly that the little work is authentically Hume's and not Adam Smith's as was formerly supposed. The passage cited is an evidence of the assumption that the rationality belonging to the principle of causality should be transferable to the individual instances of causation.
the necessary dependence of one thing on another. Thus there is no implication holding between impression and idea:

There is no object, which implies the existence of any other if we consider these objects in themselves, and never look beyond the ideas which we form of them. Such an inference would amount to knowledge, and would imply the absolute contradiction and impossibility of conceiving any thing different. But as all distinct ideas are separable, 'tis evident there can be no impossibility of that kind. 25

Here is again expressed the principle that what is distinguishable is separable. Hobart considers it the major conclusion of Hume. He writes that Hume's "whole discovery" about cause and effect comes to this, that "a proposition may imply another proposition, but a thing cannot imply another thing." 26

Thus the idea associated with the impression might be displaced and another substituted for it. There is no contradiction for Hume in the denying of any fact that it implies the existence of any other fact.

This assertion, that reason is incapable of attaining necessary connection between cause and effect, is elaborated with special insistence in the Enquiry. In fact, the clarity and varied repetition of this proposition is the greatest contribution of the Enquiry to the present chapter.

25 T, iii, 6 (86–87).

According to Hume in the *Enquiry*, the relation of cause and effect is in no wise discoverable *a priori*. We could never know that fire burned or that men talked or that gunpowder exploded except from experience:

When we reason *a priori*, and consider merely any object or cause, as it appears to the mind, independent of all observation, it never could suggest to us the notion of any distinct object, such as its effect; much less, show us the inseparable and inviolable connection between them. 27

The man brought suddenly into the world could only discover succession because "the particular powers, by which all natural operations are performed, never appear to the senses." 28

Before the event anything is conceivable. Before the collision of two billiard balls one might imagine both billiard balls to stand still, or the second ball to remain in its position, or either to bounce off in a hundred possible directions. "All the suppositions are consistent and conceivable." 29 But certitude requires the exclusion of even the possibility of the opposite. Here the opposite is conceivable and hence possible. 30

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27  E, IV, i (28); also, 24-25, 26, 27.

28  E, V, i (36).

29  E, IV, i (26).

30  This is not strictly reducible to the classic case: "Socrates, while he is sitting, sits with metaphysical certitude." In Hume's instance the disputed object is not an object of direct perception, but is inferred, argued to, and hence absent from direct perception.
Since the causal inference is not discovered \textit{a priori} by reason, it must be experiential in nature. Concretely experience means this:

We remember to have had frequent instances of the existence of one species of objects; and also remember, that the individuals of another species of objects have always attended them, and have existed in a regular order of contiguity and succession with regard to them.\textsuperscript{31}

Experience means impressions taken collectively. It is the memory, continued to the present instance, of one class of objects in constant ordered succession with another. After innumerable instances of the conjunction of the object \textit{flame} and the sensation \textit{heat}, "without further ceremony" (without bothering about real essences and powers) we call the one \textit{cause} and the other \textit{effect}.

Experience gives us the repetition of events. Instead of a single $x$ followed by $y$, we have a number of instances of $x$ followed by $y$. Hume calls this contribution of experience "constant conjunction." This new feature offers promise but it does not absolve us of all difficulties. For if one instance is insufficient to explain the necessary connection between cause and effect, the mere repetition of similar instances will not advance us along the way. Causality is not reducible, as noted earlier, merely to constant conjunction, and Hume was quite averse to saying that we had an impression of repetition.

\textsuperscript{31} T, iii, 6 (87).
He here forecasts his conclusion that in the end it may turn out that the necessary connection depends on the inference, instead of the inference depending on the necessary connection. 32

Reason does not penetrate the essences of things so as to grasp a necessary nexus between two things. Reason cannot discover a priori a necessary relation of cause and effect between two objects. But with the addition of experience, with the help of repeated instances of the conjunction of pairs of objects, can reason thus aided by experience make the transition or causal inference? For de facto, and Hume is always conscious of this point, we do make the inference:

If reason determ'ed us, it wou'd proceed upon that principle that instances, of which we have had no experience, must resemble those, of which we have had experience, and that the course of nature continues always uniformly the same. 33

This proposition cannot be demonstrated, since a change in the course of nature is conceivable and thus possible. The argument taking shape here can be stated formally:

Reasoning concerning matters of fact is based on the relation of cause and effect.
But reasoning concerning that relation is based on experience.
But conclusions from experience are NOT based on reason.
.: Reasoning concerning matters of fact (existents, causes, effects) are NOT based on reason. (Hence the inferences are not strictly reasonings or rational at all.)

32 Ibid., (88).
33 Ibid., (89); also E, IV, ii (30-33).
When we argue from a present cause to an absent effect which customarily accompanies that cause, our inference is based on experience. But Hume is careful to point out that experience of its very nature can inform us only of the past and present, not of the future. Experience is the memory of classes of objects constantly conjoined in the past together with a present instance of their conjunction, or of one member of the association. Experience cannot justify the inference since experience cannot bridge the chasm separating the past and present from the future.

Rather, an assumption is added to the data of experience. We presume that the future will be conformable to the past. The inference is as valid and rational as this presumption on which the inference is based. Reason, again showing its impotence in the existential and factual order, cannot indicate why the presumption must be so, why the course of nature must continue in the future along the patterns it has exhibited in the past. Without reference to his copy theory or his atomism, Hume points out that the uniformity of nature is not demonstrable.

34 T, iii, 6 (89).
35 On this point MacNabb remarks: "Hume does not deny that the uniformity of nature is the 'presumption' on which all probable reasoning is founded. His point is that it is merely a presumption, which cannot be proved." D. G. C. MacNabb, David Hume: His Theory of Knowledge and Morality, London, 1951, 63.
The argument from experience does not give certainty. Yet it might yield probability; it might tell us what is likely to happen in the future. Probability is usually the balancing of a set of conflicting experiences, such as the casting of a die. Given the six faces of the die and a definite number of throws, we can proceed to calculate the frequency with which each face turns up and consequently the probability in any one instance. With uniform experience there is no ground for calculation of possibility. The mathematical calculus of probabilities has no material to work on other than uncontradicted and invariable sequence. The probability that the sun will rise tomorrow cannot be calculated from a series of opposed experiences. The probability must rest on the presumption that the future will be conformable to the past. The presumption cannot itself "arise from probability." 36

No "logical reason" can be offered for the presumption. Therefore inferences from particular causes to particular effects, our assurance and conviction of the necessity of these particular causal relations, can be justified neither as demonstrable nor probable.

For the sake of argument Hume now grants his opponents that a certain cause had actually produced a certain effect in

36 T, iii, 6 (90).
the past. He returns to his original observation in this present analysis of univocal causality, namely, that there is no penetration of essences whereby we might discover the necessary connection of one object with another. Though there might have been one instance in which an object with these sensible qualities had the power and actually produced this effect, yet there is no known necessary connection between these sensible external qualities and the secret powers of the nature:

there is no known connexion between the sensible qualities and the secret powers; and consequently, that the mind is not led to form such a conclusion concerning their constant conjunction, by any thing which it knows of their nature. 37

Experience can account only for the precise period of time that falls under its cognizance. All the effects of a secret nature might change without any change in the sensible qualities. The color, texture, and other sensible qualities of bread have no connection with the secret powers of nourishment and support. 38

This last argument bears out the logical connection between the denial of the principle of causality and the denial of an individual instance. Consequently, the argument indicates the interdependence of the two major questions which constituted

37 E, IV, i1 (29-30).
38 Ibid., (34).
Hume's indirect method. The denial of the causal maxim entails the denial of necessity in particular causal laws. For to know that a particular thing is a specific cause with a specific effect, one must know that it is of a specific nature. To know this inner nature one must proceed from sensible phenomena to underlying substance. This means to go from effect to cause. But this is the very principle in question.

This much is clear. However repeated sequence might enter in as a psychological conditioner or prerequisite in the formation, clarification, and testing of the notion of causality, repeated sequence or constant conjunction of particular cases of "causality" cannot establish the principle of causality in the sense of every contingent being demanding a cause. The assent to a specific instance of univocal causality presupposes the penetration of a nature. The penetration of a nature implicitly involves the rational demand of a sufficient reason for the sensible phenomena.

Hume's second question was why we conclude that particular causes have particular effects. The response to this question involved a discussion of causal inference or transition, the second element of causal reasoning. The discussion comprised three points especially. First, the inference is not based on any rational penetration of essences which might reveal the necessary dependence of one thing on another. Nor is the relation
of cause and effect in any way discoverable a priori. Secondly, reason even aided by experience cannot make the transition, since mere repetition of instances does not reveal a necessary connection. Nor can the inference be justified as probable since the probability would rest on a presumption. Thirdly, granting one instance in which a certain cause actually produced a certain effect, yet there is no known necessary connection between a set of sensible qualities and the secret powers of the given cause.

To conclude, there is in all reasoning from experience a step which is not supported by any argument. "If the mind be not engaged by argument to make this step, it must be induced by some other principle of equal weight and authority; and that principle will preserve its influence as long as human nature remains the same." There is no such thing as causal inference. The imagination, not the understanding, habit and not reason, custom and not evidence, is at work. The nature of the transition is the work of associations of perceptions in the imagination.

The third element of causal reasoning, the nature and qualities of the idea of the connected cause or effect, remains. However, instead of finding our way through the intricate labyrinth of argument explaining belief, it is more consonant with

39 E, V, i (36).
the purposes of this study to proceed to Section 14 of the 
*Treatise*, where Hume returns upon his footsteps to reconsider 
the idea of necessary connection.

**ORIGIN OF THE IDEA OF NECESSARY CONNECTION**

The inference which rests on the idea of necessity 
has been explained. The impression, the origin of that idea, 
is now the matter of investigation. The inference turned out 
to be not "inference" but a transition determined by a natural 
necessity. From the logical justification of inference the 
question moved to the psychological grounding for belief.

The present section will be somewhat repetitive of the 
preceding investigation. The precise objective is to determine 
what we mean by power, cause, efficacy, efficiency, in short: 
"What is our idea of necessity, when we say that two objects 
are necessarily connected."40

Briefly, in the opening page of Section 14, Hume sums 
up his whole position on the matter. Since ideas are copies of 
impressions, we must find the impression corresponding to the 
idea of necessity. But the objects considered necessarily 
related, causes and effects, present themselves only as con­
tiguous, successive, and constantly conjoined. Nonetheless, 
frequent repetition somehow produces a new impression by which

40 T. I. 111. 14 (155).
the mind is determined to go from a present object to its usual attendant. This impression of determination is the source of the idea of necessity.41

Since this is an all-important stage in the main argument, the ground will be carefully traced out which Hume himself retraverses in arriving at this new impression. The logical sequence of the argument can be briefly presented under eight headings:

1. One experience of an object gives no ground for conjecture as to its effect. If we perceived the power of the cause, we could foresee the effect.42

2. Whence the notion of power then? Reason alone cannot produce an original idea (an idea not copied from an impression). Reason cannot conclude that a cause is necessary to every beginning of existence. Consequently Locke's argument from several productions in matter is of no avail. The substantial forms, and "accidents, and faculties," invoked by the "scholastics" to explain the operations of bodies, are all equally unintelligible. Since extension excludes motion or efficacy, the Cartesians conclude that God is the cause of motions and operations in matter. But we have no impression of Deity from which

41 Ibid., (156).
42 This and the following numbered paragraphs are based on Treatise, iii, 14 (157-169) unless otherwise noted.
we could derive the notion of power.

3. The idea must be from experience. Yet there is no instance of a cause where we discover the power of the operating principle "wherein the power is perceived to exert itself." If we have an abstract or general idea of power, we ought to be able to conceive some particular power in a particular body. But to conceive or comprehend the necessary bond between a cause and its effect would imply the absolute impossibility for one object not to follow upon the other.

4. Thus we have no true idea of necessity in objects. Even after we experience both cause and effect, the nature of the connection between them remains wholly mysterious. Yet the idea of necessity must have some meaning.

5. A multiplicity of resembling instances must give us the idea since one instance is insufficient. Yet constancy of conjunction does not give grounds for rationally inferring that the conjunction is a causal one. Repetition alone does not discover anything new in the objects. Repetition of impressions and ideas adds nothing to them, produces nothing in the objects, since being repeated is not a qualifying predicate. The several instances are entirely independent. Power, necessity, efficiency, represent nothing in things.

43 Ibid., (160).
6. The resembling instances do produce a new impression in the mind:

Necessity, then is the effect of this observation, and is nothing but an internal impression of the mind, or a determination to carry our thoughts from one object to another. Without considering it in this view, we can never arrive at the most distant notion of it, or be able to attribute it either to external or internal objects, to spirit or body, to causes or effects. 44

Necessary connection is the same as the transition arising from the accustomed union.

7. The impression, not from sensation, must be internal. It is the propensity, produced by custom, to pass from an object to the idea of its usual attendant. Efficacy, necessity, is something in the mind.

8. Yet, this necessity is conjoined with things, since "the mind has a great propensity to spread itself on external objects, and to conjoin with them any internal impressions, which they occasion, and which always make their appearance at the same time that these objects discover themselves to the senses." 45

Just as we link secondary qualities of sound, color, and smell, to objects, so we suppose necessity and power to lie in objects we consider, not in the mind that considers them. This propensity is not the same as anthropomorphic projection.

44 Ibid., (165).
There are several corollaries to this line of argument. Necessary connection is a datum of introspection, not of sensation. Hume is not abolishing necessary connection, but analyzing it. We find through reflective observation a causal connection exhibited in the mind, a connection between perceptions. This connection is assented to in belief, but is as unintelligible to us, as mysterious, as the connection between external objects. The causal connection of impression and idea is the new determination in the mind to pass from one to the other.

There are two distinct factors in the idea of necessary connection, "one as conditioning it, and one as constituting it. Constancy of conjunction is requisite as that through which alone a custom or habit can be acquired." The feeling generated by this custom is that which constitutes our impression.

Accordingly, there are two definitions of causality possible, as a philosophical and a natural relation. Cause is "'An object precedent and contiguous to another, and where all the objects resembling the former are plac'd in like relations of precedency and contiguity to those objects, that resemble the latter.'" This is cause and effect defined as a philosophical

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46 Smith, The Philosophy of David Hume, 373.

47 The precise nature of this feeling will be treated in the following chapter.

48 T, iii, 14 (170). Cause is defined more succinctly
relation, and implying contiguity, succession, and constant conjunction. As a natural relation: "A CAUSE is an object precedent and contiguous to another, and so united with it, that the idea of the one determines the mind to form the idea of the other, and the impression of the one to form a more lively idea of the other." This is an ostensive rather than a logical definition. Hume reduces cause and effect to succession or uniformity only as a philosophical relation. As a natural relation it is a determination of the mind, an associative connection and a process of enlivening. The word "determination" must not be taken to mean real connection, in which event Hume would be entangled in his own dilemma of defining by synonyms. Hume is giving a causal account of the origin of our idea, which account itself is reducible to succession and constant conjunction. The one distinct element is the felt determination. Feeling does not give us knowledge of necessity.

Our causal sentence does three things: it states that A has been constantly conjoined with B; it states that when A occurs again, B will occur again; it expresses the "comfortable

in the Enquiry as "an object, followed by another, and where all the objects, similar to the first, are followed by objects similar to the second." E, VII, ii (63).
feeling of "of-course-ness which we have when we pass, as we habitually do, from the one of these beliefs to the other."\textsuperscript{50}

As the argument unfolded, the underlying and explicit premises or assumptions of Hume have been noted. At this point it will be profitable to gather up the loose ends and state explicitly these premises.

Regarding the principle of causality, the first argument is based on Hume's conception of the scope of intuitive certainty. There can be only opinion with regard to matter of fact or existence. The second argument depends on the principle of his atomism, namely, that ideas are separate and that no fact implies the existence of any other. A third premise supporting both arguments is the insufficiency of demonstrative reasoning in the matter.

The rejection of the law of causation is based on the following: The mind attains only perceptions. There is no penetration of real essences. The ideas of cause and effect are separable; there is no implication holding between an impression and an idea. The rationality of the principle should be transferable to the individual instances.

The analysis of necessary connection reveals these assumptions: Ideas are copies of impressions; reason alone

can give no new idea. If we perceived the power, we could foresee the effect. Reason cannot demonstrate a necessary connection, since it is always conceivable for one object not to follow another.

The dialectic pursued throughout this lengthy chapter leads to this: the causal maxim is not known by intuition, nor by a priori demonstrative reasoning, nor by experiential inductive reasoning, nor is it found in the content of sense experience.

But does Hume deny the truth of the causal maxim? In a letter addressed to John Stewart, Hume clearly maintains:

I never asserted so absurd a Proposition as That any thing might arise without a Cause: I only maintain'd, that our Certainty and Falshood of that Proposition proceeded neither from Intuition nor Demonstration; but from another Source. That Caesar existed, that there is such an Island as Sicily; for these Propositions, I affirm, we have no demonstrative nor intuitive Proof. Would you infer that I deny their Truth or even their Certainty.51

From this it is frequently said that Hume did not deny causality, but the rationality of the causal principle.52 Hume assents to the independent existence of bodies and to the independent existence of causes. The affirmative answer rests in each case

51 David Hume, The Letters of David Hume, ed. J. Y. T. Greig, Oxford, 1932, I, 185. This letter was written in February 1754, fifteen years after the first publication of the Treatise.

Yet there are difficulties in the matter. Hume says he never denied cause. Cause may refer to a real agent which actually produces another thing so that there is a necessary connection of dependence between the cause and the effect. Cause may simply mean an impression regularly associated with another so that the recurrence of one gives rise to the idea of the other. If Hume means "cause" in this second sense, then he cannot help but affirm the existence of causes. Unknown causes are self-contradictory notions if "cause" means impressions regularly associated, since impressions are necessarily known.

The question is this: is Hume merely an agnostic or a sceptic? If an agnostic, Hume does not deny the independent reality of substances, causes, and selves, but asserts we do not know whether the intellect attains them. If Hume is a sceptic, then unknown causes and permanent selves are self-contradictory notions.

Restricting ourselves merely to causal connection, if we take Hume to be an agnostic and not a sceptic, we must take him to be maintaining the following propositions: We know what we mean by cause and necessity. We do not mean ideas

53 By sceptic is meant explicitly one who doubts the validity of the intellect. It is admitted throughout this discussion that Hume has another avenue to reality other than intellect or reason.
regularly associated with impressions or propensities of the mind to pass from one to another. We do mean real connection between external objects. But we find no warrant for asserting the actual existence of instances of this real connection.

This sequence of statements renders Hume consistent. However, since Hume tends toward the modern theory that the meaning of a proposition is its verification, he would probably deny the second proposition above: "We do not mean ideas . . ." The probability of this denial can be corroborated by two instances.

First, Hume states that we have no clear idea of power in any object: "when we say we desire to know the ultimate and operating principle, as something, which resides in the external object, we either contradict ourselves, or talk without a meaning."54 This reveals an apparent insensitivity to consistency when paralleled with Section 6 of Part iii. There Hume seems to allow that things have real essences, though we do not penetrate beyond the sensible appearances. Here he insists that the supposition is nonsensical.

Hume's doctrine on the external world furnishes the second instance. Hume first states that the external world certainly exists and it is impossible to doubt its existence, and

54 T, iv, 7 (267).
next through a philosophical investigation shows that this
selfsame assumption, which it is impossible to doubt, has no
basis whatever. Experiments show that perceptions do not have
a distinct existence; but if this is the case, it is also a
contradiction to speak of their continued existence.\textsuperscript{55}

The problem resolves itself into this. If substances,
causes, and selves are unintelligible, how can we believe in
them? It is difficult to see how a man can assent to a proposition
which has no meaning, which is unintelligible. He is
equivalently believing in nothing. A man can believe in that
which is beyond the power of the intellect to know, but can a
man believe in that which his intellect tells him is impossible?

On the other hand, the following position is consistent
and understandable. Objective necessary connection is intelli-
gible and possible. The intellect does not grasp this objective
necessary connection. Nonetheless man feels compelled to believe
in objective necessary connection. However the instances cited
above indicate that Hume was not always willing to admit that
objective necessary connection or permanent substances are
intelligible and possible.

There is no easy way out of this dilemma. The
plainest solution, apparently, is the self-styled distinction

\textsuperscript{55} T, iv, 2 (208).
of Hume as a man and as a philosopher. As a man, Hume believes in the external world and in objective causal connection. The belief is the work of the imagination and is the foundation for all reasonings about factual relationships. It is not likely that we are to take for granted what is without meaning. There is meaning, so to speak, on the level of the imagination.

But these beliefs are not the basis for demonstrative reasoning. By philosophical reflection Hume can and does question these beliefs. Philosophical reflection will not root out for good belief in the external world or objective necessity, but it can enjoy a temporary speculative doubt.

Belief takes charge at the point where knowledge ends. Belief is not an extension of knowledge, but a substitute for it.

Having denied the rationality of the causal maxim, the problem for Hume is to show in virtue of what the causal inference is felt to be ineluctable. The following chapter will delineate the all-important notion of belief, especially in relation to causality. It will afford a positive complement to the critical side of Hume set forth in this chapter.

56 T, iv, 7 (269).
CHAPTER III

HUME'S CONSTRUCTIVE THEORY: BELIEF IN CAUSALITY

Causal inference does not consist in the rational inspection of the relations of objects, but is a psychologically determined process. It has no logical basis, but only constant conditions. This is Hume's basic argument. There remains little to do but to psychologize.

Of the three elements\(^1\) constituting our causal arguments which Hume proposed to explain, only one remains. It is the nature and qualities of the idea of the connected cause or effect. The precise nature of the idea ushers us into a dominant feature of Hume's theory, the doctrine on belief.

In his approach to belief, Hume is self-consciously original. "Here is a new question unthought of by philosophers."\(^2\) This theory is a necessary basis for the positive theory of causal inference propounded in Book I. The importance Hume attached to the doctrine can be seen in the fact that the major portion of the Appendix to Book III is devoted to correcting possible misapprehensions of this doctrine. The material of the

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1 T, iii, 5 (84).
2 Abstract, 17
Appendix is succinctly repeated—sometimes almost to the word—in the Enquiry. And as noted, the Abstract is insistent on the notion of belief.

Hume is concerned solely with belief in facts. Despite the absence of rational justification, we human beings are under psychological compulsion to believe in the existence of objects. Further, we draw absent objects onto the level of the system of present perceptions.

Hume's task is to describe and explain this belief. His approach is to distinguish between conceptual content and belief-quality. This distinction is a familiar dichotomy and has its parallels and precedents throughout the history of philosophy. The earlier Scholastics distinguished between concept and judgment and between essence and existence. And after Hume, Kant was to emphasize the world of difference between a hundred existing thalers and the mere idea of the same. But the importance of the distinction was somewhat minimized by decadent Scholastics and Rationalists. The Cartesian notion of the idea was so all pervasive as to obscure the value of the judgment. Consequently, the renewed emphasis of this distinction is a real contribution of Hume, rivaling in value his insistence on the experiential nature of the causal inference.

Every causal inference terminates in conclusions concerning the existence of objects. But existence makes no
addition to the ideal content of an object. The difference between the conception and belief in an object must lie in the manner of conceiving it.

The difference between believing or not believing an intuitively or demonstrably certain proposition consists in this, that the imagination cannot conceive anything contrary to the demonstration. The person is determined to conceive the proposition in one manner. But in the absence of absolute necessity in causal reasonings, "the imagination is free to conceive both sides of the question." Since both are possible, why belief rather than incredulity?

We can conceive the proposition, whether we believe or disbelieve it. The difference again must lie in the manner of conceiving. A belief is then defined, "A LIVELY IDEA RELATED TO OR ASSOCIATED WITH A PRESENT IMPRESSION." The opening pages of the Treatise prepared the way for this definition by the famous distinction between impressions and ideas. These differ from one another only in point of their different degrees of force and vivacity. To believe in an object as existent is to accord it the same value as sense impressions. An idea achieving

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3 T, ii, 6 (66-67).
4 T, iii, 7 (95).
5 Ibid., (96).
the status of belief must, then, have acquired a like force and vivacity.

The characteristic of a conception which has attained the belief status is the liveliness of the idea, or better, a lively idea. A process of enlivening is the prelude to belief. And the enlivening can come about only through relation with sense impressions which are by definition forceful and lively.

The vivacity bestowed on the idea is explained by this principle: "that when any impression becomes present to us, it not only transports the mind to such ideas as are related to it, but likewise communicates to them a share of its force and vivacity."6

This communication or transfusion of feeling is happily clarified in the comparison suggested by N. Kemp Smith.7 His main assertion is that Hume entered philosophy by the gateway of morals, and specifically that Books II and III of the Treatise, the parts on morals, were written prior to the more famous Book I; further, that Hume came to the writing of Book I with his doctrine on belief already in mind and with the concern to lay the theoretical groundwork for his moral philosophy which follows. It has been indicated that the doctrine of belief is foreshadowed

6 Ibid., (97).

in the opening sentences of Part i, even though belief is allowed to appear under its own name only in Part iii. Smith suggests that in formulating a theory of the passions and of sympathy Hume was led in due course to attempt to work out an analogous view of belief.

Sympathy is not a distinct type of sentiment. Sympathy is a state of feeling together with others. It is a state in which observing the signs of some emotion in others, we are led through association to form the idea of that emotion. The ever present impression of the self enlivens the idea of the emotion, transfusing a force and liveliness proper to the self, and thereby in effect transforming it into an actual emotion. The suppositions are two: (1) the impression of the self tends to transfuse its liveliness; and (2) simple ideas are copies of impressions so that by an increase in force and liveliness they operate on the mind in the same way as an impression.

Belief in causal inference is a parallel phenomenon. What would otherwise be an idea acquires an influence on the mind proper to an impression. The impression is some impression of sense paralleling the impression of the self which operates in sympathy.

Since every idea is related to an impression, since belief super-adds nothing to the content of the idea, there are three elements involved: "a present impression, a lively idea,
and a relation or association in the fancy betwixt the impression and the idea." Since the phenomenon of belief is internal, whatever connection we may imagine between the present object and the inferred object, these qualities are unknown and cannot produce the belief. The present impression, provided it was observed in past instances, is the true cause of the idea and belief. The belief arises without any new operation of the reason. Instead of a process of ratiocination, the belief proceeds from custom. Custom here means whatever proceeds from a past repetition without any intervening reasoning. For this process, a present impression is absolutely necessary.

The conclusion follows neatly that "all probable reasoning is nothing but a species of sensation." In this paragraph Hume is a little forceful, perhaps overplaying his hand with the strength of logic. For all reasoning is said to be based on "taste," "sentiment," superior "feeling," "custom." Custom appears to be truly King, in Hume's own forceful phrase. Whether it be an usurped sovereignty remains for later discussion.

The doctrine here developed, which followed closely

8 T, iii, 8 (101); E, V, i (40).
9 T, iii, 8 (102-103). The meaning of custom is treated more in detail on pages 50-53 of this chapter.
10 T, iii, 8 (103).
Sections 7 to 10 of Book I, Part iii of the Treatise, may be summarized under the following points:

1. Belief names the manner in which the mind apprehends an object as existent. Belief in existence adds nothing to the content.

2. The only significant difference between an impression and an idea is a difference in force and vivacity. An idea, then, must be "enlivened" to operate on the mind after the manner of an impression.\(^1\)

3. Belief in facts is a phenomenon parallel to sympathy. All impressions can transfuse their own vivacity into an associated idea.

4. Belief involves just three conditions: a present impression, a lively idea, and an association between them. The constancy of the association is proportionate to the belief.

Several fundamental questions are left unsettled by this exposition. Is belief merely vivacity of an idea or a distinct act of the mind? Is the difference between impressions and ideas one of kind or merely one of degree? What is the nature of custom?

As to the first question, in the Treatise Hume commonly held that belief in existence was a manner of conceiving. The

\(^{1}\) T, iii, 10 (119).
belief-manner was usually described as force, liveliness, or vivacity. Hume said rather explicitly: "we must not be contented with saying, that the vividness of the idea produced the belief: We must maintain that they [vividness of idea and belief] are individually the same."12

To identify belief with a degree of vivacity involves difficulties. Hume was singularly dissatisfied with his treatment of belief and chafed under its inadequacies. Several passages from the Appendix to Book III will indicate Hume's own corrected view:

Belief consists merely in a certain feeling or sentiment. There is a greater firmness and solidity in the conceptions which are the objects of conviction and assurance than in the loose and indolent reveries of the castle-builder.

When I would explain this manner, I scarce find any word that fully answers the case, but am obliged to have recourse to everyone's feeling, in order to give him a perfect notion of this operation of the mind.13

Here belief is a feeling or sentiment, an act or attitude of the mind, a way of viewing an object as existent. Belief is not merely a specific degree of vivacity of our perceptions. Belief is rather a class of complex states of affairs, with several distinguishing marks. Such marks are a vivid idea, steady conception, customary association, constancy and coherence.

12 Ibid., (116).
13 T, Appendix to Book III, (624; 624-625; 629).
A sufficient number of the marks must be present in a sufficient degree. 14

The investigation of belief as merely a degree of vivacity leads us to our second question. In the opening sentences of the Treatise, and many times thereafter, Hume speaks of the difference between impressions and ideas as one merely of degree in force and liveliness. However, the difference appears also to be one in kind, for "it sometimes happens, that our impressions are so faint and low, that we cannot distinguish them from our ideas." 15 If vivacity alone constituted the difference between them, impressions could not be so faint, nor ideas so vivid, that the one would be mistaken for the other.

In his account of belief Hume introduces a significant exception. A sufficiently lively idea may on occasion instigate a belief. The idea "supplies the place of an impression, and is entirely the same, so far as regards our present purpose." 16

14 This is put rather pointedly by MacNabb, David Hume, 80; "It is a mark of belief that the idea believed is vividly imagined and holds our involuntary attention; it is a mark of belief that the idea believed is steady and habitual; it is a mark of belief that the steady conception of the idea comes with the click of custom in suitable conditions; it is a mark of belief that we feel and act as would be appropriate if the idea were true. Hume describes these marks very well. But no one of them . . . is by itself a necessary or sufficient criterion of genuine belief; rather a sufficient number of the marks must be present in a sufficient degree."

15 T, i, 1 (2).
16 T, iii, 8 (106).
In other words, we can know that a perception is an idea even though we do not know it as representing or subsequent to an impression, even though the perception, as apprehended, is as vivid as an impression and gives rise to beliefs.\textsuperscript{17}

This ambiguity is partly explained by the emphasis on "vivacity" as preparatory to the revolutionary doctrine of belief. Hume wished to establish two things: that ideas are copies of impressions, and therefore a process of enlivening can raise an idea to the belief status of an impression. But if the careful conclusions of the philosopher are to be distinguished from the vivid fancies of the enthusiast, another factor must be considered. This is the "force and settled order" of impressions. The correct criterion of impressions is not merely liveliness, but also coherence. When the difference between impressions and ideas is blurred, it is those perceptions which have constancy and coherence that are called impressions.

Our third question concerns "Custom." Hume employs

\textsuperscript{17} Especially clear on this point is J. A. Passmore, \textit{Hume's Intentions}, Cambridge, 1952, 96: "Thus, we can know that a perception is an 'idea' even though

1. We do not know it as representing an impression.
2. We do not know it as subsequent to an impression.
3. It is quite as vivid as an impression.
4. It gives rise to beliefs in the same way as an impression. Hume relies on the fact that, as he puts it, 'every one of himself will readily perceive the distinction betwixt feeling and thinking'; he fails seriously to ask himself the crucial question—\textit{could} we make this distinction if we were acquainted with nothing but perceptions?"
the terms custom, habit, instinct, propensity, and principle, rather indiscriminately. At best the terms can be distinguished in this way. Instinct and propensity usually refer to some innate power or inclination. Custom and habit can refer to developed or acquired inclinations, tendencies, and ways of acting. In the doctrine of belief, custom and habit are not used in the sense of the conventional mores of a people.

Custom and habit can be distinguished in this way. Custom more properly refers to the objective fact of the regular repetition of an action or event. Custom is certainly employed in this sense in Hume. Habit refers to a subjective disposition, or developed power or capacity. A person can rise habitually at an early hour without having the habit, the disposition, the inclination of rising early. Hume employs the word habit not merely to signify the objective fact of repetition or habitual ways of acting, but also to indicate a disposition or inclination so to act.¹⁸

¹⁸ Habit can also be considered in several senses. A. Habit in the sense of biological and physical adaptation consists in the fact that a being retains a modification from a certain action. If the action is repeated, the being will tend to be modified the same way in successive actions. B. Habit can mean the spontaneous repetition of that which is first caused by external causes. This is exemplified in the acquisition of language and customs. C. Habit in the psychological sense can mean the conscious acquiring by exercise of the power of doing that of which one was formerly incapable. This implies the gradual disappearance of consciousness together with an increase in automatic operation.
Custom and habit, then, are the ultimates which Hume has run up against in several points in his argument. Reason cannot explain any of the basic facts of our experience. The alternative is not scepticism but beliefs which are natural and inevitable. The principle operating to produce beliefs is custom: "'Tis not, therefore, reason, which is the guide of life, but custom. That alone determines the mind, in all instances, to suppose the future conformable to the past. However easy this step may seem, reason would never, to all eternity, be able to make it."19

Custom is the non-rational propensity to repeat the same operation.20 This definition does not explain all that Hume wants it to explain. The principle of association of ideas or the habit to repeat an operation is not enough to explain something more than a memory belief. To bridge the gap between what would be a mere memory belief and what actually is expec-

In this sense we speak of a habit of self-control, the habit of reflection before thinking.

Of these three meanings of habit, Hume usually means habit in sense B, while perhaps including sense A. Habit in sense C implies volition and thus is not applicable to belief or causal inference.

The matter of this footnote was borrowed liberally from Lalande, *Vocabulaire Technique et Critique De La Philosophie* Paris, 1947, 378-384.

19 Abstract, 16.

20 E, V, 1 (37).
tation, Hume appeals to the presumption that the future will be conformable to the past. This habit is referred to as a "species of instinct or mechanical power, that acts in us unknown to ourselves."²¹ He also speaks of a "kind of pre-established harmony between the course of nature and the succession of our ideas; and though the powers and forces, by which the former is governed, be wholly unknown to us; yet our thoughts and conceptions have still, we find, gone on in the same train with the other works of nature."²² This "correspondence . . . so necessary to the subsistence of our species" is effected by custom.²³

Custom then names both the principle of association of ideas in the sense of the tendency to repeat the associated ideas and the instinctive presumption that the future will resemble the past. Under this estimate, reason in the sense of the imagination:

is nothing but a wonderful and unintelligible instinct in our souls . . . This instinct, 'tis true, arises from past observation and experience; but can any one give the ultimate reason, why past experience and observation produces such an effect any more than why nature alone shou'd produce it?²⁴

²¹ E, IX (88).
²² E, V, ii (46).
²³ Ibid.
²⁴ T, iii, 16 (179).
In brief, Hume believes it was the wisdom of Nature which provided us with a principle more secure and ready to perform a function so essential to the subsistence of human beings than is the uncertain process of reasoning. Inference from cause to effect could not be trusted to the "fallacious deductions of our reason." Nature has taught us to use our arms and legs without providing us with the scientist's knowledge of nerves and muscles. Put in biological terms, "the tendency to expect repetitions of what has repeatedly occurred is the most general and indispensable adaptation of living organisms to an environment subject to laws." 

This again illustrates the parallel suggested by N. Kemp Smith. Just as the fundamental judgments of morals rest on feeling, and as in moral matters Nature has provided us with "immediate monitors," so our judgments in matters of fact are acts of belief, and belief like any other passion is predetermined by the constitution of our nature.

This is another echo of the biological interpretation of belief. Care must be had here lest the evolutionary era's emphasis on biology be foisted on Hume. Perhaps much of his doctrine on custom, habit, and principles of nature could be traced to the humanistic influence of classical Roman literature.

25 E, V, ii (47).
and philosophy. However, there are indications that Hume vaguely foreshadowed the modern empiricist's emphasis on the biological interpretation of human knowledge and behavior.

The great emphasis on association, the mechanical connection between perceptions, clearly indicate Hume's debt to Newton. Hume explicitly professed the desire to be the Newton of the moral sciences.\(^{27}\) But he also supplemented the mechanical connection between perceptions with various instinctive propensities. These various propensities are a witness to Hutcheson's\(^ {27}\) emphasis on the passions, or instinctive feelings. Hume considers reason to be nothing but a "wonderful and unintelligible instinct."\(^ {28}\) This instinct "arises from past observation and experience."\(^ {29}\)

To say that past observation and experience begets or develops an instinct is to come very close to saying that the instinct results from the necessity of man to adapt to the needs of his environment. Also, Hume considers it more conformable to the wisdom of nature to secure such an important operation as causal inference by "some instinct or mechanical tendency."\(^ {30}\)

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27 T, i, 4 (12-13).
28 T, iii, 16 (179).
29 Ibid.
30 E, V, 11 (47).
All in all, "reason is, and ought only to be the slave of the passions."  

Therefore, even if or when reason operates as something more than an instinct, reason is always subject to that which is instinctive. The supreme functioning power in man is that which is wholly instinctive, passion or feeling. Finally, in Hume's system, belief assumes within its scope a great deal which was previously accorded to knowledge. And belief is apparently something common to the species since belief is predetermined independently of the individual's experience. "Nature has determined us to judge just as it has determined us to breathe and to feel."  

The above facts lend support to the contention that within Hume can be found adumbrations of the modern pragmatic and behavioristic stress on the biological interpretation of human action and knowledge. However, the contention is prefaced with the clear admission that Hume did not explicitly accept and assert the biological interpretation.  

Belief and causality must now be related in the structure of Hume's philosophy. The questions just posed revealed two significant leads. Belief is a certain attitude of the believer. Belief demands certain qualities in the believed:

31 T, II, iii, 3 (415).

32 Smith, Philosophy of David Hume, 46.
belief—pungency or vividness, and systematic coherence of perceptions.

Perhaps the best approach is to set forth the twin beliefs which operate on different levels: the belief that objects have a continuing, independent existence and the belief that the thus constituted bodies are causally operative on one another. These beliefs refer us to a large number of objects which go to make up a system or world. Since there is no distinct idea of existence, existence or reality then must refer to perceptions, their very givenness, and will be applicable to anything else in so far as they are assimilable to these perceptions.

These existences form a "system." This system includes all that we believe to exist, especially all unobserved facts. Thus the desk and the history book, the man next door and Julius Caesar, New York and Shanghai, all form a part of the system. When the porter brings me a letter I suppose all the intermediate existents between me and my friend across the seas who wrote me the letter. 33

In the more technical language of Hume, this durable, inevitably believed, world or system will include impressions of sense and reflection, impressions of memory, and their causal associates. "Impressions always actuate the soul and that in the

33 T, iv, 2 (196).
The highest degree of conviction, or belief, is native to sense perception. The awareness proper to immediate perceptions carries with it the assurance of an unchallengeable and de facto type of certainty. "Ideas of the memory" or memories of sense-perceptions can be considered "equivalent to [sense] impressions." Any reality, then, has the belief status which is a memory or sense impression or assimilable with such impressions.

This basic conviction-attitude can be transferred to other objects. There are two requisites: a vividness approaching the firm tang of sense impressions, a constancy and coherence with the system of sense impressions. To believe is to allocate to a place in this system.

On the first level is belief in an external world. This means belief in things that persist when we are not sensing them. The persistence of things is not a datum of sense because we are not always sensing them. Nor is their independence a part

34 T, iii, 10 (118).
35 T, iii, 4 (82).
36 More strictly, there is immediate awareness of present impressions. There is belief only of objects not present in sense data, but which have the same force and liveliness as present sense data.
of the presented content. Perceptions are fleeting, subjective, perishing. Various interrupted appearances give similar perceptions, which are associated by the law of resemblance. The memories of impressions are infected with the same belief-quality as the original impressions. When the successive memory impressions are run together into one idea, this idea receives the memorial belief that was attached to the impressions. The imagination easily fills the gaps to form the idea of a continuing object. The continuance of the object leads us to regard it as independent.\textsuperscript{38}

The second system, or second level of belief, consists exclusively of causal association. We find by experience "that belief arises only from causation, and that we can draw no inference from one object to another, except they be connected by this relation."\textsuperscript{39} Ideas can gain the full belief status only through causal association with the system of impressions. It is only because belief has first operated in sense perception that it still carries us to the actually existent when it operates through causal inference.

Our picture is now slightly more detailed. The reality


\textsuperscript{39} T, iiii, 8 (107).
feeling suffuses all impressions of sense and memory. We believe whatever is necessarily connected with an existent also exists. Association gently and smoothly leads us to believe in an external world of continuing independent bodies. The only absent objects which enter our system are the causal companions of impressions. The causal companions borrow their belief quality or vigor from the impressions. This is the world of Hume, a "real world" of inter-connected perceptions, and these are the objects at which his twin beliefs arrive.
CHAPTER IV

CRITICISM OF HUME'S CONSTRUCTIVE THEORY

The criticism of this chapter will be centered on three topics: various objections to Hume's analysis of cause, the association mechanism, the critical acceptance of customs.

In place of the intellectual grasp of causality, Hume has substituted a theory of belief. But to account for the assent given to ideas reached by way of causal inference, Hume must not merely explain why they are assented to, but also why they alone are thus accepted by the mind. Hume must explain: "(a) how we come to believe that some objects are causally connected without believing that others are, (b) how we distinguish cause from effect, or (c) how causal connection differs from the connection of qualities in an object."^1

The most obvious, trite, and nonetheless as yet unanswered objection is this. Causality is one of the three natural relations of association. Why then does causality alone lead to belief, while resemblance and contiguity merely suggest

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connections between objects? Instances of causal relation are also instances of contiguity. If contiguity suffices to account for the association of ideas in any instance, it suffices in the causal instance.

Hume foresees the objection and treats it to some extent.² He regards resemblance and contiguity as supporting his theory of belief. For if mere resemblance and contiguity have some effect in enlivening ideas, how much more so an invariable relation should enliven ideas. "The objects" which the relation of cause and effect presents "are fixt and unalterable."³ The singular nature of cause and effect is due to the invariability or constant uniformity of the conjoined objects which are causes and effects.

On the part of the objects, this is no more than constant contiguity and succession. Now it is true that by definition causality differs from contiguity, since in casual conjunction, in addition to the objective constant conjunction, there is the subjective felt necessity. The precise point at issue is why there is a felt necessity in the one case of constant conjunction and not in another. That there is a constant conjunction, that there is a transition, that there is a felt

² T, i11, 9 (106-110).
³ Ibid., (110).
necessity, Hume rightly asserts. But once "power" is subtracted from objects, there is no explanation of why the mind asserts necessity.

There are instances of constant conjunction in which the mind neither feels nor projects a necessary connection between the conjoined objects: the succession of night and day, the front and back of a house, the lighting of a cigarette and the drawing of smoke. And on the other hand there are instances of a felt determination or projection of necessary connection in objects which are not constantly conjoined: the striking and the flaming of very unreliable matches; the taking of medicine and the relief from pain.

Further, Hume's explanation of our belief in necessary connection depends upon showing that the imagination relates impressions according to the modes of contiguity and succession before it relates them causally, and as a condition for so relating them. Constant conjunction refers to all that is afforded by experience as a ground for any causal belief. Contiguity and succession define conjunction, and are consequently of some import. Hume regards them at first as essential to causation, but progressively neglects them.

Contiguity is both spatial and temporal. Billiard balls are obviously spatially contiguous, and Hume concentrates on this example in the Enquiry. But the taste and smell of a
piece of fruit are not spatially contiguous with that piece of fruit. The fruit is in space but the smell and taste are "nowhere," according to the doctrine of secondary qualities. The spatial inherence of the smell in the object is inferred after their necessary connection is established. The flame and the attendant heat, the tensile strength and the metal (any property and its substance) cannot properly be regarded as spatially contiguous.

Temporal contiguity can mean either that the objects exist for a time contemporaneously or that the cause-object must appear just before the effect-object. The first interpretation makes contiguity to mean mere togetherness in experience. The second is reducible to succession, which is the temporal priority of the cause to the effect.

Temporal priority is not a universal element. Impressions do not necessarily have to come just before ideas. Suppose a man always saw smoke in his experience before he saw fire, or always heard the train whistle before he saw the train. The first element in the experience is not necessarily the cause of the subsequently experienced, nor is it thought to be so. If temporal priority is a necessary element of causation, there is no explanation why the mind can go from effect to cause as well

4 T, iv, 5 (237).
as from cause to effect.

The difficulty becomes a dilemma when objects are always experienced simultaneously: steam and the bubbling of water; the feeling of heat and the appearance of flame on entering a room. There is the classic example of the heavy book and the soft cushion. When we let the book fall, the cushion sinks under it. The interval between cause and effect is scarcely discriminable. Which came first, the sinking of the cushion or the pressing of the book? Logical analysis, and not phenomenal discrimination, indicates that it is not merely the appearance but the activity of the objects which must be considered.

Conjunction in the sense of contiguity and succession is apparently an unessential condition of causal belief. The undesirable conclusion is that mere repeated appearance in experience is a sufficient ground of causal belief. There should then be no more compulsion to feel necessity in the flame causing the heat, than that the wall causes the window, the chair causes

5 This is alluded to in Beardsley, "A Dilemma for Hume," 37: "In considering this reply, we may select a classic example in which the interval between cause and effect is perhaps not discriminable: we hold a heavy book level with the upper surface of a soft cushion, just touching it, and then we let the book fall as the cushion sinks beneath it. Does the cushion sink after the book presses it, or at the same time? This question arises whenever the cause appears to operate along with the effect; the book presses, the cushion sinks: which is earlier? And, then, which is the cause and which effect?"
the room, the heat causes the flame, the one half of the slipper causes the other unobserved half.

The examples are not intended as a bit of undergraduate cleverness. Hume himself has said on more than one occasion: "Anything may produce anything." This must mean that the species of object X which regularly appears with or after any other species of object Y will come to be believed the effect of Y. Instances to the contrary have been asserted before.

The appeal to constant conjunction was intended to explain why particular causes have particular effects. There is the more general question of why every event has a cause, which Hume decided "to sink" in the question why particular causes have particular effects. When I hear a bang, two questions arise, why I believe that the bang has some cause or other and why I believe that the bang was caused by a slamming door. The answer to the second question is that the belief arises from the association of that type of noise with the particular visual datum of a slamming door. But how does this explanation serve for the first question? How could custom associate the bang with "something or other."

Hume's answer is in the section on the probability of causes. Philosophers and scientists observe the complexity of nature and realize that "chance" occurrences may proceed from
concealed counteracting causes. Further, our general success in discovering regularities, relations of exact and unvarying dependence, is roughly proportionate to the minuteness and extent of the observations that we can make. Either the propensity of expectancy is already present, is innate in the constitution of our nature, or many sets of conjoined objects, many causal instances, generalize our sense of expectancy.

The supposition of a general, innate propensity of expectancy would seem to be an ad hoc hypothesis. Also this hypothesis would somewhat vitiate Hume's explanation of the particular causal inference as a mental determination resulting from the experience of constant conjunction. The alternative explanation, that many sets of conjoined objects generalize our sense of expectancy, involves considerable difficulty.

For, granted that the principle of causality is not innate and requires at least one experience of causation for the formulation of the principle, yet it is difficult to see how the repeated experience of associated events can generate the principle. The repeated association of objects gives us accumulation of experience. The accumulation, of itself, does not compel us to make the necessary judgment: "Something must have caused the banging noise." And how can a given event, a noise, become associated with a general "something or other"? Hume's explanation leads us to consider the role played by association.
For the "Newton of the moral sciences," associations are "the cement of the universe." However, the association mechanism does not explain all the facts Hume would like it to explain. Hume never disavows his basic associationist scheme. Yet where the mechanical connection of perceptions begins to fail, Hume appeals to various "propensities" of the soul. Each propensity is a concession and a deviation from his basic empiricist and associationist pattern. These concessions will not be enumerated here. The instances of the natural beliefs are sufficient.

Causal connection fits in neatly with the associationist pattern. The causal relation is reducible to the repetition of similar conjuctions. Under the influence of association, the mind passes from one perception to another. But even here there is the "irregular" propensity which accounts for the mind's projection of necessity into the perceptions themselves. Also, the transfer of vivacity is not wholly mechanical. It depends on the "propensity of the imagination."9

The mechanical links between ideas cannot of themselves generate ideas.10 In the case of independent and

8 Abstract, 32.
9 T, iv, 2 (208).
10 See Passmore, Hume's Intentions, 121: "We unite our
continuous existence, the fiction of continued existence is ascribed to another propensity, the propensity of the mind for creating fictions to overcome the sensible uneasiness due to the interruptedness of our perceptions.

Further, does the principle of association explain or generate ideas? More consistently with Hume's philosophy the principle states the conditions under which we find the beliefs to occur, though Hume's extended treatment would incline one to believe that these mechanisms themselves explain the origin of our beliefs in causal connection and independent existence.

In the instance of causality, the principle can scarcely say more than that certain perceptions (impressions and ideas or objects) are constantly conjoined and that there is an attendant belief. To say more would invite the cry of "vicious circle." The associative principle cannot state that elements in association are the cause of belief, or that the vivacity of the impression is the cause of the belief in the corresponding object or idea. Summarily, the associative principle states the circumstances or conditions of repeated conjunction.

perceptions, he suggests, 'by the fiction of a continued existence' in order to reconcile the facility with which we pass from one perception to another with their actual interruptedness. Thus yet another 'propensity' is invoked; the mind when confronted by contradictions feels 'a sensible uneasiness'; it creates fictions in order to overcome this uneasiness. The mechanical links between our ideas could not of themselves generate fictions: the co-operation of 'our mind' is vital, as we have already seen, and as Hume here substantially admits."
If the associative mechanisms, or principles, mean more than a statement of the conditions of repeated conjunction, they are subject to the same critique Whitehead levels at "habit." "It is difficult to understand why Hume exempts 'habit' from the same criticism as that applied to the notion 'cause.' We have no 'impression' of 'habit,' just as we have no 'impression' of 'cause.' Cause, repetition, habit are all in the same boat."11

A habit or associative mechanism is something which we infer. These principles are not immediately experienced; there is no impression of habit or of an associative mechanism. Certainly an impression of a permanent habit or principle would be as difficult to account for as an impression of a permanent substance. Impressions for Hume are individual and self-contained. Therefore, a habit can only be an aggregate of the separate and independent expectings or transitions which are attached each to a particular pair of impressions in a single psychical history. The same can be said of any principle or "mind" which is invoked as an enduring element in the explanation of psychical conjunction.

In final view, perhaps it is better to consider the natural beliefs as ultimates. Deeper facts or explanations may be present in reality, but we do not attain them. Association does not exactly explain the beliefs. The natural beliefs are regarded as facts; all explanations of these "facts" are on the level of hypothesis.\textsuperscript{12} The natural beliefs are the central positions to be defended at any cost. The psychological mechanisms through which Hume attempts to explain the natural beliefs, are the military outposts.\textsuperscript{13} Such terms as principle of association, custom, habit, are an indirect homage to metaphysical unity and an avowal of the impotence of pure empiricism.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{12} T, iv, 2 (206-207).

\textsuperscript{13} This is elaborated in Smith, The Philosophy of David Hume, 225: "To employ a military metaphor: if the 'natural beliefs' be regarded as central positions to be held at all costs, they can be defended either by themselves or by means of supporting outposts. If Hume's psychological mechanisms--through which he seeks to explain the natural beliefs in Book I and the indirect passions in Book II--be taken as representing such outposts, it is these forward positions that he has chosen to do much of his philosophical fighting; and he has certainly been almost as eagerly concerned to defend them for their own sakes, as by their aid to secure the capital positions in the rear."

\textsuperscript{14} Marechal states this in a short passage of unusual insight. Joseph Marechal, S. J., Le Point de Départ De La Métaphysique, Paris, 1942, II, 242: "Ou encore, entre les succession d'impressions et d'idées, ce sera L'habitude active qui, jettera, comme un trait d'union, le lien dynamique de causalité. Enfin les discontinuités et les éclipses d'une expérience
Belief has definitely shown itself to be what Hume said it was, "more properly an act of the sensitive, than of the cogitative part of our natures." But the custom which accounts for belief also accounts for excessive beliefs, for propaganda and prejudice.

To curb excessive over-beliefs and, at the same time, the unguarded tendency to seek for a sufficient cause, Hume relies upon a moderate scepticism in philosophy. In the conduct of life one must choose between superstition and philosophy. "And in this respect I make bold to recommend philosophy." Besides the reason which is a wonderful instinct, Hume holds an analytic reason supplying a criterion in the absence of which his distinction between fact and fiction, between objective and subjective, between the best thought-out scientific belief and the crudest superstition, could have no legitimate meaning. The natural beliefs are legitimate only within a strictly limited

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15 T, iv, 1 (183).

16 T, iv, 7 (271).
domain, "the experienced train of events." Custom is king only insofar as it conforms to experience. And it is the invariability and consequent universality of experience, apparently, that is the supreme norm.

The scientifically minded man frames his generalizations in accord with observed constant conjunctions. The superstitious man generalizes according to whim and fancy. This is Hume's way of meeting the fact that not all regularities are reliable, not all customs good customs.

The problem of legitimating this criterion is not easy. Reasoning based on causal inference goes beyond the evidence of the senses. For Hume this does not mean that causation unveils the meaning of the sense data, but that reason outruns the evidence. This makes causal inference to rest on natural compulsion. Now if custom and belief operate naturally, instinctively, how can reason correct or adjust the results? Belief follows inevitably and in proportion to the number of experiences of objects. If belief or custom is erroneous in some cases, why should we trust it in any? And if it operates naturally, how are we free to correct its results in one instance, without being free to reject all its fallacious results?

The basis on which reason supplements custom is apparently assumed as an ultimate. The question of miracles is a good practical instance. Uniformity of experience is the
generator of belief. Therefore our belief, says Hume, should be proportioned to the uniformity of experience. But if belief should arise without uniformity of experience, why should we attempt to control it? The very fact that belief arises without uniformity of experience, shows that belief can be had without it, and therefore there is no general rule governing the case. Reason can give no evidence for insisting one accept only uniformity. In the framework of Hume's philosophy, I am determined to believe. The only reason Hume could offer for making uniformity the criterion was that uniformity is constantly conjoined with belief. This is not the case.

The developed instrumentalism of John Dewey proffers a more satisfying justification. If we consider belief in its biological, functional aspect, then those beliefs are to be accepted which satisfy the problems and needs of our environment, those beliefs are to be accepted which fit into the "world" of realities composed of our two systems of beliefs. Perhaps Hume was tending toward this type of coherence theory. It is, in turn, open to the relativist charges leveled against all pragmatism and instrumentalism.

The inquiry conducted in this chapter reveals that Hume's constructive theory is shaky at several points. The chapter was not intended as a complete "refutation of Hume." Hume's analysis of cause and his theory of belief are the
positive complement of his rejection of the rationality of causal inference. The difficulties encountered in this positive counter-proposal urge us to reconsider the arguments and premises upon which Hume based his rejection of the knowability of the causal principle and causal inference.
CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS OF THE PREMISES

Chapter IV was a critique of Hume's positive doctrine as explained in Chapter III. The difficulties and objections against Hume's positive theory of belief invite a re-evaluation of Hume's critical theory of causation. In other words, since the theory of belief is not wholly satisfactory, and since the theory of belief was an alternative elected after Hume's critique of causation, the validity of that critique must be reconsidered. Chapter V is largely an analysis of the Humean rejection of causality proposed in Chapter II.

Throughout the positive exposition a number of propositions fundamental to Hume's epistemology have been noted. These propositions can be tabulated here under seven headings. This tabulation is neutral as far as causality is concerned. The list merely purports to include the major assumptions of Hume's epistemology.1 Further analysis of subsequent paragraphs and a second tabulation will indicate which of these assumptions bear on the criticism of causality.

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1 At least one proposition, that concerning abstract ideas or universals, was not mentioned before, but is included to round out the list.
The assumptions are:

1. That experience can be analyzed into simple components.
2. That every idea is an exact copy of a corresponding impression.
3. That what is distinguishable is separable.
4. That perceptions are the objects of knowledge.²
5. That the scope of knowledge is limited to relations of ideas.
6. That a general idea is merely a particular one plus a habit of association.
7. That the principle of attraction is the basis of association.

Which, if any, of these assumptions underlie Hume's critical arguments? The denial of the self-evidence of the principle of causality rested on Hume's view of the extent of knowledge. The assertion that the principle of causality is indemonstrable rests on his atomism: that what is distinguishable is separable. Again both of these proofs rest on a third general principle: the contradictory of any matter of fact is not impossible. Hence propositions regarding cause and effect are not certain.

In particular instances of causality, two factors render causal implication unknowable: the dogma that what is

² Hume slips back and forth from the language of the phenomenalist to the language of the realist, and cannot therefore be called a phenomenalist without qualification. This chapter attempts to show how his phenomenalist bent influenced his rejection of causality.
distinguishable is separable, and the failure to penetrate real
essences. This second factor is a necessary corollary of the
rejection of the principle of causality.

The consequent search for the origin of necessary
connection turns on two points: the conclusion that reason
cannot demonstrate a necessary connection; and the principle
that ideas are copies of impressions, and that reason even aided
by experience cannot produce a new idea for which there is no
antecedent impression.

These are the assumptions conducive to the rejection
of causality. The doctrine of belief, in turn, depends on this
critical part of Hume's philosophy. For it is precisely because
the causal inference is non-logical and the concept of power is
non-empirical, that Hume seeks another avenue to reality, an
assertion of the concrete "inferred" existent. This mode of
attaining reality is belief. The assumptions of the critical
part, then affect the whole of Hume's philosophy, for Hume
would not have been so concerned with expounding belief if
concrete reality could be grasped with strict rational certitude.

From the above analysis, precisely those assumptions
which lead to the rejection of causality can now be listed:
1. The scope of knowledge is limited to relations between ideas,
the four philosophical relations enumerated.
2. What is distinguishable is separable.
3. The contradictory of the law of causality is not self-contradictory.

4. Ideas are exact copies of corresponding impressions.

From this point on caution becomes the watchword. While admitting that Hume employs all of the above assumptions, there are a number of commentators who believe that his conclusions are independent of his chief psychological dogmas:

This may explain why it is sometimes thought sufficient to make out Hume's scepticism as deriving exclusively from his principle that a simple idea must be the copy of a corresponding impression. Failing to find an impression of necessary connection, he denies that we have any such idea. This misses not only the actual conclusion of Hume's critical analysis of causation, but also his arguments to that conclusion from the impotence of apagogic reasoning in the matter, as well as the analytic efficacy of the further principle that what is distinguishable is separable; in effect, the substance of Hume's position in this regard.\(^3\)

According to Church, then, the conclusion that apagogic reasoning is powerless in matters of existence remains independent of the doctrine of impressions and ideas and of the theory of philosophical relations. Equally independent is Hume's failure to find necessary connections among matters of fact.

Church's analysis looks a little like an attempt to rehabilitate Hume. Perhaps it is possible to reject causality or objective necessary connection without wholly accepting Hume's psychology. However, the denial of necessary connection, the

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3 Ralph Church, *Hume's Theory of the Understanding*, 203.
denial of implication between cause and effect, would seem to imply some sort of atomism or phenomenalism. This is the position which the argumentation of this chapter will attempt to develop.

Each of the assumptions will be weighed in turn. The scope of knowledge, or the exclusion of certainty from the area of existents, hinges on this: the contrary of every matter of fact is still possible. The moon could be 2,000 or 200,000 miles distant from us. Our idea of the moon would remain the same. Hume admits a type of de facto certainty involved in the immediate awareness of our perceptions. The shadow of uncertainty encloses us when we go beyond the data of immediate perception to independently existent and causally operative bodies and selves.

For Hume, the perception tree does not imply an independently existing tree. The perception tree does not imply an original seed or shoot from which it grew. The perception is just there in my consciousness. I cannot go beyond it. This view of knowledge would seem to imply a reason which cannot cooperate with the data of sensation, and a phenomenal and atomistic object of experience.

The second assumption is that what is distinguishable is separable. Hume admits that the mind cannot attain to any other existential act than that of perceptions. Because the atomic elements of experience can be analyzed in the state of
isolated independence, they are regarded as loose and unconnected either with each other or with any "external" mode of existence. Again, though his atomism cannot be said to be deduced strictly from his phenomenalistic outlook, nonetheless perceptual phenomenalism offers fertile soil for the growth of this type of atomism. It is an easier matter to consider ideas and impressions as isolated and independent than so to regard independent ontological wholes in an ordered universe.

The third assumption, the incompetence of demonstrative reasoning in matters of fact, has been regarded by some as independent of the psychological dogmas. However, it is the basis for Hume's view of the extent of knowledge. For, since a fact can always be otherwise than it is, Hume deduces from this lack of necessity a lack of demonstrability and of certitude. This view of factual relationships is in turn conditioned by the copy theory of ideas, psychological atomism, and phenomenalism.

Perhaps the copy theory of ideas is unessential. Yet it hovers over the whole of Hume's philosophy, and fits in very agreeable with an atomistic analysis of experience. If the copy theory of ideas was not the reason for Hume's conclusion concerning causality, it was certainly the reason for his investigation. The original failure to find an impression of necessary connection prompted Hume to launch on his extensive and indirect arguments preparatory to his conclusion concerning the impression
of reflection or felt determination. The dictum that every idea has a corresponding impression was the result of empiric induction and analysis. When Hume encountered an exception to this rule, an idea of necessary connection without a corresponding impression, he could have questioned the value of his original induction. However, Hume preferred to maintain his copy theory and undertake the indirect search for a corresponding impression.

Each of these assumptions points to what is crucial in Hume's analysis: a thing does not imply another thing, a cause does not imply an effect, nor an effect, a cause. Hume's limitation of the scope of knowledge eliminates strict certitude with regard to matters of fact because it eliminates any necessity in the area of concrete existents. Hence, there is no necessary dependence or necessary implication between existents. The principle of atomistic separability leads directly to the denial of one distinct thing implying another. The principle of the insufficiency of demonstrative reasoning in matters of fact renders reason impotent to discover connection or necessary implication between facts. The copy theory of ideas, insofar as it supports a perceptual phenomenalism and discrete elements of experience, leads to a separability and lack of connection between things.

The principle of sufficient reason, or in this instance, implication, can be flatly denied by anyone. This
brings philosophy to a standstill. Disputants on both sides then proceed to shout the louder: "Yes it is." "No it isn't." In Hume's case, if not the cause, at least the background and psychological conditioner of this denial were found to be these factors: a Cartesian view of reason, a phenomenalistic view of reality, an atomistic analysis of experience supported by the copy theory of ideas. These factors dovetail and intercomplement. Each of the factors must be probed to determine the value of the analysis just given.

CARTESIAN VIEW OF REASON

With considerable dispatch and few words in the early part of the Treatise Hume excluded causal inference from the sphere of strict demonstration. The exclusion was based on a clear and neatly compartmentalized set of definitions according to which the relations between ideas are set up as the sole subject matter of demonstration.

This division and consequent exclusion can be justified only if there exists a break between intellect and sense, between reason and experience. All reasoning must be a priori, independent of experience, and not necessarily applicable to the objects known through sensation. Mathematical reasoning is here considered the prime analogate of all reasoning. Mathematical

4 T, iii, 1 (69-73).
reasoning can proceed regardless of whether the objects of the mind can be realized in experience. Without concern for establishing the historical accuracy of the phrase, the "Cartesian" view of reason is taken here to mean this overemphasis of mathematical reasoning, the stress on a pure and autonomous reason, operating in independence of experience.

Hume generalizes and caricatures this rationalist and Cartesian view of reason, then exposes its flimsy nature. Obviously reason cannot operate in a purely a priori fashion, penetrating to the intrinsic nature of a thing on the first glimpse of its external make-up. Only a self-sufficient and independent reason could transcend the patient analysis of accidents to decipher immediately the specific traits of the substance. But Hume demands of reason precisely such instantaneous and definitive grasps of essences. And human reason limps away a miserable failure from the tests to which Hume puts it, tests which only a "transcendent" reason could pass.

In puncturing the rationalist appraisal of reason, Hume tends to the opposite pole in emphasizing the primacy of sense impressions. In an important footnote, he rejects the artificial dichotomy between reason and experience and insists

5 E, IV, 1 (24, 26, 28); V, i, (36).

6 E, V, 1 (38n).
on the close interplay of the two. He advocates a close association between the imagination and the understanding.

Nonetheless, Hume never heals the rationalist rupture between intellect and sense. He does not explain the joint functioning of diverse cognitive powers in man. Hume retains a relatively pure reason in the sphere of mathematics and the comparison of ideas. Apparently he nowhere explains the value of this reason or the way in which it operates. Hume fails to consider what is involved in the discursive comparing activity of reason. There are problems involved in our apprehension of any relation, in our apprehension of succession, quite as much as in the apprehension of causality.

However, he did completely separate the two types of thinking, analytic and synthetic, to employ the post-Kantian terminology. He attends very little to analytic thinking (and Kant criticized Hume for what little he did say about mathematics), and he ascribes synthetic thinking largely to the imagination.

Imagination is used here not merely in the sense of "feigning." 7 Imagination is employed in a special sense by

7 Hume adverts to the fact that he employs imagination in at least two senses, T, iii, 9 (118n): "When I oppose the imagination to the memory, I mean the faculty, by which we form our fainter ideas. When I oppose it to reason, I mean the same faculty, excluding only our demonstrative reasonings."
Hume to name the vivacity of conception, the faculty or quality "by which the mind enlivens some ideas beyond others." Imagination is the faculty proper to belief. The ascribing of primacy to the imagination is a necessary consequence in a philosophy in which reason is properly concerned only with the relations of ideas and in which association plays such an important role.

After the Humean reformation, the fundamental dichotomy between intellect and sense, between reason and the imagination, remains. Sensory data, impressions, "experience," are now king. This leads Hume to say that "causes and effects are discoverable, not by reason, but by experience." Reason cannot attain actual causes without the help of experience. But this does not show that experience and not reason attains causes. It is still possible that reason cooperating with experience, reason utilizing the data of experience, can attain causes. It is possible that sense data can contain more than the senses are capable of interpreting, and further that it is the precise function of intellect to further the interpretation, to grasp the "meaning," of the data.

8 T, iv, 7 (265). Several leads to the meaning of imagination in Hume are found in Smith, Philosophy of David Hume, 459-463.

9 E, IV, i (25).
The natural consequence of Hume's view of reason is that he is not in a favorable position to understand a conjoint operation of intellect and sense, or intelligible operations with existential bearings. Hume's reason does not profit by experience or the repetition of events. For the experience of similar circumstances clarifies the precise conditions which antecedes a given event as the apparent determinants of that event. Careful observation and induction point to the fact that the only reason for the constancy of a certain set of phenomena is this other invariably concomitant phenomenon.

But for Hume, reason is not the faculty whose goal is insight. There is no growth in intelligibilities, in the discovery of meanings, no cumulative penetration of the relations and implications in our complex world, which is the reward of the persevering drive of the intellect. Instead of profiting by the accumulation of experience, empirical understanding becomes the victim of custom. Once the cord binding the intellectual and sensory powers has been severed, imagination, the faculty proper to belief, operates as a mechanical propensity.

HUME'S THEORY OF IDEAS

It is a characteristic of Hume's style to repeat key ideas frequently throughout his work. The unfortunate fact is that the multitude of repetitions leave the basic idea fundamentally unanalyzed. This is true of Hume's theory of ideas. His
exposition remains careless and confused.

The psychology of impressions and ideas stand at the threshold of the Treatise as Hume's basic analysis of experience. It is unnecessary to go into a detailed presentation of this familiar doctrine. Simply put, the components of experience are perceptions, which can be subdivided into impressions and ideas, simple and complex. The basic distinction between impressions and ideas is the degree of force and liveliness together with the constancy attending these perceptions which we classify as impressions. All ideas are exact copies of impressions, faded out impressions in a sense, and derived from impressions. When we are dubious about the meaning of an idea, we inquire "from what impression is that supposed idea derived?" This clipped analysis led Reid to launch his

invective: "The articles of inquisition are few indeed but very dreadful in their consequences; Is the prisoner an impression or an idea? If an idea, from what impression copied?"

Although it is fashionable to pooh-pooh the acid criticisms of Reid, this remark has considerable foundation. The inquisitorial thumbscrews are definitely employed.

10 T, i, 1 (1, 2, 4, 5); i, 2 (8); also (64, 67, 74, 155, 232, 231). E, II, (14, 17).

11 E, II (17).

12 Thomas Reid, Inquiry Into The Human Mind, VI, 144.
strict copy-theory is used to bolster the theory of belief. With a one to one correspondence between impressions and ideas it is considerably easier to explain the association of impressions and ideas, and the consequent transfusion of force and vivacity, of belief-pungency. At the point at which Hume saw there was no impression of causation in the objects, there was another alternative, to question the copy theory of ideas. 13

Hume apparently does not recant his copy theory, though the analysis of experience in the early part of the Treatise is incomplete. Later the reader is called upon to recognize objects other than impressions and ideas, objects of knowledge and of belief, acts of comparison, propensities of the imagination, qualities of human nature. Of course, the modern phenomenalist can say that all of these complex objects are merely families of sense data. Hume called the objects of belief collections of perceptions. This does not account for the unity of the human person, the one person who knows, senses, wills, feels. Nor are collections or families of perceptions a satisfactory account of the unitary beings, trees, cows, birds, which we meet in experience. It was this excessively analytic attitude

13 The precise difficulty is that Hume did not merely say, as did the Scholastics, that sensation is the basis of all knowledge. Hume insisted that all knowledge be directly referable to sense knowledge. According to Hume's handling of the problem, sense must contain formally what is in intellect.
of the copy theory which led Hume to psychological atomism.

The second aspect of the theory of ideas presents itself in the form of a question: Whether the impression is representative or not? There are passages which define the impression as representative\(^{14}\) and other passages which clearly imply that it is non-representative.\(^{15}\)

Hartnack\(^{16}\) has discovered four distinct views of impressions in Hume: two representative and two of a non-representative standpoint. Hume does not depart from Locke in the representative view of impressions. The impression or perception is the immediate object of knowledge, though there is a transcendent object which is the cause of the empirical object.

Of the non-representative standpoints, one is characterized by the supposition "that it would be a contradiction to assert the continued existence of the impression; the other is characterized on the contrary by the view that such an assertion would not be a contradiction, but that empirical reasons can be found for believing it to be false."\(^{17}\)

\(^{14}\) T, I, i, 2; I, iv, 2; II, i, 1; Appendix (638-639).

\(^{15}\) T, i, iv, 4 (226); I, iv, 5 (244).

\(^{16}\) Justus Hartnack, Analysis of the Problem of Perception in British Empiricism, Copenhagen, 1950, 107-142.

\(^{17}\) Ibid., 140.
This last view, which Hartnack regards as distinctively Humean, in asserting that it is logically possible that a perception can have a continued existence, equivalently states that a perception is not something perceived by a mind. In this view mental and material are not used to describe the content of an impression. A mind is a collection of various perceptions just as an object or substance is a bundle of perceptions. Being perceived means that there is a relation between the two collections of perceptions, "mind" and "external body." Hume edges near to the later so-called neutral monism of William James and Bertrand Russell.

Without entering into more detail as to which view Hume most consistently espoused, it is clear that his theory of ideas provides no ground for believing in the existence of an independent world. In any of the views, perceptions are the immediate object of knowledge. And though belief may go beyond these immediate perception, knowledge never passes beyond the frontier into the land of independent existents. The exact correspondence of impression and ideas conditioned Hume's psychological atomism. The representative and especially the non-representative characteristics of the theory of ideas issued in phenomenalism. Each of these will now be handled at greater length.
PHENOMENALISM

No one can doubt, believes Hume, that we are directly aware only of "perceptions." Hume believed in the existence of both material objects and perceptions and thought that perceptions were the appearance of external objects. He was a phenomenalist in that he argued that we could not know anything but perceptions in the restricted sense of certain knowledge unrisked by error. "We may observe . . . that nothing is ever really present with the mind but its perceptions or impressions and ideas, and that external objects become known to us only by those perceptions they occasion."\(^{18}\) We cannot rationally know or infer anything but perceptions, yet we must believe that there are material objects. This apparent inconsistency might urge the abandonment of the theory of ideas. But Hume considers it established. This is one assumption that an otherwise acutely critical philosopher neglected to question. Actually the theory was in his favor, the necessary prerequisite for his positive beliefs.

Reality in this phenomenalist context is nothing but our name for a particular organization of vivid perceptions. In Chapter III it was indicated that generally for Hume, to believe is to take something to exist. Hume is careful to insist that existence is not an idea or conceptual content. But

\(^{18}\) T, ii, 6 (67); also E, XII, i (125; 126; 127).
while insisting on the identity of content in belief and in fiction, Hume sometimes claims that a reference to existence is no great distinguishing mark among perceptions:

To reflect on anything simply, and to reflect on it as existent, are nothing different from each other . . . Whatever we conceive, we conceive to be existent. Any idea we please to form is the idea of a being; and the idea of a being is any idea we please to form. 19

This attitude obviously breeds difficulties in distinguishing between the existence of a thing and our thinking of that thing. Hume confuses here two assertions: "1. 'Whatever we think of has the form of a fact.' 2. 'Whatever we think of we take to be a fact.' " 20 Existence may not be a perception distinct from all others. But it must be a principle of things which, while eluding conceptualization, is attained in belief or judgment. But if existence is just another word for perception, non-existence must not be a word for anything. Hume must mean that in any instance what we attain are perceptions. But we can think perceptions which are merely perceptions and we do not call them "real things." And we can think perceptions which are at once vivid and systematically inter-connected; these perceptions we call "real things."

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19 T, ii, 6 (66-67). This section is the most insistent statement of the phenomenal role of perceptions.

20 Passmore, Hume's Intentions, 98.
This is Hume's phenomenal world. One may balk at recognizing it as the world with which ordinary people have dealings. Yet it is a world rich with possibilities when it comes to the rejection of causality. Without a reference to independent existence it is quite impossible to explain why certain of our perceptions are picked out as sensations, or as memories, or as images, or as beliefs. Perceptions are sometimes alike and sometimes different, that is all. Hume arrives at belief in the independently real, not by the inference of cause and effect as he asserted in Part iii, but through the association of similar perceptions and the smooth passage of the imagination over the gaps in perception. A certain propensity of the imagination overcomes the feeling of uneasiness attendant upon the gaps in perception by producing the fiction of continued existents. Since the perception or impression is considered continuous, one concludes that it is independent. Hence the belief in independent objects.

Perceptual phenomenalism affects the causality arguments mediately through the belief in independent objects. The character of cause and effect are attributed to independently existing things. Since physical bodies are objects of belief, bodies under the aspect of "cause" or "effect" will likewise be objects of belief.

To insist that Hume's theory of ideas leads to
phenomenalism and thence to the rejection of objective necessary connection is not to "answer Hume." Hume has other arguments, depending as much on the discreteness of particulars as on the "mentality" of perceptions. However, this does point up the intrinsic dialectic of Hume's thought. The theory of ideas joins hands with phenomenalism and the two lead to atomism.

ATOMISM

whatever objects are different are distinguishable, and that whatever objects are distinguishable are separable by the thought and imagination. 21

Wherever there is a difference among experiences, an actual separation may occur. Any distinguishable experience may be separated without alteration from other experiences with which it is conjoined. This seems to imply that any distinguishable element in experience is self-identical and self-contained, if not self-sufficient. Hume's systems are combinations of individual elements that appear in association. Association itself is somehow a distinguishable constituent and therefore separable, external to its terms. It seems difficult, under the force of Hume's dictum, to see how perceptions are repeatable or that there can be terms without a relation or a relation without terms.

This is not to imply that experience begins with

21 T, 1, 7 (18).
atomic blocks to be built up into a normal conscious life. Normal experience consists of impressions closely associated in syntheses. Hume's point is that elements can be discerned within the syntheses, and that every element thus separately conceived can exist separately (even though in most instances he might concede that it would be a fanciful possibility).

The factor of implication, of causal connection, could scarcely survive the passage through the sieve of atomism. A world of discrete particulars severs any necessary connections between things:

that as all distinct ideas are separable from each other, and as the ideas of cause and effect are evidently distinct, 'twill be easy for us to conceive any object to be non-existent this moment, and existent the next, without conjoining to it the distinct idea of a cause or productive principle. The separation, therefore, of the idea of a cause from that of a beginning of existence, is plainly possible for the imagination; and consequently the actual separation of these objects is so far possible, that it implies no contradiction nor absurdity; and is therefore incapable of being refuted by any reasoning from mere ideas; without which it is impossible to demonstrate the necessity of a cause.22

It is true that other possible worlds are intelligible. This does not at all whittle away the certitude that this world is this. Any matter of fact, any contingent existent, might be otherwise or might even not be. But there is a con-

22 T, iii, 3 (79-80); iii, 12 (139).
sequent *de facto* necessity in its immediate presence. As the old adage has it, Socrates sits with metaphysical necessity while he sits. Any actual contingent existent now in being requires an actual cause for its actual existence.

Clearly Hume's discussion has all the earmarks of a confusion of the logical with the real world. Completeness of descriptive analysis is equated with existential self-sufficiency. When perceptions are the only objects of the mind, logical and real possibility become easily confounded. The criteria of necessity and immutability, applicable to universal essences, are transferred to the order of particular, concrete existents. Since the atomic elements of experience, impressions and ideas, are loose and independent of each other, they are analyzed as similarly isolated in any "external" state of existence. Perceptions can enter and leave consciousness without anyone making too great fuss of searching for a cause.

What seems to be wanting here is something other than perception, the act of judgment, which can affirm something other than mere perceptions, namely, the act of being. This involves the intentional aspect of judgment. But by emphasizing the intentionality involved in the intellect in judgment, it is not hereby conceded that the concept is devoid of an intentional aspect. Knowledge can be considered as an ensemble of formal determinations, which are the determinations of the thing known,
or knowledge can be considered as a relation, an opposition between subject and object. The determinations of the act of knowing are always given concretely in relation to the object. An essence is always an essence of something. It is impossible for phenomenological description to prescind sincerely from this relative aspect, the ad aliquid or hoc aliquid, which is characteristic of knowledge. The intellect manifests an intrinsic dynamic tendency toward being. Though the intentional aspect of cognition finds its completion in judgment, it is also present in the first operation of the mind, apprehension. 23

Besides intentionality, what also seems to be lacking in Hume is a notion of relativum: one thing which of its very nature has a rapport, a regard for another, such as father-son, husband-wife. That two facts are adequately distinct shows only that, as far as their intrinsic natures taken singly are concerned, it is not apparent that they are inseparable. But if, when they are considered in relation, one is known to entail the other, it follows that they are inseparable and that the thought of their separation implies a contradiction, because it implies that a relation which is known to subsist between them does not subsist between them. Thus, if beginning to be really

entails being caused, the separation of these factors does in fact imply a contradiction.

This hints at another view of the world in which there are continuities between the cause-event and the effect-event. They are not "loose," but connected, interconnected, and related in complex ways. The analysis of any discriminable event involves the description of other events relevant to its occurrence. A thing as a thing may not be connected with another. One billiard ball, or one gear, can be considered in isolation. But a billiard ball actually striking another, and a gear enmeshed with another cannot be considered as unrelated with the other.

The difficulties of the preceding chapter suggested that custom or association was not enough to explain our insistence on the necessary connection between certain pairs of conjoined objects. There is operating some grasp of logical connection, some rational selectivity, some formulation of tentative laws. The following chapter will attempt to present a theory of causal implication. First, however, a brief evaluation of Hume's main aim in philosophy is in order.

Throughout these pages of exposition and criticism, the questioning and inquiring attitude of Hume has been evident. Hume's philosophy is better presented as a critical or inquiring attitude. As an exponent of systematic doctrine, Hume leaves much more to be desired. But we can hardly absolve ourselves
by remarking that his philosophy is rich in problems and hints. What was Hume's main aim or goal in philosophy?

First, there is one basic factor at the threshold of Hume's philosophy. Hume questions the fundamental principle that assurance ought always to rest either on direct awareness or on logically cogent evidence. Hume wishes to insist that a large number of man's convictions are not rational and that a man can and must be guided by custom or experience more than by reason. It is the denial of the above fundamental principle which renders Hume's philosophy somewhat independent of the general stream represented by Descartes, Spinoza, and Berkeley.

Hume's aim, as was noted in Chapter II, was not merely, perhaps not at all, to question either causality or the reality of the corporeal world. His major concern was to displace the traditionally conceded function of intellect by another avenue to reality. Hume was chiefly interested in his doctrine of belief and in the principles of attraction or association. The preliminary analysis and critique of causality was devised to indicate that the instrument of reason was too inadequate to grapple with existential reality.

These two contributions or interests of Hume also indicate two major influences. The principle of association hearkens back to Newton. Newton showed that the fundamental changes in the physical world could be explained by the prin-
ciple of gravitation. And with gravitation, Newton could point to association as a fact of experience without appealing to any occult cause.

Hume applied this doctrine to the knowing processes. The fundamental changes in the mental world could be explained by the association and attraction of perceptions, of impressions and ideas. In this way Hume develops a dynamics of the mind by which he can give a mechanistic account of mental processes. He finds "a kind of attraction which in the mental world will be found to have as extraordinary effects as in the natural, and to shew itself in as many and as various forms."\(^{24}\)

From this and other passages it is clear that Hume considered the principle of association to play a significant role in his philosophy: "If anything can entitle the author to so glorious a name as that of inventor, it is the use he makes of the principle of the association of ideas, which enters into most of his philosophy."\(^{25}\)

Hume's other major concern, belief, especially under the aspect of the dominant role that feeling plays in belief, reflects the influence of Hutcheson. Hume asserts that "belief is more properly an act of the sensitive, than of the cogitative

\(^{24}\) T, 1, 4 (12-13).

\(^{25}\) Abstract, 32.
part of our "nature." This indicates Hume's fundamental emphasis on feeling or passion in place of reason.

The work of Hutcheson maintained the dominant role of feeling and passion in moral matters and insisted on the non-cognitive character of the aesthetic and moral senses. Hume himself writes of Hutcheson in a note appended to later editions of the Enquiry:

But a late Philosopher Mr. Hutcheson has taught us, by the most convincing Arguments, that Morality is nothing in the abstract Nature of Things, but is entirely relative to the Sentiment or mental Taste of each particular Being. Moral Perceptions, therefore, ought not to be class'd with the Operations of the Understanding, but with the Tastes or Sentiments.

Hutcheson believed that moral sentiments and judgments are determined for us by nature. We are so constituted by nature to judge of good and evil, immediately and involuntarily, just as our taste reacts in a determined way to bitter and sweet things.

Norman Kemp Smith suggests the following steps which Hume may have taken because of the influence of Hutcheson:

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26 T, iv, 1 (183).

27 The matter on Hutcheson has been derived largely from secondary sources, especially Smith, Philosophy of David Hume, 23-47.

28 E, I (10n).
if the fundamental judgments of morals, as of aesthetics rest on feeling, not on reason; and if in matters of moral conduct Nature has been thus careful in providing us, independently of all calculation and reflection, with these 'immediate monitors', may it not be so likewise in the professedly theoretical field? May not our so-called judgments of knowledge in regard to matters of fact and existence be really acts of belief, not of knowledge—belief being a passion and not a form of insight, and therefore, like all passions, fixed and predetermined by the de facto frame and constitution of our human nature?29

The evidence for this contention is sufficiently convincing. The positive teaching of Book I of the Treatise does reverse the roles traditionally ascribed to reason and the passions. Theoretical judgments do not express an insight into a necessary relation. These judgments rather convey a belief which rests on feeling or sentiment.

Newton and Hutcheson, then, appear as the two major influences on Hume's positive teaching. But there remains the question of influence as it was traditionally handled by Reid,30 Beattie, Huxley, and T. H. Green. These commentators contended that Hume's teaching is wholly negative and that it stands as a classic reduction to absurdity of the principles of Locke and Berkeley.

29 Smith, Philosophy of David Hume, 43-44. Smith's analysis of the influence of Hutcheson is convincing. However, the following statement, that the reversal of the roles played by reason and the passions is the most significant and the most important element in Hume's philosophy, is open to dispute.

30 Thomas Reid, Inquiry Into The Human Mind, I, in Works, 102-103.
Without entering too much into detail, it is clear from Chapter III of this thesis that Hume's philosophy is not wholly negative but that Hume had a definite positive contribution concerning belief and the principles of association which he intended to assert.

However, something can be said for the traditional view that Hume carried the assumptions of Locke and Berkeley to a logical conclusion. Prescinding from the question of whether Hume intended to use the theory of ideas for the same purposes as his predecessors, the fact remains that he retained the theory of ideas. Though otherwise quite critical, Hume did not question this fundamental assumption. Dispensing with the shades of difference between Hume and his predecessors, perceptions are for him the objects of the mind, and ideas are copies of impressions. It has been indicated in this chapter how the copy theory of ideas influenced Hume's phenomenalism and his psychological atomism. These two viewpoints were in turn the basis for the negative criticism of causality. Thus it may be concluded that, consciously or unconsciously, Hume is influenced by the Lockean tradition in the negative aspect of his philosophy.

To conclude, positively, Hume was concerned to establish his theory of belief, based on the primacy of feeling and the principle of association. Hutcheson and Newton are the two chief influences behind Hume's positive contributions.
Negatively, Hume aimed to attack the rationalist or intellectualist approach to causality and to the reality of the corporeal world. In his negative approach, Hume borrows from elements in the Lockean tradition and is therefore influenced by that tradition.
CHAPTER VI

A POSITIVE THEORY OF CAUSALITY

The exposition of Hume's basic doctrine and the accompanying criticism have been completed. But criticism of its nature is inevitably negative and therefore leaves a vacuum. The purpose of this chapter is to fill the vacuum by presenting a positive theory of causality.

However, since this chapter is of the nature of an epilogue, the positive analysis will necessarily assume the form of a brief summary. The exposition may fail to satisfy at many points for want of detail, but this method is necessary to avoid the present analysis from itself developing into the proportions of another thesis. As the argumentation proceeds, sources will be indicated wherein the matter is treated in greater detail.

There are at least three steps to be accounted for in a positive approach to causality: the origin of the notion of cause, the validity of that notion, and finally the knowledge and validity of the principle of causality.

A discussion of the origin of the notion of cause calls for psychological or phenomenological analysis. Changes
occurring in the concrete things are the primary experiences from which, it would seem, we derive the notion of causality. But the immediate data of experience do not merely reveal to us things changing, the coming-to-be of things, but also the factors which bring about change. Thus, for present purposes, two broad types of change can be distinguished. There are experiences of change in which only the coming-to-be of the changing object is known immediately. Examples of this are the apparent motion of the moon across the sky, the beginnings of vegetation in the spring, the clouding up of the sky. In these instances the agents of the change are not immediately experienced.

We also find within direct experience both the changing things and the agents of the change: a hammer smashing a nail into a plank, a knife cutting a slice of bread, a man chopping down a tree with an axe.

Instances of this second type of change appear most fruitful as a source of the notion of cause. For granting the abstract possibility of garnering the notion of cause from metaphysical reflective analysis based on changes of the first type, it seems much more probable that the notion of production or efficiency arises in ordinary experience only from instances of change in which the external agents of the change are perceived directly.

Such direct experiences as pushing, pulling, being
bumped against, feeling a hot fire, experiencing resistance to our efforts, willing, thinking, violent collisions and explosions—these are proposed as the material from which is derived the notion of cause. In the above list "internal" and "external" experiences are lumped together. The question immediately arises in this matter whether our notion of cause comes more immediately from internal or external experiences. There is not space here to pass final judgment on this debated point.

However, it appears plausible that the most direct experience of causality is in those instances of causation in which the action and passion involved in predicamental causality has as one of its terms the human person. Such basic actions as pushing or pulling furniture and other objects, actions in which the person experiences himself as the source of motor activity which brings about a change in some external body or in some other part of his own body, or actions in which the person feels his body acted upon by external agents, his attempted movements blocked or resisted—these causal actions are proposed as the prime source of the notion of cause or productive agent. These experiences are "external" insofar as external bodies are involved as agents or patients. The experiences are "internal" insofar as the person is involved as agent or patient.

Human experience is clearly rich in instances of
causal activity. We displace certain objects by pushing them, breaking them, bending them. Certain looks or words attract or repel other men and animals. These are instances in which men are conscious of their active influencing of other things.

Other things also influence men. Certain things hurt us when they are hurled against us. Things resist our efforts, are easy or difficult to manipulate. Other things also act on each other. One billiard ball collides with another to set it in motion. A strong wind makes a building sway; a tornado demolishes the same building. Cascading water turns a wheel. Animals are caught in traps.

These are all banal, everyday experiences. But from these, men get the idea of one thing acting upon, producing another thing. These may be called primitive experiences of causality. Just how primitive the experience of causality is can be indicated by relating causality to the first knowledge of external reality. Upon what is based the judgment or assertion of concrete reality independent of the mind? It is grounded in the experience of other things acting upon us independently of us. It is the immediate experience of being resisted by or determined by corporeal beings. This original experience of action and passion, in which the concrete thing and the human person are the agent and patient, is the datum upon which is based the existential judgment. The judgment of
existence is based on an actual instance of causality. The causal instances which have been taken as primary are largely mechanical movements. There are also qualitative changes, such as the sowing of a field and the appearance of vegetation, the heating of water and its boiling. Causality is present in these instances, but it is not experienced immediately. Its affirmation rests on an inference, which presupposes the said notion of causality.

The qualitative even must be assimilated and integrated into a present impression of causality or mechanical activity. There are instances of this, such as the purr of the automobile motor when one steps on the starter, the sound of an electric bell at the pressing of the button, the production of sound at the striking of a piano key. In the visual field, a parallel would be the lighting up of a bulb at the turn of a switch.

In all these instances the qualitative event is associated with some mechanical activity on the part of the human agent. In this way the qualitative event is assimilated to the more primitive experience of mechanical activity and interaction.¹

¹ The priority accorded mechanical movement over qualitative change is based on the findings of A. Michotte, La Perception De La Causalité, Paris, 1946, especially 220-256.
Qualitative events which are not connected with mechanical activity, such as growth or the appearance of a field of wheat after sowing, demand interpretation and elaboration on the data of experience. These are causal instances in which only the coming-to-be of the patient, and not the activity of the agent, is directly experienced.

The data of "internal" experience can be put briefly: There is the spontaneous conviction of men that they are the masters of their actions, that they have the power to produce movements of their limbs, that they can direct the course of their thoughts. There are also insights which connect the experience of an insult and the consequent anger, the knowledge that one's grief is due to the death of a loved one. In these latter instances, internal experience suggests that not only are the cause and effect within experience but that one even attains to the reason why the cause produced the effect.²

The first few pages of this chapter are deeply indebted to Michotte's findings and his analysis of the origin of the notion of cause.

² A. C. Ewing, "A Defence of Causality," Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, London, XXXIII, 1932-1933, 124-125. He writes: "It seems to me that we can see and to some extent really understand why an insult should give rise to anger, why love should lead to grief if the object of one's love die or prove unworthy, why a success should give some pleasure."
Maine de Biran deserves mention at this point. He considers the sentiment of effort, the characteristic of voluntary movement, to be the primitive fact as an experience-type of causality:

dans un rapport fondamental simple, ou irrésoluble en termes phénoméniques, où la cause et l'effet, le sujet et le mode actif, se trouvent unis indivisiblement dans le même sentiment ou la même perception d'effort (nisus) dont les muscles soumis à la volonté sont les organes propres. C'est de cette impression originelle d'un effort que dérivent toutes les idées de force ou de cause. 3

Certainly Maine de Biran, by his careful description of the causal data and by his insistence on the sentiment of effort and the experience of resistance, has done much toward the refutation of Hume. However, since external action is concerned with material objects, it is difficult to determine just how far volition is able to affect material objects or the movements of limbs. That is why instances in which there is physical contact and interaction between the human person and concrete things in an action passion relationship are here regarded as the experience-type of causality.

Having indicated the origin of the notion of cause, the psychological account must give way to a brief metaphysical

explanation of what is meant by efficient cause. In all the examples cited the essential character of the agent or the cause consisted in productivity, in the making of a thing by action. An efficient cause is a cause or principle which, by action, produces the being of another. Causality is essentially, then, action. It is the actuality of an active potency which is productive of a distinct term. 4

Causality is not just any action. Action is causal only as the action of an agent ordained to a term as to an effect. As yet, it is not clear just what this productive action is. Action is an ultimate category and can scarcely be adequately defined but only pointed to. But it is to be noted that causal action is not to be conceived as an emission, a transplantation of entity or energy. De Regnon states very clearly that the action is not a reality which goes from the cause to the effect. This intermediary reality, which is neither in the cause or the effect, would be a reality existing in itself, that is, a substance. 5

4 This definition of causal action is taken almost verbatim from Francis Meehan, Efficient Causality in Aristotle and St. Thomas, Washington, D. C., 1940, 207, where he writes that causal action is the "actuality of an active potency which is productive of a term distinct from itself regardless of whether this term is intrinsic or extrinsic to the agent in question. . . ."

5 P. de Regnon, Métaphysiques des Causes, liv. 3,
Efficient causality is distinct from the relation of causality, a fact which Hume did not advert to. The relation results from the action of causality. But the relation remains even though the causality ceases when the action ceases. The relation continues because the action leaves in the cause and in the effect a permanent determination which is the foundation of the relation. Causality belongs more properly then to the category of action than to that of relation.

Some understanding of what causality is can be had from a view of the action-passion correlate and from a grasp of the Scholastic dictum, actio est in passo. Although distinct, cause and effect are not isolated to the point that transitive action of one upon the other becomes unthinkable. Rather the causal action is precisely that in which the two things, cause and effect, are united and distinguished. The union of two things is not their fusion, much less their confusion. The distinction of two things does not constitute them as two atoms or two worlds. Four things can be mentally distinguished in the

ch. 2, a. 3, Paris, 1886, 195: "L'action n'est pas une réalité qui sort, de la cause et qui se propage jusqu'à l'effet; car cette réalité intermédiaire, qui ne serait ni dans la cause ni dans l'effet, serait une réalité existant en elle-même, c'est-à-dire une substance. Qui ose jamais soutenir une conception aussi grossière?"

The metaphysical account of the notion of cause presented here owes much to de Regnou's Météphysique, especially Livre III, Chapitres II and III. Also considerable help was derived from Meehan, Efficient Causality, especially 170-240.
action-passion correlate: the being of the cause, its acting, the reception of its influence, and the being of the effect. There are the baker and his knife, the movements of hand and knife, the being cut of the bread, and the cut in the bread itself.

Thus the action of the agent is in the patient. That which is done, the becoming, is in the effect. The cutting takes place in the bread. Instruction is in the student, not in the teacher. The movement, under the aspect of the becoming of the effect, is a passion. Insofar as it is related to its source, the agent, the same movement is an action. Action is the common act of cause and effect, just as knowledge is the common act of knower and known.

The origin of the notion of cause and the exact meaning or value to be attached to the notion have been considered. Hume may still ask his question whether one thing

6 This double aspect, action and passion, of the one movement is succinctly expressed by St. Thomas, In III Phy. 4, p. 392 a-b: "Idem est actus moventis et moti: moventis enim dicitur inquantum aliquid agit, moti autem inquantum patitur; sed idem est quod movens agendo causat, et quod motum patiendo recipit . . . Idem enim est quod est a movente, ut a causa agente, et quod est in moto ut in patiente et recipiente."

7 This happy comparison is made by André Marc, Dialectique De L'Affirmation, Bruxelles, 1952, 441-442: "Reprenant un langue qui formule la loi de la connaissance, acte commun du connaissant et du connu, disons que l'action est l'acte commun de la cause et de l'effet, le même acte des deux."
actually produces or causes another. This is not yet a question of the necessity existing between cause and effect, but merely the question of whether there are real productive agents in the world.

The simple and direct answer is contained in the account of the origin of the notion of cause. For there are instances of activity in the world in which we directly experience both the coming-to-be of the patient and the activity of the agent. We understand that as a matter of fact, prescinding from questions of necessity, some things do change in dependence upon an agent. This is an immediate datum, a datum involved in the primary experience of existence. When we know ourselves as existing, we experience ourselves as the sources of willing, thinking, and acting. When we judge that there is a concrete world independent of us, we so judge precisely because this world acts upon us causally to determine us to know.

Some things, then, as a matter of fact change under the influence of an agent. But is this necessarily so? This raises the question of the validity of the principle of causality. To phrase the question metaphysically, can a thing pass from potency to act without the productive activity or some agent?

One can thus far assert that with consequent necessity a given A is the cause of B. One may also assert in an enumerative judgment that all the instances of change in his experience
have an agent or efficient cause accompanying them. In this way many experiences of causation may generate the notion of a general causal law. This is close to what Hume meant by the work of habit and association. But even though the plurality of instances of causation does suggest the formulation of a general law, yet the judgment of necessity that there exists a necessary connection between cause and effect cannot result from a mere summation but requires rather a reflective analysis to determine the value of this necessary judgment.

The precise character of this reflective analysis is to subsume all effects under the category of contingent or participated being. Then by reflecting on what it means to be a contingent being and what it means to have a cause, one concludes that "to have a cause" is of the nature of a "contingent being." To say that every contingent being demands a cause is to say that the notion of contingent being implies the notion of cause. The first step in establishing the principle of causality, then, is to indicate the meaning of implication.

Implication\(^8\) is considered as holding between propositions. This is its use in logic. But propositions represent or indicate facts or classes of facts. Thus if proposition A

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8 This explanation of the meaning of implication presents in summary fashion the thought elaborated in D. J. B. Hawkins, *Causality and Implication*, London, 1937, 47-48.
implies proposition B, and proposition A represents a character of the class of things A and proposition B indicates a character of the class of things B, then any instance of A implies B. Implication is as valid as the ideas or propositions between which it holds. When implication holds between factual propositions, then it relates the facts themselves.

Two conditions for valid implication become clear. The first is the existence of a concrete world independent of the mental world of logical propositions. If the propositions are to bear some relation to facts, these facts must exist and be represented in the propositions.

Secondly, implication is primarily an intensional relation, as opposed to extensional or enumerative. Singular things are conjoined spatially and temporally. The conjunction of abstract natures is by the intensional relation of implication. Thus the second factor or condition for valid implication is abstraction or the ability of the mind to grasp the universal aspects of things. For implication involves the grasping of the characters or attributes of the objects of class A and of class B. Then, when a character or attribute of the apprehended nature A is seen to demand some attribute of the nature B, a necessary relation is asserted to exist between A and B. Consequently whenever A actually exists, B must also exist, since A cannot be given without B. Implication is thus a togetherness of absolute
In an actual instance, implication comes to mean this. An instance of A without B is conceivable if only A is considered. But if B is also considered, an instance of A without B is impossible. And since we are dealing here with universals, the implication is valid for every instance of A and B. The terms between which the implication obtains are absolute natures. It applies to singulars insofar as these embody the natures.

An implicative proposition, then, is one in which one absolute nature is asserted to have a conjunctive relation with another nature. This must be distinguished from a proposition in which a predicate is affirmed to belong to a singular subject, as in "This man is white." The implicative proposition or implication expresses an if-then relation between the universal subject and the universal predicate.

Implicative propositions may be of two kinds. An implication can be contained in a judgment which is merely explicative. An example of this is the proposition, "All bodies are extended." The predicate, extended, is asserted of the subject, bodies, as a part of its meaning and as derived from a simple analysis of the meaning of the subject. "What is red is colored," and "Every rose is a flower," and "Every colored thing is extended," are all examples of this type of implication which is expressed in an explicative judgment.
But there is also an ampliative judgment which provides an extension of knowledge in such a way that the predicate cannot be derived from the mere analysis of the subject. Both the terms of the implication, both the subject and the predicate, must be present and known. Given both the subject and the predicate, the predicate is found to be implied by the intelligible nature of the subject. An example of this is the case in point, "Every event has a cause."

In either case, whether the implication is discovered by mere analysis of the subject or by the conjoint analysis of the subject and predicate, all that is required is that the terms of the implication be fully and distinctly apprehended.

For any valid implication between facts two things, it has been noted, are required, a concrete world independent of us and a mind capable of abstraction. A third piece of metaphysical equipment is required when there is question of the conjoint analysis of the two concepts, "contingent being" and "thing having a cause." This is the principle of sufficient reason. As a principle of reality, it states that everything which is has a ground of its being, whether in its own nature or outside it. It is also called the principle of universal intelligibility.

Now the question is this. Must every event have a cause, or can a thing come to be without an agent? To examine
the matter in its metaphysical context, it is necessary to revert to the concepts of act and potency.

The thing which becomes, before it becomes, cannot have that which it acquires. Change is precisely a tendency or movement toward act. Act is the term of all movement and becoming. Act is the crown of achievement, the maturity of growth, because movement is the passage from the imperfect to the perfect. Act is thus logically prior to potency.

Yet there is the apparent antinomy in the real order in that, in every instance of becoming, potency chronologically precedes act. This antinomy is resolved in that, though potency precedes act within this changing thing, this changing thing demands an act outside itself which determines it to achieve the perfection to which it is destined.

This other, this act which determines the changeable thing to become, is what is called efficient cause. Applying the principle of sufficient reason, mobile being has its sufficient reason either in itself or in another. It does not have the sufficient reason in itself, because then it would give itself what it receives. The changing thing would already have that which it gives itself. The changing thing would already be that which it is becoming and which it precisely should not be in order to become.

It is clearly necessary that it have the sufficient
reason in another which is already in act. Otherwise potency would be prior to act, non-being prior to being, and the more perfect would be explained by the less perfect. The principle of contradiction violently opposes all of this.

From this analysis it is clear that it is the nature of a "thing which comes-to-be" that it necessarily "has an efficient cause." The intrinsic principles of changeable being are insufficient to explain adequately the change. The predicate "has an efficient cause" belongs necessarily to the subject "whatever becomes."

Every effect, every being that changes, has an efficient cause. This is not the broadest enunciation of the principle. Becoming or change reveals a particular characteristic of all being that changes. It is contingent, or participated, or limited being. A contingent being is one which can be or not be. A contingent being does not necessarily exist, since it does not have the reason for its existence in itself. Since a given contingent being is, and since it does not have the sufficient reason for its existence in itself, it must have it in another. By comparing the notion of "contingent being" with the notion of "that which has a cause" one finds that the "other" which contingent being implies is an efficient cause. Thus the principle of causality can now be enunciated in its wider scope: Whatever exists contingently (every participated being) has an
efficient cause of its existence.

To conclude by way of summary, the notion of cause is more probably derived from instances of change or causation in which both the coming-to-be of the thing changed and the activity of the agent bringing about the change are immediately experienced. Instances in which there is physical contact and interaction between the human person and concrete things in an action-passion relationship are regarded as the experience-type of causality. Internal experience is equally immediate. Man experiences himself as the source of willing, thinking, and acting. He experiences resistance to his efforts.

Secondary instances of causality are experiences of qualitative causality which are associated with mechanical activity, such as the striking of a piano key and the production of sound. Also secondary are instances in which, though both the cause and effect are experienced, the person is not involved as agent or patient. Finally there are all those instances of causality in which only the effect or the change is experienced, and which demand an inference to determine that there was a cause and what the cause precisely is.

Metaphysical analysis of the nature supplemented the psychological account of the origin of the notion of cause. The metaphysical analysis indicated that causality is essentially action. Causality is the actuality of an active potency which
is productive of a distinct term. The action of the agent is in the patient, since the causal action is the common act of cause and effect.

This led to the question of the necessity expressed in the principle of causality. To establish the principle of causality, the following factors were involved as premises: a world of concrete existents independent of the mind, a human intellect which is capable of discerning universal aspects of these concrete existents, the principle of sufficient reason and the fact of implication as obtaining between these concrete existents.

With surprising exactness these factors correspond, by way of opposition, to the premises involved in Hume's denial of causality. In the conclusion to the body of the thesis expressed at the end of the last chapter, Hume's major deficiencies were considered to be: a phenomenalistic view of the object of knowledge, an inaccurate account of the proper work of human reason, and an atomistic analysis of experience.
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B. ARTICLES


The thesis submitted by Donald Edward Ryan, S.J. has been read and approved by three members of the Department of Philosophy.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

May 1, 1955

Date

Signature of Adviser