

SPECIALISTS AND GENERALIZERS.

SPENCER AS THE DISCOVERER OF UNIVER-
SAL PRINCIPLES--STEPHEN PEARL
ANDREW'S THEORIES.

To the Editor of the New-York Times:

In your issue of March 23 a correspondent, who styles himself "Outsider," asks whether Herbert Spencer is a specialist of recognized authority in any of the branches of human knowledge? And in the same breath he asks is it possible to deduce truth from a mere opinion or from any number of opinions? If, as "Outsider" evidently believes, it is impossible to deduce truth from a mere opinion, why then it is folly to ask specialists for their opinion of Mr. Spencer? "Outsider" ought to know that specialists are in a great degree incapable of any broad or generalizing idea, and even somewhat so, in applying their own attribute of precision in any other than the exact direction in which they may have adjusted the tube of their mental microscopes. They are, for the most part, the Gradgrinds of science, abounding in facts, but destitute of any artistic or constructive idea of arranging or disposing of their facts, and oblivious of any underlying and deeper law which has originated the facts and guided in their distribution.

All languages are composed of a few elementary sounds, which, constantly repeated in new combinations, make all that men ever say or can say. It is also in a similar manner that, employing so few signs as nine digits and zero, we can write all possible numbers and that we can know positively that we have the means at command by which we can write new combinations of numbers so soon

as they shall occur to us, although previously we may never have thought of those particular combinations as possible numbers. We have, then, in a sense a mastery through science over infinite details, with which, as details, we are entirely unacquainted. It is not the universality of facts, which are indeed infinitely numerous, but the universality of principles, which are infinitely unific and simple, which Mr. Spencer claims to have discovered and exhibited.

Whether the method of discovery be scientific or not is of no consequence. The only question to be considered is, Does it "get there"? I think it does, but not with both feet, as many of the admirers of Mr. Spencer believe. Of course, Mr. Spencer does not claim to possess photographs of the parents of matter, nor to have discovered a way to materialize space, let alone to bag the unknowable, as "Outsider" seems to imagine. The temptation is great, however, to ask with "Outsider" whether Mr. Spencer thoroughly understands his own theory? In my humble opinion the late Stephen Pearl Andrews has left a more formal scientific statement of the general character of evolution than that formulated by Mr. Spencer. According to Mr. Andrews there are only three fundamental principles in the universe. These are unism, duism, and trinism, because they are derived from and stand definitely related to the numbers one, two, and three respectively. The first two of these three principles, unism and duism, crop out and reappear under many forms, and in the absence heretofore of any sufficiently compendious generalization they have received a variety of namings. Thus, unism is called unity, sameness, centralizing or centripetal tendency, gravitation, arrival, conjunction, thesis or synthesis, integration, combination, contraction, generality, simplicity, &c. It is the tendency to unite or toward unity, or the manifestation of the presence or results of that tendency in thousands of modes, in every sphere of being.

Duism is called diversity, difference or variety, decentralizing or centrifugal tendency, repulsion, departure, separation, antithesis differentiation, diffusion, expansion specialty, complexity, &c. It is the tendency to disparting or dividing, or the manifestation of the presence of results of that tendency in thousands of modes, in every sphere of being. By its nature it not only departs from the unism, but it also bifurcates or divides in departing into two (or more) branches, like the tines of a fork, and in all senses manifests an inherent alliance with plurality, and primarily or typically with the number two.

Trinism is the principle symbolized by the totality of being, or of any particular being. It is compounded of unism and duism as factors, constituents or elements like the handle of the fork, which is one, on the one hand, and the tines of the fork, which are two, (or more,) on the other hand. Trinism is, therefore, the type or representation of the whole fork or other compound and resultant object, and so of all concrete or real being--unism and duism being abstract elements of being merely, or, as it were, parts not united in any whole.

H. L. P.

NEW-YORK, Tuesday, April 8, 1890.

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