These facts are evident; but Locke has a system; this system consists in admitting no other origin of all our ideas than sensation and reflection. The idea of the finite, which is resolved into that of body and succession, easily comes from sensation or reflection; but the idea of the infinite, which is resolved neither into the idea of body nor into that of succession, since time and space are neither the one nor the other of these two things, can come neither from sensation nor reflection. The system of Locke, if the idea of the infinite subsist, will therefore be false; the idea of the infinite, therefore, must not subsist; and Locke shuns it and eludes it as much as he can. He begins by declaring that it is a very obscure idea, whilst that of the finite is very clear and comes easily into the mind (Book II. Chap. XVII. § 2). But obscure or not obscure, is it in the intelligence? That is the question, and obscure or not obscure, it is your duty as a philosopher, if it is real, to admit, whether you can elucidate it or not. And then, in regard to the obscurity, let us understand ourselves. The senses attain only body; consciousness or reflection attain only succession. The objects of the senses and the understanding are therefore body and succession, that is, the finite. Thus nothing is more clear for the senses and consciousness than the finite; whilst the infinite is and ought to be very obscure, for the very simple reason that the infinite is the object neither of the senses nor of consciousness, but of reason alone. If then it is with the senses or consciousness that you wish to attain the infinite, it is necessarily obscure and even inaccessible to you; if with the reason, nothing is clearer, so far that it is then the finite which becomes obscure to your eyes and escapes you. And behold how empiricism, which is exclusively grounded on internal or external experience, is quite naturally led to the denial of the infinite; whilst idealism, which is exclusively grounded on the reason, very easily forms a conception of the infinite, but finds great difficulty in admitting the finite, which is not its proper object.

After sporting a little with the idea of the infinite as obscure,

Locke objects that it is purely negative, that it has nothing in it positive. Book II. Chap. XVII. § 13: "We have no positive idea of infinity." § 16: "We have no positive idea of infinite duration." § 18: "We have no positive idea of infinite space." This is the source of the accusation so often repeated since against the conceptions of reason, that they are not positive. But, at first, observe that there is no more an idea of succession without the idea of time, than an idea of time without the previous idea of succession; and no more an idea of body without the idea of space, than an idea of space without the previous idea of body, that is, that there is no more an idea of the finite without the idea of the infinite, than there is an idea of the infinite without the previous idea of the finite, whence it follows that, in strictness, these ideas suppose each other, and, if any one wishes to say it, reciprocally limit each other; consequently, the idea of the infinite is no more the negative of that of the finite, than the idea of the finite is the negative of that of the infinite; they are negatives on the same ground, or they are both positive, for they are both simultaneous affirmations, and every affirmation contains a positive idea. Or do we understand by positive that which falls under experience, external or internal; and by negative that which does not fall under it? Then I agree that the idea of body, of succession, of the finite, falls alone under experience, under sensation, and consciousness, and that it alone is positive; and that the idea of time, of space, of the infinite, falls only under the reason, is purely negative. But it is necessary to maintain, according to this explanation, that all rational conceptions, and, for example, those of geometry and morals, are also purely negative, and have nothing positive. Or if we understand by positive every thing that is not abstract, every thing that is real, every thing that falls under the immediate and direct action of any of our faculties, it must be admitted that the idea of the infinite, of time and space, is as positive as that of the finite, of succession, and body, since it falls under the reason, a faculty quite as real and quite as positive as

the senses and consciousness, although its proper objects are not objects of experience.*

Finally, being obliged to explain himself categorically, after many contradictions, for Locke often speaks here and elsewhere of the infinity of God (Book II. Chap. XVII. § 1), and even of the infinity of time and space (*ibid.*, § 4 and 5), he ends by resolving the infinite into number (*ibid.*, § 9): "*Number affords us the clearest idea of infinity.*—But of all other ideas, it is number, as I have said, which, I think, furnishes us with the clearest and most distinct idea of infinity we are capable of. For even in space and duration, when the mind pursues the idea of infinity, it there makes use of the ideas and repetitions of numbers, as of millions and millions of miles, or years, which are so many distinct ideas, kept best by number from running into a confused heap, wherein the mind loses itself." But what is number? it is, in the last analysis, such or such a number, for every number is a determinate number; it is, therefore, a finite number, whatever it may be, as high as you please. Number is the parent of succession, not of duration; number and succession measure time, but do not equal it and exhaust it. The reduction of the infinite to number is, therefore, the reduction of infinite time to its indefinite or finite measure, which is at bottom the same thing; as in regard to space, the reduction of space to body is the reduction of the infinite to the finite. Now, to reduce the infinite to the finite, is to destroy it; it is to destroy the belief of the human race, but, once more, it is to save the system of Locke. In fact, the infinite can enter the understanding neither by consciousness nor by the senses; but the finite enters the understanding marvellously well by these two doors; it alone enters the understanding: therefore there is nothing else either in the understanding or in nature; and the idea of the infinite is only a vague and obscure idea, entirely negative, which is resolved, when reduced to its just value, into number and succession.

* On the infinite and the necessary as proper objects of reason, see 1st Series, Vol. 5, Lecture 6, p. 223.

Let us examine the theory of personal identity* in the system of Locke, as we have examined that of infinity, of time, of space.

Is the idea of personal identity in the human understanding, or is it not? Each one of you can answer for himself: is there any one of you who doubts of his personal identity, who doubts that he is the same to-day that he was yesterday, and that he will be to-morrow? If no one doubts of his personal identity, it only remains to determine what is the origin of this idea.

I suppose that no one of you would know that he exists, unless he thought and were conscious of his thought. Seek whether, in the absence of all thought and consciousness, you could have any idea of your existence, and, consequently, of your existence as one and identical. On the contrary, can you have a consciousness of a single operation of your mind, without irresistibly believing, at the same instant, in your existence? No, in every act of consciousness there is the consciousness of some operation, of some phenomenon, thought, volition, sensation, and at the same time the conception of our existence; and when memory comes after consciousness, we conceive that the same being, the same *me*, which just before was the subject of the phenomenon of which I had a consciousness, exists still, and is the same that memory recalls to me. Thus consciousness and memory cannot be exercised without the reason suggesting to me the irresistible conviction of my personal existence, one and identical.

Now, if you again distinguish the two orders which I have several times designated to you, the logical order and the chronological order of knowledge, it is evident that, in the order of nature and reason, it is not consciousness and memory which are the foundation of personal identity, and that it is, on the contrary, personal identity, the continuous existence of the being, which is

* On personal identity, see 1st Series, Vol. 1, Lectures 19–22; Vol. 3, Lecture 1, p. 70, etc.; Vol. 4, Lecture 20, p. 368; and Lecture 21, p. 446.

the foundation of consciousness and memory. Take away being, and there are no more phenomena, and these phenomena come no longer to consciousness and memory; in the order of nature and reason, it is therefore consciousness and memory which presuppose personal identity: but it is not thus in the chronological order; and if in this order we cannot have the consciousness and the memory of any phenomenon without instantly having a rational conception of our identical existence, nevertheless it is necessary, in order that we may have this conception of our identity, that there should have been some act of consciousness and memory. Without doubt, the act of memory and consciousness is not consummated, unless we conceive our personal identity; but some act of memory and consciousness must have taken place, in order that the conception of our identity may take place in its turn. In this sense, I say that some operation, some acquisition of memory and consciousness, is the necessary chronological condition of the conception of our personal identity.

Analysis may raise, in regard to the phenomena of consciousness and memory, which suggest to us the idea of our personal identity, the same problem which it has already raised in regard to the phenomena of consciousness, which suggest to us the idea of time: it may seek what, among the numerous phenomena of which we have consciousness and memory, are those on occasion of which we acquire at first the conviction of our existence. At bottom, it is to seek what are the conditions of memory and consciousness. Now, as we have seen, the condition of memory is consciousness; and, as we have again seen, the condition of consciousness is attention, and the principle of attention is the will. It is, therefore, the will, attested by consciousness, which suggests to us the conviction of our existence, and it is the continuity of the will, attested by memory, which suggests the conviction of our personal identity. It is, again, to M. de Biran that I refer the honor and the responsibility of this theory.*

* Works of M. de Biran, Vol. i., Introduction of the Editor.

Let us look at the theory of Locke. Locke has very clearly seen (Book II. Chap. XXVII. § 9) that where there is no consciousness (and, as it has been very well remarked, Locke should have added memory to consciousness), where, I say, there is neither memory nor consciousness, there can be for us no idea of our personal identity, so that the sign, the character and measure of personality, is consciousness. I cannot render too much praise to this part of Locke's theory: it attains and puts into light the true sign, the true character, the true measure of personality; but the sign is one thing, and the thing signified another; the measure is one thing, and the thing measured another; the eminent and fundamental character of the *me* and personal identity is one thing, and this identity itself is another. Here, as in regard to the infinite, as in regard to time, as in regard to space, Locke has confounded the condition of an idea with this idea itself; he has confounded identity with consciousness and memory, which suggest the idea of it. Book II. Chap. XXVII. § 9: "Since consciousness always accompanies thinking, and it is that which makes every one to be what he calls self, and thereby distinguishes himself from all other thinking things; in this alone consists personal identity, *i. e.*, the sameness of a rational being: and as far as this consciousness can be extended backwards to any past action or thought, so far reaches the identity of that person; it is the same self now it was then; and it is the same self with this present one that now reflects on it, that that action was done." § 10: "Consciousness makes personal identity." § 16: "Consciousness makes the same person." § 17: "Self depends on consciousness." § 23: "Consciousness alone makes self." But, the confusion of consciousness and personal identity destroys personal identity, as the confusion of number and the infinite destroys the infinite, as the confusion of succession and time destroys time, as the confusion of body and space destroys space. In fact, if personal identity is altogether in consciousness, then when there is an enfeeblement, or loss of consciousness, there must be an enfeeblement or loss of personal identity; deep

sleep, lethargy, which is a species of sleep, revery, intoxication, passion, which often destroy consciousness, and with it memory, must also destroy, not only the sentiment of existence, but existence itself. It is not necessary to follow all the consequences of this theory. It is evident that if memory and consciousness not only measure our existence, but constitute it, he who has forgotten that he has done a thing, really has not done it; he who has badly measured by memory, the time of his existence, has really had less existence. Then there is no more moral imputation, no more juridical action. A man no longer recollects to have done such or such a thing, therefore he cannot be tried for having done it, for he has ceased to be the same. The murderer can no longer bear the penalty of his crime, if, by a fortunate chance, he has lost the memory of it.

To sum up, there is no doubt that personality has for its distinguishing sign the will and the operations of which we have a consciousness and a memory, and that if we had neither consciousness nor memory of any operation and any voluntary act, we should never have the idea of our personal identity; but when this idea is introduced into the intelligence by consciousness and memory, it continues there independently of the memory of that which introduced it. There is no doubt that what declares and measures the personality and moral accountability of our acts, is the consciousness of the free will which produced them; but these acts once performed by us with consciousness and free-will, memory of them may fade or even entirely vanish, and the responsibility, as well as personality, may remain complete. It is not, therefore, consciousness and memory which constitute our personal identity. And not only consciousness and memory do not constitute personal identity, but personal identity is not even the object of consciousness and memory; none of us has a consciousness of his own nature, otherwise the depths of existence would be easy to sound, and the mysteries of the soul would be perfectly known; we should perceive the soul as an airy phenomenon of consciousness which we directly attain, a sensation,

a volition, a thought. In point of fact it is not so, because personal existence, the being which we are, does not fall under the eyes of consciousness and memory; nothing falls under it but the operations by which this being manifests itself. These operations are the proper objects of consciousness and memory; personal identity is a conviction of reason. But all these distinctions could find no place in the theory of Locke. The pretension of this theory is to draw all ideas from sensation and reflection; not being able to make the idea of personal identity proceed from sensation, it is therefore necessary that this theory should make it come from reflection, that is, that it should make of this idea an object of memory and consciousness; that is, that it should destroy personal existence by confounding it with the phenomena which manifest it, and which would be impossible without it.

It only remains for us, in this lecture, to examine the theory of substance.* We are no more frightened by the idea of substance than by that of the infinite. The infinite is the character of time and space; so the idea and the name of substance, are the generalization of the fact of which I have just been treating. Consciousness attests to you, with memory, an operation, or several successive operations, and at the same time suggests to you a belief in your personal existence. Now, what is your personal existence, the being which you are and which reason reveals to you, relatively to the operations which consciousness and memory attest to you? The subject of these operations; and these operations are its characters, its signs, its attributes. These operations vary, and are renewed; they are accidents; on the contrary, your personal existence always subsists the same; you are to-day the same that you were yesterday and that you will be to-morrow, amidst the perpetual diversity of your acts. Personal identity is the unity of your being opposed to the plurality

* On the idea of substance, see the first Series, Vol. 1st, course of 1816; Vol. 2, Lectures 9 and 10, p. 19; Vol. 3, Lecture 3, p. 125; Vol. 4, Lecture 12, p. 56, Lecture 21, p. 433, Lecture 22, p. 448; Vol. 5, Lecture 6, pp. 156-72, etc.

of the acts of consciousness and memory; now being, one and identical, opposed to variable accidents, to transitory phenomena, is substance.

This, you see, is personal substance; it is the same in regard to exterior substance, which I still do not wish to call material substance. Touch gives you the idea of solid; sight and the other senses give you the idea of other qualities, primary or secondary. But what! is there nothing but these qualities? Whilst the senses give you solidity, color, figure, softness, hardness, etc., do you not believe that these qualities are not in the air, but that they are rather in something which really exists, which is solid, hard, soft, etc.? You would not have had the idea of this something, if the senses had not given you the idea of these qualities; but you cannot have the idea of these qualities without the idea of something existing; this is the universal belief, which the distinction between qualities and the subject of these qualities implies, the distinction between accidents and substance.

Attributes, accidents, phenomena, being, substance, subject, are the generalizations drawn from the source of the two incontestable facts of belief in my personal existence, and belief in the existence of the exterior world. Every thing that has been said of body and space, of succession and time, of the finite and the infinite, of consciousness and personal identity, all this should be said of attribute and subject, of qualities and substance, of phenomena and being. If we seek the origin of the idea of phenomena, of quality, of attribute, it is given us by the senses if the object of search be an attribute of external substance; by consciousness if the object of search be an attribute of the soul. As to substance, whether it be material or spiritual, it is given us neither by the senses nor by consciousness; it is a revelation of reason in the exercise of the senses and the consciousness, as space, time, the infinite, and personal identity, are revealed by reason in the exercise of sensibility, consciousness, and memory. Finally, as body, succession, the finite, variety, logically suppose space, time, the infinite and unity; so, in the order of reason and nature, it is evident that attribute and accident presuppose subject and substance. But it is not less evident that, in the order of the acquisition of our ideas, the idea of attribute and accident is the necessary condition in order to arrive at that of substance and subject, as in the same order the idea of body, of succession, of number, of variety, is the condition of the idea of space, of time, of the infinite and identity. This being settled, let us see what place the idea of substance occupies in the system of Locke.

"I confess," says he, Book I. Chap. IV. § 18, "there is another idea, which would be of general use for mankind to have, as it is of general talk, as if they had it; and that is the idea of substance, which we neither have, nor can have, by sensation or reflection." Locke, therefore, systematically denies the idea of substance. Doubtless many passages might be cited in which he implicitly admits it; but here he openly rejects it as "of little use in philosophy," Book II. Chap. XIII. § 19; there, as obscure, Book II. Chap. XXIII. § 4: "We have no clear idea of substance in general." But take away from substance this character of abstraction and generality, and restore it to its reality; substance is then *me*, is body. What! is substance of little use in philosophy, that is, does the belief in my personal identity, the belief in the exterior world, play an unimportant part in my understanding and in human life? Without doubt, to the eyes of the senses as well as to the eyes of consciousness, all substance is obscure; for no substance, material or spiritual, is the proper object of the senses and of consciousness; but, once more, it is not obscure to the eyes of reason, which has its proper objects, which it reveals to us with the same evidence that consciousness and the senses reveal their objects to us. Notwithstanding, Locke everywhere repels the idea of substance; and, when he officially explains himself in regard to it, he resolves it into a collection of simple ideas of sensation and reflection. Book II. Chap. XXIII. §§ 3, 4, 6: "We have no other idea of substances than what is framed by a collection of simple ideas." . . . "It is by such combinations of

simple ideas, and nothing else, that we represent particular sorts of substances to ourselves. . . ." § 37: *Recapitulation.* "All our ideas of the several sorts of substances are nothing but collections of simple ideas, with a supposition of something to which they belong, and in which they subsist; though of this supposed something we have no clear distinct idea at all." And he declares that we know nothing of matter but the collection of its qualities, and nothing of mind but the collection of its operations. Nothing is more true than this in a certain respect. It is certain that we know nothing of mind but what its operations teach us in regard to it; that we know nothing of matter but what its qualities teach us in regard to it; as we have already granted that we know nothing of time except what succession teaches us in regard to it, of space except what body teaches us in regard to it, of the infinite except what the finite teaches us, of *me* except what consciousness teaches us. Body is the only measure of space, succession of time, the finite of the infinite, the operations of consciousness of our identity; so attributes and qualities are the only signs and the only measures of substances, whether material or spiritual. But because we know nothing of a thing except what another thing teaches us in regard to it, it does not follow that the former thing is the latter, and that substance is only the collection of its qualities, because it is by the collection alone of its qualities that substance is manifested. Hence a thousand extravagances and paralogisms which have everywhere been produced. It is evident that the collection into which substance is resolved is in every way impossible, without the supposition of substance. M. Royer-Collard* has perfectly shown the different phases of this impossibility. I will refer only to one. Among all the conditions under which a collection is possible, here is one which is incontestable: there must be some one, some mind, to make this collection. Numbers placed under each other do not make addition; arithmetic is not made entirely by itself, it supposes and demands an arithmetician. Now Locke, by denying substance, has destroyed the arithmetician necessary in order to make the addition; the human mind no longer exists, you are no longer a mind one and identical, capable of adding the different quantities of which a collection is composed, and there only remain quantities which must add themselves to each other, must themselves perceive the relations which bind them together. But pass over this difficulty, which, among several others, is a radical one; admit that the collection is possible without some one, some mind which makes it; suppose it made, made by itself alone, what will this collection be? All that a collection can be, an abstraction, a mere word. Behold, therefore, at what you definitely arrive; and, without speaking of God, who is nevertheless also a substance, the substance of substances and being of beings, behold, therefore, mind, behold matter reduced to mere words. Scholasticism had converted many collections into substances, many words into entities; by an exaggeration in a contrary sense, Locke converted substance into collection, and made words of things; and this, mark it well, necessarily and by the force of his system. Admitting only ideas explicable by sensation or reflection, and being able to explain the idea of substance by neither, it was necessary for him to deny it, to reduce it to qualities which are easily attained by sensation or reflection. Hence the systematic confusion of qualities and substance, of phenomena and being, that is, the destruction of being, and consequently of beings. Nothing, therefore, substantially exists, neither God nor the world, neither you nor I; all is resolved into phenomena, into abstractions, into words; and, strange enough, it is the very fear of abstraction and verbal entities, it is the badly understood taste for reality which precipitates Locke into an absolute nominalism, which is nothing else than an absolute nihilism.

* Works of Reid, Vol. iv., p. 305.