

## CORRESPONDENCE

TO THE EDITOR OF *Philosophy*

DEAR SIR,

There is nothing whatever in Professor Keightley's endorsement of Mr. Douglas Fawcett's speculations that induces me to modify my opinions about *The Zermatt Dialogues*. He asserts that I have not dealt with the "fundamental, vitally important, and significant issues" raised. I showed, however, that "its positive conclusions are vitiated by being fallaciously circular." Further, I indicated the radical and inherent defectiveness of Imagination, as such, whether divine or human; and if Professor Keightley prefers to regard these criticisms as "verbal fault-finding," and to allow Mr. Fawcett's "main theses and contentions" to rest on an obviously circular argument, then his views about the methods and aims of Philosophy differ profoundly from my own.

I have not the slightest objection to the criticism of Hegel—as Professor Keightley quite gratuitously suggests—provided that this is competent. I have simply protested against the too familiar device of prefacing one's criticism by sheer caricature. As contrasted with this, the thoroughgoing, and often adverse, analysis of Hegelianism by Baillie and Bosanquet, McTaggart and Bradley—not to mention foreign writers—is invaluable. As matters stand, Professor Keightley merely echoes current mis-statements about Hegel's theory of the relations between Thought and Reality, or the Absolute.

Can it possibly be the case that both he and Mr. Fawcett remain unaware that much, if not indeed all, of Hegel's finest work lies in the sphere, not of Logic and Metaphysics, but of *Æsthetics*?

J. E. TURNER.

THE UNIVERSITY,  
LIVERPOOL,  
August 3, 1932.

TO THE EDITOR OF *Philosophy*

SIR,

In the April and July numbers of *Philosophy* there have been two articles dealing with Entropy. The first of these, by Dean Inge, suggests that the Second Law of Thermodynamics applies to animate as well as to inanimate nature. The second article, by Professor J. Johnstone, concludes by saying that Entropy is increasing in the inorganic series concurrently with its decrease in the organic.

The result is indeed fanciful. "Time's arrow" seems to point in both directions at once. One is tempted to ask, therefore, if the Second Law of Thermodynamics can indeed be applied to animate as well as to inanimate nature. Is it not likely that the chief characteristic of life is its challenge to this Law?

The living organism is distinguished from all inanimate nature by its ability to "sort" materials into less and less "probable" combinations. Life in its earliest manifestations declares war on Entropy. For the individual the struggle is an unequal one; the principle of Carnot triumphs when senescence begins. Phylogenetically the principle is kept at bay in those races which are successful in the struggle of evolution. In the world of ideas the conceptions of Goodness, Truth, and Beauty are so "improbable" that their very birth seems to defy the process of Entropy.

Many of us feel that an end for organic and inorganic matter in a cold dead ball (or in radiation) is an intolerable prospect. We would welcome a dissertation from a biologist to protest with Lord Balfour against "the deeds and thoughts of man being wiped out like a child's sand castle by the incoming tide." The theologians protest very well in their own way. I, for one, would delight to see the biologists protest in theirs; for Life and Entropy seem to me to be at daggers drawn.

I am, etc.,

W. E. M. MITCHELL.

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VICTORIA, B.C.,  
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