

TREATISE ON THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE REAL AND THE
IDEAL IN NATURE¹¹ (1806) BY F. W. J. SCHELLING

Translation by Dale Snow

[2: 359] The most obscure thing of all, yes, obscurity itself according to some, is matter. However, it is precisely this unknown root out of which arises all the forms and living appearances of nature. Without knowledge of it, physics is without a scientific basis, and science itself loses the bond by means of which the idea is connected to reality. I take matter neither to be something independent of the absolute unity, which might underlie it as a kind of stuff, nor do I regard it as mere nothingness; but rather I agree with Spinoza's statement in one of his letters, who when asked if the multiplicity of corporeal things could be derived a priori out of the mere concept of extension (in the Cartesian sense), answered: I take matter instead for an attribute in which the infinite and eternal essence expresses itself. Since in this case every piece of matter in itself must be an expression of the whole universe, it can hardly be an attribute that reflects the infinite essence, but rather must be regarded as the epitome of all attributes. The ancients already partly knew and partly suspected that matter had an opposition, a duality, at its foundation. That this is overcome through a third element and that it in itself presents a closed and identical triplicity is everywhere acknowledged since the new challenge posed by these investigations. Still the profundity of this subject retains an irresistible attraction for the observer, and pulls him in again and again, at least so long as he cannot convince himself that he has fully grasped it, as it appears to me to thus far be the case. For this reason I believe I have accomplished something neither [2: 360] unnecessary nor undesirable to the learned, when I communicate in a simple presentation the summarized results of my investigations, concerning the principles, the final results of which are matter, in the fullest sense of the word. The same principles are necessarily those of nature as a whole and finally those of the cosmos itself, and by following them we might be able to develop a symbolic picture, based on matter itself, from which the inner workings of the universe and the highest principles of philosophy could be developed. We hope that this development does not appear as a foreign addition to a work, which has no worth other than the true one, to be grounded in intuition and reveal via a series of justified intimations, the all-encompassing meaning of that law of dualism which we encounter just as definitely in the most individual appearances as in the whole of the world. Already the first look at nature teaches us what the last one does; because matter expresses no other or lesser bond than that which is in reason, the eternal identity of the infinite with the finite. We recognize in things first of all the pure essentiality itself, that cannot be further explained, but rather explains itself. We see this essentiality, however, never in itself, but rather always and everywhere in a wondrous union with that which could not subsist by

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itself and is only illuminated by being, without ever being able to become anything essential in its own right. We call this the finite or the form.

The infinite cannot be added to the finite; for it must then be able to in itself arise out of the finite, that is, it must not be infinite. But it is just as unthinkable that the finite be added to the infinite; for it cannot exist at all prior to it, and only first becomes something in the identification with the infinite.

Both must therefore be united through a certain original and absolute necessity, if they are to appear bound together at all.

We call this necessity, at least until we find another expression, the absolute bond, or the copula.

And in fact it is clear that this bond, in the infinite [2: 361] itself, is the true and real infinite. It would in no way be unconditioned, were the finite or nothingness to be opposed to it. It is absolute only as the absolute negation of nothingness, as absolute affirmation of itself in all forms, thus only as that which we have called the infinite copula.

It is also just as clear that reason does not recognize the true and in every relation unconditioned, when it only conceives of the infinite as the opposite of the finite.

If it is essential for each to affirm itself in the form of the finite, then it is at the same time this form, and since it exists only through the bond, then it must appear to itself as an expression of the same unity of the infinite and the finite.

Just as necessary and eternal as these two are also together as bond and bound, indeed the identity and the particularity of these is itself only the real and at the same time higher expression of this first identity. Should the bond be posited in the first place, then it must abolish itself as bond, if it is not to posit the infinite reality in the finite, that is, if it does not at the same time posit that which is bound.

The bond and that which is bound do not constitute a doubled and differing reality; but rather that which is in the one is also in the other; that in terms of which the bound is in no respect like the bond is necessarily nullified, since the essentiality consists precisely in the absolute identity of the infinite and the finite, therefore also in that of the bond and what is bound.

We can acknowledge between these two no other difference than that which we can find in the law of identity (through which the relationship of the predicated and the predicated is expressed as eternal), according to whether we reflect upon the absolute sameness, the copula itself, or upon the subject and predicate as equated, and how the former and the latter are above all inseparable, just as it also is with the bound and the bond.

The bond expresses in the bound at the same time its own essence as identity. This can therefore [2: 362] to that extent be regarded as its expression. If I were to remove from the expression what it received from that of which it is the expression, nothing would remain save inessential characteristics, for instance those that it has by virtue of being a mere expression, and an empty schema; thus the bond itself and the expression are not two different things, but rather either one and the same thing viewed from different perspectives, or the one is indeed an essence and the other inessential.

It is the same distinction that some have made between the *esse substantiae* and the *esse formae*, from which it is equally easy to see that it is not a real, but merely an ideal difference.

We can express the bond in its essence as the infinite love of itself (which is the highest in all things), as the infinite desire to reveal itself, except that the essence of the Absolute cannot be thought of as distinct from this desire, but rather just as this willing-of-itself.

It is precisely this affirming-of-itself, regardless of the form, that is in itself infinite, which is why it can never in any respect become finite.

The Absolute is, however, not only a willing of itself, but rather a willing in infinite ways, that is in all forms, grades, and potencies of reality.

The expression of the eternal and infinite willing-of-itself is the world.

If we look at this expression for that which it has received from the bond, and with respect to which it resembles it, the positive in it, and not the inessential characteristics: then it is not different from the absolute itself, but rather is only the complete copula, displayed in its progressive development.

We stand here at precisely the first and most important points of its unfolding.

The universe, that is, the infinity of forms in which the eternal bond affirms itself, is only universal, real totality (*totalitas*) through the bond, that is through the identity in the multiplicity. The totality therefore demands the identity (*identitas*) and cannot be thought in any respect without it. [2: 363] Yet it would also be impossible for the bond of the many to be one, that is, that it itself would not be multiple, were it not also in this its identity in the multiplicity, and therefore also the whole in the singular. The identity of the bond demands therefore the thoroughgoing wholeness of itself, and cannot be thought without it.

Identity in totality and totality in identity is therefore the original, and in no way a separable or dissoluble essence of the bond, which thereby receives no duplicity, but rather truly first becomes one.

Neither from the former nor the latter alone can the complete birth of things be conceived, but rather from the necessary oneness of both in all and each in the bond itself. The completeness of the determination of all realities is exactly the same as that completion of the eternal itself, which makes it the identity of the whole and the whole identical to it.

The forms in which the eternal will wills itself are multiple, regarded in themselves; multiplicity is therefore a characteristic of things that can only be attributed to them apart from the bond; for that reason it adds nothing to the reality of the things and contains nothing positive in itself. The bond is the identity in the multiplicity of things, and insofar is regarded as the negation of multiplicity in itself.

There is an ancient saying about God: he is the only being who is always in the center, also at the periphery, and therefore nowhere peripheral. We, on the other hand, wish to declare space as that which is everywhere merely peripheral, never central.

Space as such is the mere form of things without the bond, the strengthened without the strengthener: thus its inessentiality is revealed through itself, in that it designates nothing other than sheer powerlessness and lack of substance. It cannot

be demanded that we explain space, for there is nothing explicable in it, or say how it was created, since a non-being cannot be created.

The bond as the one and the same in the multiplicity of that which is bound [2: 364] negates both of these as self-sustained; at the same time it negates space as the form of the self-subsistent.

This bond, which binds all things and makes everything one, which is the omnipresent, never circumscribed central point, exists in nature as gravity.

In that the bond in gravity negates space as the form of the self-subsistent, it posits above all the other form of finitude, time, which is nothing other than the negation of the self-subsistent, and does not arise out of the particularity of things themselves, as space does, so much as it is an expression of oneness, in opposition to multiplicity, the eternal in contradiction with the non-eternal [*Nichtewigen*].

The bond, that in itself is the eternal, is time in that which is bound qua bound. For the bound as such is only this = B; the bond, however, as the essence of B is above all the essence, the indivisible copula of all things.

Therefore, that the former (the bound, qua bound) expands beyond the eternal (or the bond) is a mere accident, and limited in time. For everything is temporal that has its reality exceeded by the essence, or contains more in its essence than reality is able to accommodate.

In that as a consequence of an unavoidable necessity the bond of the whole is also the essence of the individual bound entity, it immediately ensouls it; ensoulment is the imagining of the whole in the individual. It is seen as ensoulment when the magnetic stone attracts the iron, the electron the light bodies; but isn't it by immediate ensoulment that each body, without visible cause, as if by magical means, is moved toward the center? This ensoulment of the individual through the copula of the whole is to be compared to the ensoulment of the point when it is thought of as belonging to the line, and indeed as suffused with a concept of the whole, which contains more than it (the point) can contain in itself, but which in this process loses its independent existence.

The being of the bound, qua bound, is therefore [2: 365] different with respect to its nature and concept from that of the bond. The essence of the bond is in itself eternity, but the being of the bound is in itself duration; for its nature is indeed on the one hand to be, but only insofar as it serves the whole, thus also not to be. That which combines this contradiction in itself is time.

The bond in B is not determined by the bond in C, D, and so forth, because it is as the former and especially the latter a thoroughly indivisible bond. That which is bound, on the other hand, as such, is necessarily determined by the other bound entities as such (for it is combined with a whole, but not in and of itself, but through the bond), and therefore is subject to relations to others, and indirectly to all things.

In the inessentiality of time, the real itself is the eternal copula, without which time could not even pass. The essence of time is always to be central, nowhere peripheral. Every instant therefore has the same eternity as the whole. Understood in this way, the life-span of each thing is, regarded in itself, is not different from the eternal, but rather has its own eternity.

Just as the bond is an eternal truth, so is it also as the essence of the individual only an eternal, not a temporal truth. The existence of an individual can then, in the truth of the bond, only be conceived dynamically in terms of the idea, not mechanically, and is therefore, irrespective of duration, eternally in and of the whole.

Posit, in order to make this clear (at the same time representing it in mythical fashion, as it is done in religious doctrine), time as having passed and therefore now as eternity: in this you again posit yourself in it. This eternity, that you imagine only as time that has passed, already is. The finitude of the thing, that is, of the bound, is that it only has duration and elapses, overpowered by the omnipotence of the copula. Yet its infinitude is that it belongs to the whole, and that its existence, however long or short it happened to have been, is preserved in the whole as eternal.

The expression of the affirmation of being, the self-subsistence in the individual [2: 366] is rest; for all which are self-subsistent are at rest. Just as the bond in the form of gravity negates the self-sufficiency of the bound, in the same way it negates that rest, the nothingness of which we intuit in space, in that it puts motion to rest.

Motion at rest is therefore the expression of the bond in the individual, insofar as it is gravity, that is, the identity is in the totality.

In itself, however, the bond of gravity in all things presents itself as the infinite and free substance. It does not have one being and another being, or parts, but is only one and the same being. It is not circumscribed, not by things, for all things are only in it, it itself, however, is in no other, nor by itself, for it is inconceivable to itself, because it is not doubled, only one. As that which is the essence of all things, it necessarily has itself no relationship to others, and since it further cannot be compared with anything else, it also has no size; just as little as it has any relationship to size or any other differences among things; because it is the same divine bond for the smallest as well as the largest. Just in the same way there is neither space nor interval for the bond, neither nearness nor distance; for it is the omnipresent center. Everything which holds true for the bond is also true for the universe, which regarded positively is not distinct from the bond. Therefore how can we, with respect to the essence of gravity, even pose the question about whether or not space is infinite. Especially since God reveals himself everywhere in gravity as the middle point, and the infinitude of his nature, which a wrong-headed imagination looks for in the infinite distance, announces itself in the present and at every point, he thereby cancels out that wavering of the imagination which attempts in vain to unify the unity of nature with the universe and the universe with the unity.

In general, therefore, gravity is that which renders all things finite, in that it posits them in the boundedness of the unity or the inner identity of things in time. Precisely through this overpowering or oppressing by the bond does that which is bound become capable of [2: 367] and adept at shadowing the essential, just as the formless stuff, when it is shaped by the sculptor, disappears at the same time as it allows the idea of the artist to emerge; or there, where the most constant change takes place, and this is most apparent in its nothingness, in the organism, is where the essential (the copula) shows through and become visible; or as often organic beings immediately before their demise seem most suffused with the radiance of life.

All coming into being in nature rests on precisely this annihilation, this coming into transparency of the bound, as the bound, for the bond.

The bond is related to the bound as the affirmed to the affirmation, both of which, as previously remarked, are just as necessarily together as in the highest principle of reason ($A=A$) the subject and predicate are joined by the copula.

But the bond or the identity of gravity posits the bound as merely finite, as not eternal, and correspondingly the eternal in gravity is not itself real or objective, but rather only the affirming or subjective.

If then in the bound the eternal should be posited as real: then the bond, that is, the affirming, must itself be affirmed, itself again be real.

How is this possible? We have not forgotten, that the eternal in gravity was only regarded from one side, namely only as the identity in the totality.

The eternal, however, does not simply affirm itself as the identity in the universality of things (through which they have the mere relation of affirmation), but rather it affirms also its affirmation of all things in particular, that is, it posits itself or is universality even in particulars, totality in identity.

Insofar as it is not merely identity in totality, but just as much totality in identity and therefore also in particulars: to this extent is it itself completed substance, and to this extent will the eternal be developed in the bound qua bound. [2: 368] If the bond as mere identity negated the self-subsistence of things, and thereby of space (for only the universe is truly separate and in itself, because there is nothing outside it): then contrariwise the bond, as totality in particularity, must negate temporality and finitude; but then summon into being for the thing the real being-in-itself and thereby real space or extension, simultaneity, and in a word, that through which it is a world for itself.

Here is the place to fully explain ourselves with respect to the relationship of space and time in nature, and how the two constantly negate each other and finally come into balance.

Space and time are two relative negations of one another: therefore in neither of the two can there be anything absolutely true; rather, in each precisely that is true, by means of which the other negates it. Space has simultaneity in itself, and the appearance of truth exactly to the extent that it is the opposite of time. Time, on the other hand, cancels out the dispersal of things and posits the inner identity of things; it brings with it something negative, in that it negates the nothingness of space, namely, the succession of things.

The inessential in the one is therefore always negated in the other, and insofar as the true in each cannot be extinguished by the other, so is the true posited in their complete relative mutual negation, that is in the complete balance of the two.

Since the eternal, as the unity in the universe, is gravity in nature, it follows that it is everywhere present, in the part as in the whole, and all things have in common their subjection to gravity.

Where then are we to find this second essence, if we may be permitted to so designate it, since it after all is the same as the first, if not in the omnipresent essence of light, in which the universality of things is activated, the Jupiter, with which everything everywhere is suffused?

This expression might seem incomplete and as if drawn only from a single phenomenon, but can hardly be misunderstood by those [2: 369] who are familiar with the ancients' concept of the world-soul or the intelligible ether. And only they know that we intend to express something far more general by it than what is ordinarily described as light.

Thus, just as gravity is the one which, by extending itself to all, is the unity in the universe, so do we say on the contrary of the essence of light that it is the substance, to the extent that it is present in the individual things, therefore in general is the identity in the universe or the whole.

The darkness of gravity and the radiance of light are that which first produce together the beautiful appearance of life, and complete it to the point of what we call actual reality.

The essence of light is a glimpse into the omnipresent center of nature; just as through gravity things are outwardly one, in the same manner they are united in the essence of light as if by an inner midpoint, to the extent that the focal point more or less completely lies in them.

Of this essence we say that it negates time, as time, in the bound. We recognize this already in the individual appearances in a variety of ways: in sound, which, despite belonging to time, still remains organized within it, a true totality; most definitively in its purest appearance, in light. When Homer describes the rapidity of the movement of thought by its timelessness, which traverses many countries in an instant, we could compare the timelessness of light in nature only with that of thought.

However, as innermost essence and as the other principle of individuality, light unfolds the eternal present in itself and brings also that to the fore, by means of which it has eternal truth, by means of which it is necessary in the universe. For each thing is necessary only to the extent that its concept is the concept of all things.

Since the motion of a thing is nothing other than the expression of its bond with other things, so light, insofar as it objectively unfolds the relation in the thing itself, does not, like gravity, posit movement to that which is at rest, but rather rest to that which is [2: 370] in motion and makes the thing, even at rest, into the mirror of the whole.

The same principle is recognizable in that universal soul, which is suffused with time, foresees the future, is a presentiment in animals, brings the present into agreement with the past, and fully cancels that loose connection of things in time.

It is undeniable that alongside the external life of things an inner one reveals itself, through which sympathy and antipathy, as well as the perception of other also not immediately present things becomes possible; it is undeniable therefore, that the general life of things is at the same time the particular life of the individual.

Since it is this principle through which in general the infinitude of things as eternity and present is posited, so it is simultaneously that, which in time forms the enduring in the all-encompassing circle of eternity so to speak single circles, forming the greater and smaller periods which are decorated with years, months, and days; should we not agree with Plato, in naming this universally ordering and improving principle of general and universal wisdom the kingly soul of the whole?

The essence of light is also, just as gravity is, an abstraction from the singular and total being; never do we see a thing in nature operating on its own, but rather the actual essence of the thing, whether we observe it in its creative activity or in the created effect, is always the identity of both, just as it was recognized by us at first.

Here we see the first copula between the infinite and the finite completely developed in actuality and transformed into the higher, between the infinite, so far as it is the unity in the universality of things, and in the things, so far as it is the universality in the unity.

In both of them lie the eternal bond; each is absolute in itself; but each is again so engulfed by the same bond, that it itself and that with which it is unified constitute only one and the same indissoluble absolute. [2: 371] It is one and the same nature that posits in the same way the individual in the whole and the whole in the individual, as gravity tends toward the identification of the totality, as light tends toward totalization of the identity.

The two principles of eternal opposition and eternal unity generate as a third the complete expression of the whole essence of that sensuous and visible child of nature, matter.

Not matter in the abstract, something general, formless, or barren, but rather matter with the vitality of the forms, such that it constitutes three dimensions yet still forming one indissolubly enchained whole.

All forms that are possible in accordance with the essence of the absolute, must also be actual (for with the bond is necessarily the bound), and since the universality, the unity, and the identity of both, each of these three is in itself the whole Absolute, yet none exists without the other, so it is clear how in each the whole, namely the universality, the unity and identity of both are contained and must be expressed.

Thus, for example, gravity is in itself the whole and indivisible God, insofar as he expresses himself as the unity in the multiplicity, the eternal in the temporal.

Gravity in itself organizes itself therefore into a specific world in which all forms of the divine bond are conceptualized under the common sign of finitude.

Gravity affects the seed of things; but light strives to unfold the bud in order to intuit itself, since it can recognize itself only as the whole in each, or the absolute identity, the completed totality.

Gravity produces the limitation of space, the existence for its own sake, and posits in the bound the successive or time, which brings into harmony that merely finite bond as connection or coherence.

In the realm of gravity itself gravity is expressed through all which is solid or rigid, in which space is dominated by time.

[2: 372] Light, on the other hand, causes the whole to also exist in the individual.

In the realm of gravity itself, therefore, the expression of light is air as the other bond. Here the whole shows itself as unfolded in the individual, that each part is absolutely of the nature of the whole, while the existence of the rigid depends upon the relative difference of the parts from one another, as polar opposites. If then in the realm of the rigid, time is the life principle, so over and against it stands the other realm of air, which in its freedom and indistinguishability from space presents the purest untroubled picture of simultaneity.

The absolute copula of gravity and light is productive and creative nature itself, to which these are related as mere attributes, though essential ones. From this springs all that we think of in connection with the idea of the reality of existence.

In the realm of gravity is, as the expression of the third bond, the actual identity, that in which the archetype of matter is revealed most purely, water, that noblest of things from which all productivity issues, and to which it all returns. From gravity as the principle of the finite arises fluidity; from light, that the part resembles the whole.

All existents in the realm of gravity can be reduced to these three original forms.

Also every individual part of matter is an expression of the tripartite whole, and presents only the fully expressed copula in three dimensions, without the presence of which (in terms of actuality or potency) no reality is possible.

The observation of these forms in their separateness leads us to a representation of inorganic or non-living nature.

However, they are in fact and in the actual natural world not separate, but rather, just as they have gravity in common, in the same way their particularity is unfolded through light or the inner center of nature. It is itself is the universe in one and they [2: 373] as members of an organic body unfold the totality of their differences, which are taken up simultaneously in the identity and eternity of its self-intuition.

That is to say, just as in the first creation the infinite and indivisible essence of nature, affirming itself in the finite, positing it as accidental and temporal, is at the same time essentially positing and affirming itself in the equally eternal withdrawal of the whole in the unity, which transfigures just this finitude in the identity of its essence and in so doing posits itself.

Viewed from this perspective, the individual natural things do not form an interrupted or infinitely extended series, but rather a chain of life steadily recirculating into itself, in which every member is necessary to the whole, as it seems to the whole itself, which cannot undergo any alteration of its relationships without giving some sign of life and sensitivity.

The smallest of alterations, for example, mere spatial relations, lead in this life-suffused whole to manifestations of warmth, light, electricity: all reveals itself as ensouled in such a close relation of the part to the whole and the whole to the part.

When the bound seek to grasp the bond of the eternal in the temporal, the non-totality of the totality, the expression of this striving is magnetism.

On the other hand, the general bond through which the temporal is expressed in the eternal, the difference taken up into the identity, is the general bond of electricity.

The temporal bond (in magnetism) again effects identity, unity in multiplicity; the eternal (in electricity) manifests the universality present in the individual: where the two cancel each other out and a third arises out of these two, the productivity of the organic nature interwoven with itself reappears in the chemical creations and transformations through which each part of matter, sacrificing its own life, enters into the life of the whole and achieves a higher, organic existence.

Thus lives the essence enclosed in itself, generating the individual, changing, in order to mirror eternity in the temporal, in that it itself [2: 374] in all forms of force, content and organism, posits time in itself as eternity and is unaffected by any alteration.

The source of life of nature in general is therefore the copula between gravity and light; yet this source, from which all flows, is hidden in nature and cannot itself be seen.

Where this higher copula affirms itself in individuals, there is found a microcosm, an organism, a complete presentation of the general life of substance in a particular life.

This same all-encompassing and providential unity, which moderates the movements of nature in general, the still and steady as well as the violent and sudden, in terms of the idea of the whole, and always steadily leads it back in the eternal circle—it is the same divine unity which, infinitely self-affirming, transforms itself into animal and plant and seeks, with irresistible power, at the very moment of its appearance to transform earth, air and water into living beings, reflections of its universal life.

It is this higher unity that the totality of gravity and the identity of light likewise display in the bound, positing both as attributes of itself.

Light seeks in the bound the essential, namely the bond; to the same extent as it unfolds this can it enter into the all in one and thus portray the world in miniature.

The life of the organic depends in the first instance on this development of the bond; hence the infinite love of the plant for light, in that it is able to lighten the bond of gravity by means of it.

In the same relationship in which the bond is revealed, the bound starts to become inessential and subject to increasing alteration. The bound as such (mere matter) should not be anything for itself; it is only something as an expression of the bond, and therefore constantly interchanged, in that the organ, that is the bond, the living copula, the idea itself, remains and always stays the same, as if by divine force.

Though the complete repression of the bound, as bound [2: 375] and the development or realization of the bond, the idea comes at last to a successful birth.

In that the bound disappears, on the other hand the bond emerges as living, the same relationship seen as essential that on a deeper level still appeared accidental; then the particularity of the bound is only essential and eternal in the bond; becomes therefore objective, actually posited, thus does the actual, which previously seemed inessential, now itself become essential or necessary. Therefore the existence of the organism does not rest upon matter as such, but rather on the form, that is upon that which in other respects is accidental, but here appears essential for the existence of the whole.

No less than the bond of gravity becomes developed in the organism, does light, as the universe in one, the eternal rest in eternal motion, find in living being a more or less complete center. In increasing development the individual at rest becomes the whole, just as the power of every point of the eye encompasses the entire heavens, and the point becomes the same as infinite space.

Once again the threefold copula hypostatizes itself, and forms a characteristic world for each.

The obscure bond of gravity is dissolved in the efflorescence of the realm of plants, and opens itself to the light.

The bud of the essence of light arises out of the animal realm.

The absolute copula, that which is both unity and midpoint, can only rediscover itself in one, and only from this point, in repeated development extend itself ever anew into an infinite world. That one is man, in which the bond fully breaks free of the bound and returns to its eternal freedom.

Although the organism in general rests upon the actuality and self-affirmation of the absolute copula, in each individual sphere of it the opposition and identity of both principles must be represented.

The true identity of both principles is, however, that in which [2: 376] at the same time their essentiality consists. Were each only a part of the whole, not presented through its own totality, then the independence of each would be cancelled and that highest relation of divine identity dissolved, the difference of which from a merely finite one we have elsewhere already explained in that opposed entities are not bound together because they needed to be, but rather those, each of which could have existed independently and yet not without the other.

This relationship is represented only in the opposition and unity of the sexes.

The realm of gravity, as it by and large takes form in the world of plants, is in the individual personified by the female sex, the essence of light by the male.

The divine bond that mediates between the two principles and is the eternally creative, is productive in the animal and plant worlds, without recognizing itself (for love recognizes itself only in one) through the blind force of the great work of propagation. The bound, like the bond itself, are creative, generative, self-affirming.

Just as the threefold bond of things lies in the eternal as one and brings forth the whole through its unity, it is delivered by recognizing itself in human nature or even in the past, as the complete and unavoidable expression of itself finally in the architecture of the world, and the divinely all-encompassing stars, to speak properly of the lives of which would require more space than is possible within the compass of this work.

Only one thing needs to be remarked upon at this point: that space and time, both in the body of the world alternately negating one another in their inessentiality and thereby essentially posited, are in circulation completely in equilibrium.

The goal of the most sublime science can only be this: to present reality, reality in the strongest sense, the present, the living existence of God in the whole of things and in the individual. How did one ever come to the point of questioning this existence? Can the existence of existence be questioned? It is a totality of things, as well as the eternal; but God is as [2: 377] the one in this totality; this one in all is recognizable in every part of matter, all lives only in it. And just as immediately present and recognizable in every part is the all in one as it everywhere reveals life and even in the transitory itself unfolds the bloom of eternity. The holy bond, through which both become one, we feel in our own lives and their changes, for example that of sleep and waking, in which we yield to gravity, only to return to the light. The copula of all is in us as reason, and gives proof of our spirit. This is no longer an extra- or supernatural matter, but a matter of the immediate and nearby, the only reality, to which we belong and in which we exist. No barrier is being scaled, no limitation disregarded, because in fact none exists. Everything that can be said against a philosophy that deals with the divine, or also against the misunderstood

and self-misunderstood recent attempts at such, is completely in vain against us; and when will it finally be understood, that against this science which we teach and clearly recognize, immanence and transcendence are completely empty expressions, since they cancel out this opposition in themselves, and everything in this science flows together into a world suffused with God?

A wide experience has taught me that for most the greatest stumbling block to the grasp and living understanding of philosophy is their unshakeable opinion that its object is to be sought in the infinite distance; which is why it happens that while they ought to be intuiting that which is present, they are instead completely caught up in straining to create an object which is not even being talked about.

As impossible as it is for those still possessed by this delusion to see the truth in this matter, it is in contrast just as simple and clear for those who either were never infected by it, or through a happy temperament or other means have recovered from it. In this philosophy there are no abstractions by means of which one might enter into that madness. [2: 378] All that which reason recognizes as eternal consequence of God's nature, is in nature not just the expression, but the real history. Nature is not merely the product of an inconceivable creation, but it is this creation itself; not just the appearance or revelation of the eternal, but rather and simultaneously this eternity itself.

The more we know the individual things, the more we know God, says Spinoza, and with constantly increasing conviction must we call to those who seek the science of the eternal: come to physics and recognize the eternal!

The order and enchainment of nature could not be expressed in any other way, even by he who observes it only with pure senses and serene imagination; if he wished to grasp and express the essence of this world in words he would find even as an observer no other expression of it than those we have found. The formations of the so-called non-living nature would indeed, due to the distance from which it shows him the substance, allow its power to be divined only as a deeply hidden fire; but also here, in metals, in stones, there is the immeasurable power which all existence is an expression of, the unmistakable drive to determination, yes to the individuality of existence. As if storming forth out of an unfathomable depth the substance appears to him already in plants and growth (in every flower that spreads its petals, there appears a principle of not of just one, but many things), until hypostatized in the animal organism the initially groundless essence comes closer and closer to the observer and looks at him out of open and meaningful eyes. Still it appears to want to withhold a secret and only reveal certain sides of itself. But does it not come to pass also for him, the mere observer of the work, after he has given up all hope of grasping it with the understanding, at last to lead this divine confusion and inconceivable richness of forms into the holy Sabbath of nature, into reason, where it, in repose amidst its transient products, recognizes itself and knows itself. For to the extent that we can silence ourselves does nature speak to us.