

Prefatory Note

There is a long historical association between theism and rationalism on the one hand, and empiricism and atheism on the other. This work arises from the feeling of discomfort which such an alignment produces in me. On the one hand I believe in God, and I think there are good reasons for believing in God. On the other hand, my belief in God, like many others, is not based upon inference but on experience of creatureliness.

The rationalists insist that the concept of God is bound up with that of necessity and that, without it, it is reduced to the status of one finite concept amongst others, not unique. What can be made of a God who merely *happens* to exist? Arguing for the same premises, the empiricists will maintain that from presented data it will never be possible to infer necessity, and that any being who is not necessarily might *not* be. The support on which everything stands might slip under at any moment, and therefore, cannot be called God.

To meet these objections, it will be necessary to reexamine much of the natural theology and also much of the recent philosophy of religion. From the time of St. Thomas this or that traditional argument for divine existence has been under fire. Of these the ontological argument is the most discussed one, while the argument from design has sadly suffered undeserved neglect. I have chosen to state and examine the argument from design through its ramifications at the hands of such thinkers as St. Thomas, David Hume, Kant and William Paley. This argument is somehow closer to the natural disposition of man. Even the *Vedas* implore us to look upon the world as the undying poetry of the gods : *pasya devasya kavyam, na mamara na jirjati*. It is well enough that Kant treated this argument with respect.

I can hardly think my treatment of St. Thomas' Fifth Way adequate in any respect. The requisite scholarship is poorly lacking in me. However, I have not spared myself of any pains to rise upto my daunting task. For the rest of my thinkers there was access to their texts, I have tried to understand their intentions with a free mind. I have always reminded myself of what St. Paul has said, 'the letter killeth, the spirit enliveneth'. It is the spirit of the argument from design that I have to get at, and state and examine to the best of my abilities. Much of course remains to be said, but I should like to say with Cardinal Newman, I do not look for the other shore, one step will suffice for me.