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THE  
EVIDENCES  
AGAINST  
CHRISTIANITY.

By JOHN S. HITTELL.

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SECOND EDITION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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## PREFACE.

“The love of truth, a deep thirst for it, a deliberate purpose to seek it, and hold it fast, may be considered as the very foundation of human culture and dignity.”  
— *W. E. Channing.*

STRONG convictions that all superstitions are pernicious, that Christianity is a superstition, that abundant evidence can be produced of its false, superstitious and pernicious character, that this evidence may be presented in such a way as to be perfectly irresistible to every intelligent and impartial man, that this presentation were better made in my poor way than not made at all, and that hostility to systems, believed to be superstitious, is a duty which every man owes to himself and to society—these are my motives in writing and publishing this book. Christianity comes home to, and has a strong influence upon every man who deserves to be called “civilized.” He cannot be ignorant that it is rejected by a large proportion of the learned men of the age, and it is his duty to desire to know the reason. No man can look with contempt on the religious opinions of Hume, Gibbon, Paine, Burns, Byron, Shelley, Froude, Bentham, Romilly, Bowring, Carlyle, Emerson, Franklin, Jefferson, Madison, Greg, Parker, Martineau, Hennell, Montaigne, Bayle, Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, D’Alembert, La Place, Arago, Mirabeau, Napoleon, Buffon, Comte, Cousin, Spinoza, Lessing, Wieland, Gœthe, Frederick the Great, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, De Wette, Feuerbach and Strauss—no man is so exalted that the opinions of such men, on the greatest questions which occupy the human mind, can be unworthy of his notice. On the contrary, it

is the duty of every man to learn those opinions if he can "It is high treason to humanity to be indifferent about religion ;" \* it is high treason to truth to adopt an opinion without having giving both sides, for and against, an equally fair hearing. The evidences for Christianity have been compiled by a number of very able writers : so that the student can gain a comprehensive and clear view of all that can be said for that system in a few hours : but previous to the publication of this book, no such compilation had been made of the evidences on the other side : and the opinions of those, who had written against Christianity, were scattered through hundreds of volumes, many of which are with difficulty to be found, and require a great expense of time and money for their examination. Besides, the writings of some of these authors are not easily to be understood, even by the thoroughbred student, and are quite unintelligible to the masses, who depend for their support upon their physical labor. From the skeptical writings of these and other great men, I have tried to compile a book for the million,—to give within a small space, a clear view of the principal evidences against Christianity. If the attempt to save labor in the acquisition of a knowledge of what has been written against the Bible, or if the diffusion of such knowledge be wrong, let the sin be on my own head. And if I am to be punished by my fellow-men, whether the punishment consist in bodily pains or in denunciation, abuse and excommunication, I ask only that when they raise the hand to strike, each one shall, for himself, declare " I am without sin : I never had any doubt of the truth of the religious dogmas which I profess to believe."

A much respected friend writes to me, as my book is about to go to press, " If I might recommend anything, it would be to cultivate the tone of Strauss, who examined the

ZSCHOKKE.

subject not as an interested inhabitant of this world, but as if he had happened here from another planet, and was merely giving an account of things *here* to his friend—say, in Jupiter.” There is undoubtedly something admirable in that tone : but I must confess that I cannot, neither would I if I could, assume it. The war against superstition is not with me an affair undertaken merely because I have no other way of passing my time—it is not an affair, the progress and result of which will furnish me with equal amusement or be looked upon with equal indifference, whether my cause be successful or not. The religious tyrant is not less hateful to me than the political despot or the foreign oppressor. As I would feel a bitter indignation at the wrongs inflicted by the latter, so do I at the evils caused by the former. And this indignation I shall not attempt to conceal. All the earnestness of which my soul is capable, is enlisted in this struggle. As under certain circumstances, I would deliberately shed the blood of my fellow-men in defense of my country so now I shall not shun the call which I feel to wound the feelings and the prejudices of the partizans of a maleficent creed.

Though I cannot but rejoice at times in the strength of my cause, and exult in the confidence of its victory ; though the very difficulty of the task which I have undertaken and the might of the enemies whom I oppose, are such as to give a keen pleasure, to one who can appreciate “the rapture of the strife,” yet there are other times, when I am sad and sorry that such a labor should have appeared to me in the guise of a duty. The feelings would have to be unusually blunt in a man who could feel unalloyed pleasure in endeavoring to overthrow a system which is woven in with the heart-strings of many of those who are dearest to him. “To oppose\* the institution which your fathers

\* THEODORE PARKER.

loved in centuries gone by ; to sweep off the altars, forms and usages which ministered to your mother's piety, helped her bear the cross and bitter ills of life, to sunder your ties of social sympathy, to destroy the rites associated with the aspiring dream of childhood, and its earliest prayer, and the sunny days of youth—to disturb these because they weave chains, invisible but despotic, which bind the arm and fetter the foot, and confine the heart ;—to hew down the hoary tree under whose shade the nations played their game of life, and found in death the clod of the valley sweet to their weary bosom—to destroy all this because it poisons the air and stifles the breath of the world—it is a sad and bitter thing."

A large class of my countrymen—a very respectable class, a class to whose opinions I am in no wise insensible—will consider the publication of this book, or even the public avowal of the principal doctrines advanced in it, as proof that the author is a very unwise, even a bad man,—an enemy to God, to religion, to morality and to society. Unwise and indiscreet I may be, but I am not conscious of wrong in doing what I now do. On the contrary, I feel a strong hope that this work will do good, that it will exercise an influence (perhaps a very weak one) to make men happier and better : and I have the strongest confidence that it can do no evil. It is written carefully and conscientiously and does not, to the author's knowledge or belief, contain one untrue statement or unfair argument, or one objection (to Christianity) which can be satisfactorily controverted. I have not argued the Christian side of the question elaborately : indeed, I have given very little of the matter which goes to fill up most of the books on the "Evidences of [for] Christianity," but it is because I thought *that* matter rendered completely worthless by what is herein contained. But even had I considered any or all of the Christian argu-



mentation to be excellent and unanswerable, it would have been useless for me to have here inserted, that which has elsewhere been published in able, clear, comprehensive and concise essays, which are to be found in every library and book-shop. I now refer the reader to the works in favor of the Bible by Paley, Alexander, Chalmers, Palfrey, Channing and Watson: and I invite him to weigh their arguments and evidences, step by step, with my own. The superior merit of my cause more than compensates for my great inferiority in literary ability. "The reader will find" here "none of those arts which are commonly employed by disputants either to perplex a good cause or to palliate a bad one, no subtle refinements, forced constructions or evasive distinctions, but plain reasonings grounded on plain facts, and published with an honest and disinterested view to free the minds of men from an inveterate imposture, which through a long succession of ages has disgraced" religion, "and tyrannized over the reason and senses of the Christian world." \*

The first edition of "*The Evidences against Christianity*," published in San Francisco, was honored with a number of notices and criticisms by Californian newspapers, which generally condemned the publication, not because Christianity is true or because the ideas advanced in the book are false, but because, as they hinted, it is necessary to respect the religious prejudices of the people, because the people must have some "religion," and because I proposed to overthrow Christianity without offering any other "religion" to put in its place. Many of them asserted, directly or indirectly, that a false religion is not necessarily pernicious in its influence, and that no amount of sincerity, no purity and strength of benevolent motive, could justify me for sending forth such a book. I do not agree with them and in these

\* THE REV. DR MIDDLETON. Free Inquiry.

matters, I cannot follow the dictation of others. He who wishes to do credit to humanity, must seek his rule of action within and not without.

I am well aware that many illustrious men, including a number of prominent "Infidels" have said that some religious creed, some religion dependent for its existence on sentiment or superstition is necessary for the common people—that a philosophical creed, a religion founded solely on reason would never suffice to protect them from immorality. I shall meet this, like every other important, consideration connected with the main question at issue, in a direct manner : although it is not consistent with my main purpose, to argue at length the influences of belief on the morality of nations. I regret that we have no essay containing all that might be said of the pernicious moral consequences which, as the Christians assert, would ensue upon the total extinction of Christianity and the universal reign of deism, pantheism, or atheism. In becoming the active assailant of the Bible, I follow the example of many good and great men. It is true that most of the great anti-Christian authors wrote so as to be understood only by the learned, but one main cause, of their not addressing themselves to the million was, that the million were not capable, in earlier times, of weighing the evidence and appreciating the arguments.

Superstition is grounded upon ignorance, which latter must be removed before the former can be overthrown. The Mohammedan who has been merely convinced that Mohammed is not the prophet of God, will believe in some other prophet, who may be little better than Mohammed. When a man is so ignorant as to ask another man the way to Heaven, he is bound to be superstitious, and it does not matter much whom he asks; and it does not help him greatly to discover that *such a one* is not the right one. His

need will remain the same, until his mind is so cultivated that he understands Heaven to be a place which exists only in his own conception—until he understands that all the assertions of the priests, about infinite and eternal happiness in another life after the death of the body, are and must be pure fables.

In ancient times the downfall of one form of superstition was always followed by the rise of another ; and there are many who may think that it will be of little use to overthrow Christianity, if other superstitions are to take its place. Science and philosophy are the sole power which are certain to dispel superstition, and teach the only doctrines which should occupy the place of the expelled demon : but they work slowly : they scarcely take a step in an age among the masses of the people. However, let us not despair. The world does move, and of late the motion has been accelerating wonderfully. Let us not curse the human tree because it does not bear figs as we might wish : “let us wait ; \* let us dig about it : in time it shall put forth fruit.” Science is slow, but we know also that she is sure. Philosophy, by its very nature, is destined to be the common property of all mankind. “The discoveries, † which in one age are confined to the studious and enlightened few, become in the next the established creed of the learned, and, in the third, form part of the elementary principles of education.”

In my war against the Christian superstition, I seek to break down the superstition as well as the Christianity. I have endeavored, with very limited success beyond doubt, to set forth clearly, to popularize a number of important principles of science and philosophy. I have sought, by giving a number of interesting extracts from great authors,

\* THEODORE PARKER.

† DUGALD STEWART.

to kindle a desire in my readers to look farther, to pursue those trains of thought which I have brought to their attention. Even if my attempts to popularize certain doctrines of science and philosophy be complete failures, and if I should know that success in exposing the absurdity of Christianity would be followed by the adoption of some other form of superstition, I should still persevere ; for the overthrow of a religious belief is always accompanied by a period of mental activity which must be beneficial. It is probable that the new superstition will always be a little better than the old one ; man cannot outgrow many particular forms without learning some valuable general principles.

The system, which I propose to sweep away, has lost its vitality, and a considerable portion of it has already turned into corruption. "Mankind\* has outgrown the popular theology." "No man † can go with his thoughts about him into one of our churches, without feeling that what hold the public worship had on men is gone or going. It has lost its grasp on the affection of the good and the fear of the bad. \* \* It is already beginning to indicate character and religion to withdraw from the religious-meetings. \* \* The prayers and even the dogmas of the Church are like the Zodiac of Denderah and astronomical monuments of the Hindoos—wholly insulated from anything, now extant in the life and business of the people." Christianity exists only by sufferance and cannot exist so much longer. Every intelligent man must see that all the evidences and arguments against it, must come within the reach of the people at no distant day. Why should I not endeavor to place them in their hands now ? I have yet to learn that it is wrong to save labor to others by compiling, ar-

\*THEODORE PARKER.

† EMERSON.

ranging, digesting, condensing, and republishing in a harmonious whole the scattered thoughts of able and learned men on any important print of religious or social philosophy. My justification, however, before my own conscience, depends not on the example of others, or on the knowledge that if I should not attack Christianity, somebody else would, but upon the belief that duty requires me to do my utmost to overthrow a great system of falsehood.

To consider the attainment of all the possible truth in regard to religion as a great and substantial blessing—to understand that that truth is to be attained only by the bold exercise of reason and submission to all its clear conclusions as of the highest tribunal, whose decisions are infallible until questioned or revoked by itself upon complaint of doubt (truth's prosecuting attorney in the court of philosophy)—to examine the affirmative and negative sides of every religious question before believing either—to begin and continue the examination with a desire to see the whole force of all the evidence and arguments—to examine as fully as means will permit and the importance of the subject justify—to examine both sides with equal thoroughness and equal zeal if possible—to feel throughout the examination that religious truth must be good, and error evil,—to disbelieve all the punishments, threatened in a future Hell for untrue religious opinions adopted after honest and impartial investigation; or if that Hell be believed, to scorn and defy it and its author—to be zealously attached to all religious opinions deliberately formed—if free to declare them openly, and, if enslaved, (by the fear of physical or mental pain for self or others) to lament the slavery because of the restriction upon the expression of belief—to hate and despise all cant and hypocrisy—to pity all canters and hypocrites—to consider the open declaration of unpopular religious opinions seriously entertained as in itself a sign of

virtue great in proportion to their unpopularity—and to be exceedingly cautious in abusing or condemning those, who after having looked at both sides thoroughly, have seen fit to adopt the “other side”—these appear to me to be among the highest duties of every man, no matter what may be his position in society.

It would be horrible to believe that the knowledge of religious truth may be a curse—to think that if there be no God-given gospel, and no God-ordained teachers, it were better to accept a forged book-revelation and a mercenary, lying priesthood, and to have their influence pervading and governing every individual portion of the social system. It would be horrible to believe that reason, and impartial, skeptical investigation were our worst enemies, and that superstition and a blind adherence to the past, were our truest friends. It would be horrible to believe that a demon of untruth, a father of lies, is the omnipotent governor of the universe. If I could believe that love of truth for its own sake were a base impulse; that the search for truth, with an utter disregard of the fate of traditionary creeds and systems, were a sin; that truth itself were seriously endangered by bold investigation, open statements of evidence, and fair argument; that duty—regard for the best interests of society—true love for mankind—an earnest devotion to whatever might conduce most to the greatest welfare of the greatest number of the human race—requires the conscientious freethinker to act the hypocrite through life, and carefully conceal his opinions on the fundamental points of religion—if I could believe all this, and could believe that the general acceptance of the doctrines, advanced in this book, would result in the perdition of humanity, its condemnation to the horriest hell ever conceived by religious superstition and fanaticism, I should be tempted to exclaim “Down with us! Down into Hell at once! Better eter-

nal and the most agonizing pain in punishment of a righteous indignation and resistance, rather than quiet submission to the demoniac government, which declares our holiest aspirations to be unpardonable offenses, which punishes our noblest and most heroic labors as the greatest of all crimes ! ”

It may be that I am in error. Although I have satisfied myself by an examination, neither hasty nor superficial, of the whole subject, that the letter of the Bible and its spirit—in so far as that differs from natural religion and morality—are false and productive of evil ; that they form one of the first and greatest barriers, now obstructing the social, political, and moral progress of the human race ; that they cannot exist much longer in general acceptance among civilized nations ; and that the sooner they be stricken down, the better it will be for all—although I have satisfied myself of all this, my opinion may be incorrect. Many men, far greater and better than myself, have held opinions adverse to my own : and if they were right, I must be wrong. But I have the consolation of thinking that, if the Bible were the word of God, no attack which I could make upon it by an appeal to reason, would do the least injury or discredit to it. But rather I might hope, that, if my book should find readers, it may aid to dispel various crude, superstitious and debasing notions prevalent among Christians and taught by the Church. Such are the belief in the miracles of the ancient and modern priests, in ghosts, in the possession of the human body by devils, in an anthropomorphic God, in special providences, in the duty of the people to submit unresistingly to their rulers, in the virtue of persecuting heretics, in the sinfulness of unbelief and many other kindred tenets. The skeptical writings of the last century had a great influence to purify the Christian faith on these and similar points of doctrine, and I know no rea-

son why good should not be done in the same way now. Why should I not aspire to exercise a little of that beneficent influence which flowed from the pen of that much calumniated benefactor of his race—Voltaire? that Voltaire of whom Brougham \* says “We owe to him the habit of scrutinizing, both in sacred matter and in profane, the merits of whatever is presented for our belief, of examining boldly the foundations of received opinions, in making probability a part of the consideration in all that is related, of calling in plain reason and common sense, to assist in our councils when grave matters are under discussion; nor can any one, since the days of Luther, be named to whom the spirit of free inquiry, nay, the emancipation from spiritual tyranny, owes a more lasting debt of gratitude.” Happy should I be, could I know that, in a distant time, learned men should occasionally meet my name as that of one, who, with pure motives and by proper means, had done a little to break the yoke of “spiritual tyranny.”

The chief characteristics of the orthodox religious philosophy of the present age are a dread of free inquiry, a distrust of reason, a terror of truth herself, unless her friends give security, previous to her appearance, that she shall wear the yoke of the established system. If I can do nothing more, I may hope to change this state of affairs. I may hope to have a little influence in inducing Christians to build their faith on the solid rock of reason, instead of upon the sand of their grandmothers’ traditions, as they have generally done heretofore: and in that case my labor would not have been in vain. The bellwethers of the orthodox flocks are loud in their lamentations over the decline of “Vital Christianity,” but they never advise the only remedy—strong doses of free inquiry. Until that medicine be resorted to, formalism and hypocrisy will not cease to rule in

\* HENRY LORD BROUGHAM. *Life of Voltaire.*



the Christian Churches. However, as I have said, my expectations and incentives in the present labor are not to purify Christianity, but to aid in breaking it down entirely. If I should fail in all these high purposes and hopes, I shall at least have the satisfaction of knowing that I have fought boldly and zealously against a seeming evil, and that I have gathered the weapons, and prepared them for the continuation of the strife, so that some great warrior, who may come after me, shall find them all ready to his hand, and need only lay hold, and go on conquering and to conquer.

Full of faith in the intelligence and morality of the mass of the American people, and satisfied that for them, at least, light on both sides of such a question as Christianity, cannot be evil; and fearing (except for the ill performance of my task) no literal or figurative cross or stake, which have been threatened from time immemorial against all religious teachers, who should proclaim the esoteric doctrines long taught to the initiated only, I shall not stop short at the exoteric, but will freely speak the whole truth, as I understand it, and as it may be applicable in this place. "I persuade myself that the life and faculties of man, at the best but short and limited, cannot be employed more rationally or laudably than in the search of knowledge, and especially of that sort which relates to our duty and our happiness. In these inquiries, therefore, wherever I perceive any glimmering of truth before me, I steadily pursue and endeavor to trace it to its source, without any reserve or caution of pushing the discovery too far, or opening too great a glare of it to the public. I look upon the discovery of anything which is true as a valuable acquisition to society, which cannot possibly hurt or obstruct the good effect of any other truth whatsoever." \*

\* The reader is requested, after reading each of the following chapters of this book to turn to the Appendix and glance over the notes, authorities, and illustrations of statements made and opinions expressed.



## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION.

#### DOMAIN OF REASON IN MATTERS OF RELIGION.

‘Beware, lest any man spoil you through philosophy.’—PAUL, *Col. II. 8.*

“Shake off all fears and servile prejudices, under which weak minds are servilely crouched. Fix reason firmly in her seat, and call to her tribunal every fact, every opinion. Question with boldness even the existence of a God; because if there be one, he must more approve of the homage of reason than that of blindfolded fear.”—JEFFERSON.

§ 1. The reader will not—perhaps should not—examine this book, without recalling to mind the fact that, by reading it, he violates the command, or, at least, the wishes of the Christian Church. Neither Moses, nor Jesus, none of the prophets, or apostles, invited a skeptical investigation of their miraculous powers, or of the truth of their doctrines. Of those processes of reasoning which are now used by learned men in testing new doctrines in science and philosophy, the ancient Jews had little, or no knowledge, and their religious books took no account of them. Doubt of the divine authority of the priests was a great crime under the Mosaic law, and the greatest of sins under the Christian dispensation. Under both blind faith is a great merit, a positive virtue. “The first thing Jesus Christ requires, is faith and submission. This is commonly his first precept, and also of his apostles: ‘Follow me, believe, and thou shalt be saved’ (*Luke V. 27; IX. 59; Acts XVI. 31*). Now that faith, which was required, was not obtained by a train of philosophical discussions and long reasoning, but was the gift of God, a pure grace of the Holy Ghost, which commonly fell on ignorant persons (*Mat. XI. 25*). It was not even produced in the apostles by their reflecting on the holiness of the life of Jesus Christ, and the excellencies of his doctrines and miracles. They stood in need of a revelation from God himself to know that he, whose disciples

they were, was his eternal son."\* (*Mat. XVI. 17*). The apostles frequently warned their followers against philosophy,—“the beguiling serpent,”—(*2 Cor. XI*) which might lead them away from the uninquiring “simplicity that is in Christ.” The church, for many ages, had little to fear from reason, benighted in barbaric darkness, and spent little denunciation upon it; but no sooner had the minds of men been awakened by the dawn of modern civilization, than the thunders of the Vatican were hurled at those who ventured to assert, in theory or practice, the right to abandon the orthodox traditions. The ancient forms soon became too narrow for northern Europe, and she obtained some freedom by the Reformation,—freedom to think, and question the doctrines of Rome, as far as the leading reformers questioned—no more. Reason was an angel of light, when she doubted the divine authority of the Pope; but she was the bride of the devil, when she questioned the divinity of Jesus. And so it is to this day. All the orthodox Christian Churches,—Greek, Catholic, and Protestant,—discourage and denounce free inquiry. They never recommend it; and when they have the power, they invariably make it a crime. “The inquisition of public opinion,” says Jefferson, “overwhelms in practice the freedom asserted by the laws in theory.” No Christian church has ever had complete control of the legislation of a country without punishing those who published books written against its fundamental doctrines. Religious skepticism has an influence so great now that legal intolerance is becoming rare, but the social still exists. The priests and Christian newspapers never advise any one to read skeptical books; they dare not give such advice. The libraries of their orthodox theological seminaries do not contain any such books; the institution which should venture to place them within the reach of the students would be demolished at once. Fashionable publishers dare not publish such books, and fashionable booksellers dare not sell them publicly. The orthodox, religious bookdealer, who should be found selling any of the formidable books against the Bible, would be excommunicated forthwith. The church-magazines and newspapers are very careful not to speak in laudatory terms of free thinkers, or

\* BAYLE.

even of liberal Christians. To abuse and malign "infidels" is considered an evidence of sincere piety ; to do justice to them is to commit an offense against religion. Bayle, knowing the prejudices of the "righteous" in this respect, thought that policy required him to apologise for not reporting more evil of atheists in his *Dictionary*, than he had done ; but he said that he had published all that he could learn against them. This feeling has gone so far in the United States that the most debasing lie-worship prevails among the representatives of public opinion. The heroes of the Revolution are habitually besmeared with praise beyond measure ; but one of those most influential in bringing on that Revolution, is never mentioned in the Fourth of July harangues ;—and the reason is that he, Thomas Paine, dared to be an enemy of the Bible ! That fact has obliterated the account of his great services. The American authors and editors are extremely fond of boasting of the little literary ability which has come to light in this continent ; yet who would ever discover from American books, or newspapers, that Palfrey, or Norton had written on religious subjects ? But they must not be spoken of, for their writings are not orthodox ; and it matters not that their books are among the ablest and most learned of the age. This is the policy of the secular as well as the religious press. The sin is not that of the editors, who, as a class, are "infidel" enough, but of the people generally, who, though they are not free from scepticism, yet think that the sham of religion must be kept up. If an author, or editor dare to speak like a man, the howl of "infidelity," and "atheism" is raised at once. To have an "infidel" book is a sin ; to be known to believe in its doctrines, is a serious offense, about which neighbors worry themselves with lamentations ; to declare that belief is to become an object for avoidance and obloquy, a public enemy, against whom every one may wag his tongue with impunity. Though among the great mass, there are some Protestants who excuse free inquiry, yet there has not been one prominent man, who has given the weight of his influence in its favor, and all the official authorities are strongly opposed to it. Thus it is that the two ablest religious periodicals of the day, the *North British Review*, representing the Scotch Church, and the

*Christian Observer*, the chief organ of the English Hierarchy, have gone so far as to discourage the publication of any new works on the evidences for Christianity. The former (May, 1854,) says, that it is a great evil of such books that the authors "repeat, and give currency to the *fallacious* arguments which they wish to expose"! And the latter (Aug., 1852,) thinks that a very "strong objection to any distinct comment on the infidel works of the day" is, that "it gives greater currency to that which might at once sink into the obscurity it deserves"! There is a woful condition of affairs; the greater the efforts which the Christians make to convert the skeptics, the more ground they lose. Alas! And has the great Christian Church come to this, that its only hope of continued existence is in keeping its members ignorant of what is said on the other side? It has come to that, alas! None but the prejudice-blinded are safe, if they come within the range of the serpent's eye. "No young or unformed mind," says the *Christian Observer* very truly, (July, 1852,) "can study the exegetical writings of modern Germany without the most serious risk of making shipwreck of his faith forever. The brilliant sophistries of Baur, the imposing candor of De Wette, the rapid and synoptical comments of Meyer, the emotional and fantastic piety of Schleiermacher, the masterly historic touch of Hase, are just those attractive elements which enter into combination most readily with the tendencies of eager, but undisciplined minds." There was no necessity that the *Christian Observer* should confine its remarks to "exegetical writings;" it might have said at once, and with perfect truth and propriety, that no clear, unprejudiced mind, seeking truth for its own sake, would be likely to have much faith in the Bible, after reading Hume, Gibbon, Paine, Voltaire, Bentham, Hennell, Strauss, Greg, or many others who might be named. No wonder then that the Christians do not love free inquiry, since it would and will certainly lead to the annihilation of their church.

If the reader have any doubt as to the propriety of questioning the truth of the Bible, let him consider that the prohibition of free inquiry bears fraud on its face—that the only proper test for truth in religion is reason,—and that belief in untruth after a fair investigation is better than adherence to truth before.

§ 2. *The prohibition of free inquiry bears fraud upon its face.* It is just such a trick as might reasonably be resorted to, to protect a false religion. What a grand scheme—to bring up a whole nation in an undoubting faith in, and a boundless fear of, a confederated set of priests, whom it supports in luxury and power, and whose authority dare never be questioned! The prohibition of free inquiry has been used to protect many fraudulent creeds. Every nation of men has its priests, who live by their creed, live well by it, are supported in luxury and high consideration by it, and who consequently are highly interested in its support. Their profession gives them a peculiar influence over the people, and in many states they have been almost omnipotent, politically. Their words were received with superstitious awe, and they could entertain a hope that a prohibition of free inquiry would be successful. There were such bodies of professional priests in ancient Egypt, in Babylon, in Persia, in Gaul, in Phœnicia, in Judea, in Etruria, and in Greece. There are such priests now in Japan, in Hindostan, in Thibet, in Arabia, in Russia, in France, in England, and in Utah, and among many other civilized and barbarous nations. The several classes of priests of no two of the lands specially mentioned above, taught or teach the same creed. There have been at least two hundred different religious creeds taught and extensively received among men, different from, and inconsistent with, each other, and all necessarily false, except perhaps one. These creeds were not only false, but their priests knew them to be false. Cicero said he did not know how two Roman augurs (priests) could meet without laughing at each other. Many of the Boodhist priests in China have confessed to Protestant missionaries that their creed is false, but they could not say so publicly, for if they did, they would lose their means of support. The Catholic priests in Spain laughed at their brother Blanco White, when he confessed to them with great seriousness that he doubted the inspiration of the Bible. *They* had got beyond that long before. A large number of the Catholic clergy in France publicly declared during the great revolution that their creed was a fraud. It is no secret that there is much skepticism among the Protestant clergy of the United States. And yet all these

separate sets of priests make the same claim, that *their* creed is the word of God, and is exempt from examination by reason. "To ask for nothing but results, to decline the labor of verification, to be satisfied with a ready-made stock of established positive arguments as proof, and to decry the doubter or negative reasoner, who starts new difficulties, as a common enemy,—this is a proceeding sufficiently common in ancient as well as in modern times. But it is nevertheless an abnegation of the dignity and even of the functions of speculative philosophy."\* The same prohibition of doubt and free inquiry prevails now among the Bramins, the Boodhists, and the Mohammedans; and that prohibition which is thus made to serve as a protection for the four principal creeds on the earth, each accepted by more than a hundred millions of men, and each inconsistent with all the others—that prohibition bears fraud upon its face. Truth wears no defensive armor, shuns no enemy, and fears no fight: her only and constant prayer is for light and for a chance at the foe.

The only proper test for truth in religion is reason. Reason is the word of God, given to man for his guidance. Without it he has no guide: the revelation which does not appeal to his reason and agree to its demands is no revelation. "In entering upon any scientific pursuit, [or philosophic investigation,] one of the student's first endeavors ought to be to prepare his mind for the reception of truth, by dismissing, or at least loosening his hold on all such crude and hastily adopted notions respecting all the objects and relations, he is about to examine, as may tend to embarrass or mislead him: and to strengthen himself by something of an effort and a resolve for the unprejudiced admission of any conclusion which shall appear to be supported by careful observation and logical argument, even should it prove adverse to notions he may have previously formed for himself, or taken up without examination on the credit of others. Such an effort is in fact, a commencement of that intellectual discipline which forms one of the most important ends of all science. It is the first movement of approach toward that state of mental purity, which alone can fit us for a full and steady perception of moral

\* GROTE. History of Greece.



beauty, as well as physical adaptation. It is the euphrasy and rue with which we must purge our sight before we can receive and contemplate, as they are, the lineaments of truth and nature."\* "The strict rule of scientific, [and philosophic,] scrutiny exacts according to modern philosophers in matters of inductive, [and speculative,] reasoning an exclusive homage. It requires that we should close our eyes against all presumptive and extrinsic evidence, and abstract our minds from all considerations, [such as traditional authority and prejudices of education,] not derived from the matters of fact which bear directly on the matter in question. The maxim we have to follow in such controversies is *fiat justitia, ruat cælum* [let us know the truth, though it send us to hell.] In fact what is actually true is almost most desirable to know, whatever consequences may arise from its admission."† If the Bible was first adopted without reason, then it should be examined by reason now, to prevent the continuance of error; if it was investigated by reason in the beginning, then we should have the same privilege which our forefathers had. There is no probability that truth will lose ground by free discussion and submission to reason as the supreme tribunal: and he who expresses fears that it will, betrays at once his belief that his cause is bad. A revelation can be no revelation until it is understood, and no book-revelation now in existence can be understood, except by the exercise of reason. Anything claiming to be a revelation appeals by its very nature to our understanding, authorizes it to be bold and self-reliant, and promises in advance to submit to the decision.

It is not only the right but it is the duty of every man to examine the evidences on both sides of a question before adopting a firm belief on either side. On any other principle there will never be any progress in arriving at truth. Doubt is the beginning of philosophy—its mother and constant companion. He who believes what is told him on the mere say-so of others is always reckoned a fool. It may be very well for a child, entirely lacking in judgment, to receive as true everything told to it, but something different is expected from men of mature years. They should

\* HERSHEL. Introduction to Astronomy.

† PRITCHARD. Natural History of Man, Sec. II.

not only accept no doctrines without investigation, and reject all proved to be untrue, but they should also reject all not proved to be true. "It is not simply to arrive at a conclusion by a certain measure of plausible premise—and then to proclaim it as an authoritative dogma, silencing or disparaging all objections—that philosophic speculation should aspire. To unmask not only positive falsehood, but even affirmation without evidence, exaggerated confidence in what only doubtful, and show of knowledge without the reality ; to look at a problem on all sides and set forth all the difficulties attending its solution, to take account of deductions from the affirmative evidence, even in the case of conclusions accepted as true upon the balance—all this will be found pervading the march of every great thinker. As a condition of all progressive philosophy it is not less essential that the grounds of negation should be fully exposed than the grounds of affirmation."\* In matters of religion it is peculiarly the duty of every man of intelligence to investigate, and demand conclusive evidence before believing. The subject is every day before him ; it is frequently under public discussion ; information upon it may be obtained with comparative ease ; and the matter may be said to be within the comprehension of every one—at least, every one must form some opinion upon it. The decision is one of high importance ; for upon it may depend much of a man's mode of thought, theory of duty, and course of life. We know that religious opinions at this day render a large majority of the human race subject to debasing superstitions, to illiberal prejudices to false theories and improper practices in morals, and to mental darkness generally. It is not only so to-day, but it always has been so. It was so in ancient Egypt, Babylon, and Gaul ; it is so in modern Hindostan, in Ceylon, in Spain, in Turkey, and in many other countries which it is not necessary to name. A large proportion of the wars, the despotic governments, the illiberal laws, the inquisitorial persecutions of good and wise men, and the opposition to beneficent reforms which have cursed the earth is chargeable to the self-styled ministers of God. We not only know that the creeds have been false, and that they have been productive

\* GROTE. History of Greece. Slightly changed.

of almost unparalleled evils, but we know that they were conceived in fraud, and are still maintained by the grossest deception, over a large portion of the earth's surface. We not only know the fraud, but we comprehend the entire baseness of the motives at the bottom of it. History tells us that in ancient times the people were very ignorant and superstitious, and easily imposed upon, and the priests were numerous, and so influential that they could induce the people to believe or do almost anything. It was the common belief among the political rulers that government could not be firmly established, or morality preserved without the aid of superstition, the terror of the gods, and an implicit faith that the laws were of divine origin, and this belief frequently governed their action. Numa, Lycurgus, Zaleucus, Pythagoras and scores of other law-givers asserted that their codes were communicated to them by the Gods. Diodorus Siculus tells us that the purpose of these claims to divine origin for human laws, was to ensure the supremacy and permanence of constitutions, which would have been much less secure without the mighty protection of superstition. The laws of Egypt, Hindostan, Persia, and Babylon were all ostensibly dictated or written, word for word in Heaven. Strabo [50 B. C.] expressed the opinion common among the ancient Greeks and Romans, when he said: "It is impossible to conduct women and the gross multitude, and to render them holy, pious, and upright by the precepts of reason and philosophy: superstition, or the fear of the gods must be called in aid, the influence of which is founded on fictions and prodigies. For the thunder of Jupiter, the ægis of Minerva, the trident of Neptune, the torches and snakes of the furies, the ivy-adorned spears of the gods, and the whole ancient mythology are all fables, which the lawgivers who formed the political constitutions of states, employed as bugbears to overawe the credulous and simple." Robertson, after quoting the above in his History of India, adds—"These ideas of the philosophers of Europe were precisely the same which the Brahmins had adopted in India, and according to which they regulated their conduct with respect to the great body of the people. As their order had an exclusive right to read the sacred books, to cultivate and

teach science, they could more effectually prevent all who were not members of it, from acquiring any portion of information beyond what they were pleased to impart." Neither did such views expire with ancient times. They are still common even in the most enlightened countries, and men are to be met on all sides, who assert positively that whenever their respective forms of faith shall die, there will no longer be any security for peace, order, morality, and human happiness, and who would prohibit, under such penalties as should be effectual, any public denial of, or argument against, the main articles of their respective creeds.

The knowledge of this fact should serve as a warning to every man to carefully avoid the pit into which so many others have fallen. Let no one believe that "those times are past": human nature is the same, as it was three thousand years ago. The dangers which beset *us*, may come in a different shape, but they are substantially the same as those which caused the sufferings of men in early ages. With these facts, impressed upon our minds, every manly feeling, every sentiment of honor, devotion to truth, hatred of superstition, indignation at ecclesiastical frauds, opposition to intolerance, hostility to all kinds of tyranny, love of peace and desire for the general welfare of mankind—all combine to induce us, to use every reasonable exertion to avoid being duped into slavery to a false creed with the errors which must flow from it—all combine to induce us to distrust tradition as a reliable guide to religious truth—all combine to induce us, to receive nothing as of divine authority until it has been proved to be so by evidence at least as strong as that which a man must produce in court, before he can gain a lawsuit on a demand of five dollars for services rendered.

The Christians say, "The mysteries of a revelation are of a supernatural order; they rest upon the highest authority of God, who has revealed them to us, not for our comprehension, but for our belief, with all the humble submission which we owe to the infallible supreme being. From this it is clear that the tribunal of philosophy is incompetent to decide in matters of religion, which belongs only before the bar of revelation. Before a court, in its

nature so hostile as reason, revealed truths are endangered in advance. They are not made to stand the trial of philosophical disputations ; their greatness, their sublimity will not permit them to subject themselves to human criticism. Besides, it is against the nature of things that they should be victorious in such a struggle ; their essential character is to be subjects of faith, not of science. Theologians should not be ashamed to confess that they cannot enter into debate with philosophical doubters. The Christian who has allowed himself to be bothered by the objection of a skeptic, has already one foot in the grave of his fidelity. The ship of Christ is not made to be tossed about on the stormy sea of doubt, but to remain securely anchored in the harbor of faith.\*” The Catholics tell us that we must provide for our eternal salvation as for our bodily health ; that as we employ physicians to devote all their attention to medicine and surgery, and then trust ourselves completely in their hands, so we should employ the church to manage for our eternal happiness. Religion, they say, is a matter, as abstruse as anatomy, physiology, chemistry and therapeutics, and it is quite as dangerous for a man, to attempt to make his own creed, as for him to try to set his own broken leg. The orthodox Protestants say, that the Catholic doctrine is wrong, because it necessarily leads to the preservation of all the abuses which collect about churches, as about all other old and prosperous corporations ; because, on that system, we must condemn all the beneficent reforms which have taken place in the church, and because it would reduce the whole world to slavery to the priesthood. But, say the Protestants, the Catholics are right in the idea that the people must trust the welfare of their souls with a physician, only they have not selected the right one ; they should place themselves not in the hands of the church, but of the Bible. The Scripture is a great receipt book, entitled, *Every man the Doctor of his own Salvation*, and it is the duty of all mankind, by taking the medicine therein prescribed, to heal themselves from the hereditary leprosy of original sin. It is the duty of reason, to discover that this receipt-book is infallible, and then to surrender itself completely to the reme-

\*BAYLE. Dictionaire. Article sur le Pyrrhonisme.

dies prescribed, and though some of the medicines appear bitter and nauseating, yet to take them in full confidence that they are all for the best. This duty is sanctioned by the severest conceivable penalties. Both, Catholics and Protestants, leave reason free, to appreciate the merits of their respective living and dead doctors of salvation, but they do not give her freedom to discover and argue upon their faults. No Catholic must expose the corruptions of the church ; no Protestant must expose the weak points of the Bible. They really allow no freedom to reason, except that of signing a contract of absolute enslavement. Now, I demand, that before signing, she shall have full liberty to examine the proposed contract ; that while examining it, she shall not be terrified into imbecility by any threats of infinite pains, to be inflicted for an error of judgment in her determination, whether to sign or not ; that she shall remember, that although she is fallible, that yet she is the highest authority ; that there is no authority discoverable on earth, except that which comes from her equals, fallible like herself ; comprehending that, if she will but give her attention to the subject, she is as competent to form a sound opinion, as any other judge ; and seeing, that submission to any authority without examination, is necessarily degrading, superstitious, and suicidal in its nature. If after making a full and fair examination, she see fit to sign the contract, and to observe it, I shall make no objection, whatever.

§ 3. *Belief in untruth, after free inquiry is better than adherence to truth without free inquiry.* Human reason is fallible, and liable to error. No man can have any perfect assurance of possessing the perfect truth in religion. Many men have felt confident of such possession, but have been in error, as we know of a certainty ; and knowing the mistakes of other men in this matter, we should be careful in forming our opinions. That care implies, of course, thought ; thought implies doubt, and doubt demands investigation. An opinion scarcely deserves the name of "belief" if it has not been considered on both sides ; it is mere superstition. An English bishop has written very truly :

" He who has never doubted yet,  
Has never yet believed."

We attach as a general rule the idea of high value only to those things which are rare or difficult of attainment ; but blind belief can make neither claim to high value. If there were any merit in belief, that merit should be measured by the amount of reasonable doubt and thorough investigation, and devotion to truth which led to the opinion. There is no other measure for merit in belief worthy the notice of a sensible man. Without doubt and investigation, no truth can be understood ; it remains a mere formula, and in no respect deserving to be considered as a proper intellectual possession, but rather a garment worn on the outside of the man. An idiot may believe sincerely that Jesus was the son of God, but surely that mere belief is no merit. A child may believe that the earth moves round the sun, but the mere repetition of such an opinion brings little blessing to his mind. It is the how and why, which does the good. "An opinion,\* though ever so true and certain to one man, cannot be transferred into another as true and certain in any way, except by opening his understanding, and assisting him to so order his conceptions, that he may find the reasonableness of it within himself." "It is not instruction, but provocation," says Emerson, "that I can receive from another soul. What he announces, I must find true in me or wholly reject ; and on his word, or as his second, be he who he may, I can accept nothing." "The intellectual worth† and dignity of man are measured, not by the truth which he possesses, or fancies that he possesses, but by the sincere and honest pains he has taken to discover truth. This it is that invigorates his mind ; and by exercising the mental springs, preserves them in full activity. Possession makes us quiet, indolent, proud. If the Deity held in his right hand all truth, and in his left only the ever active impulse, the fond desire, and longing after truth, coupled with the condition of constancy erring, and should offer me the choice, I should humbly turn towards the left, and say 'Father give me this ; pure truth is fit for thee alone.'" If the result of belief is to be a paralysis of doubt and speculation, then is the consummation of knowledge the

\* WOLLASTON.

† LESSING.

condition of intellectual barbarism. "Plato \* has profoundly defined man 'the hunter of truth,' for in this chase as in others, the pursuit is all in all, the success comparatively nothing. In action is contained the existence, happiness, improvement and perfection of our being; and knowledge is only precious, as it may afford a stimulus to the exercise of our powers, and the condition of their more complete activity. Speculative truth is therefore subordinate to speculation itself, and its value is directly measured by the quantity of energy which it occasions—immediately in its discovery—mediately through its consequences. Life to Endymion was not preferable to death. A waking error is better than the sleeping truth."

§ 4. "But," I shall be told, "this doctrine of free inquiry into all religious opinions will result in the rejection by a considerable portion of society, of the doctrines of a personal God who governs the universe, and of a future state of rewards and punishments. Now, these two doctrines are the foundation of all morality. Either you must abandon your free inquiry, or the hope of morality. The two can not exist together." And then my opponent appeals to history, and points to a number of special cases which prove, as he says, that faith in God and hell are the only trustworthy supports of public and private virtue.

I reply that "true religion † teaches no doctrines except such as are approved by pure, unassisted reason;" and no man has a right to say that men are more likely to arrive at the truth without free use of reason than with it. If in any case, the doctrines arrived at by the friends of free inquiry, have been accompanied by immoral practices, then, I say, that the latter were not the necessary consequences of the former. Morality is not dependent on speculative religious opinions. "The ‡ distinction between moral good and moral evil, the obligation to avoid and cleave to that which is good, are laws as much acknowledged by man in his proper nature as the laws of logic, and which spring as much from a principle within him, as in his actual life they

\* SIR WM. HAMILTON.

† KANT. *Brief an Fichte*. 2 Feb. 1792.

‡ GUILZOT. *History of Civilization*.



find their application." "Morality\* is usually said to depend upon religion; but this is said in that low sense, in which outward conduct is considered morality [: and it is not true even then]. In that higher sense in which morality denotes sentiment, it is more exactly true to say that religion depends on morality, and springs from it. Virtue is not the conformity of outward actions to a rule, nor is religion the fear of punishment, or the hope of reward. Virtue is the state of a just, prudent, benevolent, firm and temperate mind. Religion is the whole of these sentiments, which such a mind feels towards an infinitely good and perfect being. I am pleased with contemplations which trace piety to so pure and noble a source—which show good men have not been able to differ so much from each other as they imagined; and that amidst all the deviations of the understanding, the beneficent necessity of their nature keeps alive the same sacred feelings". Conscience, the impulse to be just, and to love justice for its own sake, is an inborn part of every healthy human mind; it is not plastered on by the priest. Every age, every nation has been blessed with men full of the spirit of love for their fellow-men; and he who claims any peculiar and exclusive merit in this respect for Christians, subjects himself to the charge of either ignorance of the facts, illogical reasoning, or intentional dishonesty. "Socrates, † and Confucius, Plato, Cicero, and Zoroaster, agree unanimously in what constitutes clear understanding and just morals; in spite of their various differences, they have all labored to one point on which our whole species rests. As the wanderer enjoys no greater delight than when he everywhere discovers, even unexpectedly, the traces of a thinking, feeling mind, like his own, so are we delighted, when in the history of our species, the echo of all ages and nations reverberates nothing but truth and benevolence towards man."

But if it be granted that free inquiry must be followed by great danger to morality, let us ask where our opponents would place the fence between skeptical investigation and blind adherence to tradition. How far is it proper to enslave the minds of the people? Should speculative philoso-

\* SIR JAMES MAKINTOSH.

† HERDER. *Philosophy of History.*

phy have been strangled, when Socrates led it as a child about the streets of Athens? Should natural science have been smothered in the cradle, when Anaxagoras had to flee from Attica, because he said that rain was caused, not by the immediate and not-to-be-examined will of Jupiter (the orthodox doctrine), but by the condensation of vapor in the air according to natural laws? Is it to be regretted that the priestly enemies of Abelard did not succeed in having him burned for saying that the only way to reach philosophy was by beginning with doubt? Ought we to lament the success of the Reformation with its platform of the "right of private judgment," provided it went no further than Luther led? Should we rejoice to think of the imprisonment of the grey-haired Galileo, for teaching doctrines at variance with those of the Church? Of course, the priests were right when they raised the howl of indignation at Descartes, when he taught that no doctrine should be received as pure truth until it has been tried over the hottest fire of reason in the crucible of skeptical examination? The Saxon censors were right, when they prohibited the circulation of Fichte's essay, denying the existence of a personal deity? The outcry against Lawrence was proper, when he demonstrated that the mind is the function of the brain? And we should regret that zealous theologians had not sufficient influence to stop, as they denounced, the researches and the teachings of the phrenologists, the geologists, the Egyptologists, and the mesmerists, who appeared to pay no regard whatever to the interests of orthodox religion? In short, where shall we stop thinking about things which may have an influence on our religious ideas? What possible point can be fixed between the most debasing superstition of the dark ages, and the most enlightened skepticism? I have a right to demand that my opponent shall be consistent with himself. Until he is, I shall condemn him out of his mouth. Does he admit that free inquiry—the spirit of insubordination to ecclesiastical authority—has done good in the past? If not, he stands self-condemned—an advocate of barbarism. If yes, then why should it not do good in the future? Where is the standard by which we are to learn where scientific and speculative thought must stop? How shall we distinguish between him who now denounces pantheistic, materialistic,

anti-christian and heretical authors, and endeavors to excite popular prejudices against them,—how shall we distinguish between him and the man who in former centuries raised his hands against Anaxagoras, Abelard, and Galileo. Both cried out, “religion is in danger ;” but we find that the cry was false, and instead of religion having been endangered by the philosophers, the world is fast coming to believe that it owes great obligations to them, and that those who were considered in their times among the worst, because the most influential enemies of the church, did it really the most good. The Protestants of the United States abuse the memory of Voltaire ; but they owe more to him for their religious opinions than they do to any Protestant who has lived within the last two hundred years. He did vastly more than any man of his own, or any later age, to annihilate those superstitions which prevailed and still prevail in the Catholic Church. “ Human \* weakness has always confounded its representations of religion with religion itself, and predicted the fall of religion, if their own peculiar views were subjected to alteration. ‘ Religion is in danger,’ they cried at the time of the Waldenses, the Hussites, of Wickliffe, of Luther ; but it was only that form of religion, which bore the name of Catholic that was really in danger, not religion itself, which thus only gained a new form, beneficial to itself and to its influence, and bloomed forth in a new dress suitable to the times. Divine religion would indeed be a poor, paltry thing, if it depended for its existence on any form of human representation, which must always change as the time changes. Then long since would it have perished.”

Free inquiry is not the enemy of morality, but on the contrary its warmest and most powerful friend. We have no cause to imagine that after having furnished the chief mover of the progress which mankind has made in the last four hundred years, the spirit of scientific investigation and of philosophic doubt should now become a source of boundless evil. If we see the trouble and are unable to see how we shall escape from it, our only proper way is to go ahead with more speed. Time will provide a salve for the wounds which it inflicts. Experience tells us that though men have often adopted false opinions, yet that freedom of thought is the most certain protector of truth ; and that

\* Westminster Review, Dec. 1845.

“speculative \* philosophy, which to the superficial, appears so remote from the business of life, and the outward interests of men, is in reality, the thing on earth which most influences them.” The observer must be blind indeed, who does not perceive the vastness of the scale on which speculative principles, both right and wrong, have operated upon the present condition of mankind ; or who does not now feel and acknowledge now deeply the morals and the happiness of private life, as well as the reformation of political society and the general progress of the race are involved in the final issue of the contest between true and false philosophy. “Truth † in its own essence cannot be but good.” Philosophers agree in regarding it as inseparably allied to human happiness, to which error is essentially hostile. “It is ‡ utterly impossible to reckon the benefits which light confers upon the mind wherein it is allowed to enter.” “The || great interests of the human race, then, demand that the way of discovery should be open, that there should be no obstruction to inquiry, that every possible facility and encouragement should be afforded to efforts addressed to the detection of error, and to the attainment of truth—nay, that every human being as far as he is capable, should actively assist in the pursuit, and yet one of its greatest discouragements at present existing amongst mankind is the state of their own moral sentiments. Although he who has achieved the discovery of a truth in a matter of importance, or rescued an admitted truth from insignificance and neglect, may justly indulge the reflection that he has conferred a benefit on his fellow-men, to which even time itself can prescribe no limits, he will do well to prepare for the odium and persecution with which the benefit will be resisted, and console himself with a prospective reliance on the gratitude and sympathy of a future age. It is impossible to deny the fact that in some of the most important departments of knowledge [particularly those connected with Christianity] the bulk of mankind regard novelties of doctrine—a description under which all detections of error and acquisitions of truth must come,—as acts of moral turpitude or reprehensible arrogance, which they are ready to resent on the head of the promulgator.”

\* JOHN MILL.—† BYRON. Cain.—‡ Vestiges of Creation.

|| SAMUEL BAILEY. On the Pursuit of Truth.

## CHAPTER II.

### WHAT IS CHRISTIANITY ?

“ A poor man in our day has many gods foisted on him, and big voices bid him—‘ worship or be damned.’ ”—CARLYLE.

§ 5. The fundamental dogma of Christianity, as the latter presents itself in this age, is that the Bible is the word of God—a divinely inspired revelation of the nature of man’s moral and religious duties, and of the realities of the spiritual world. With that dogma the Bible must stand or fall. The purpose of this book is to show that the Bible is not divinely inspired, that it is a work of mere human origin, and that a considerable portion of it is false. I cannot in this place recapitulate all the doctrines, assertions or assumptions of the Bible, nor even those which I intend to deny and, if possible, prove untrue : but the main doctrines of the book, as generally understood, may be said to be that there is an omnipotent, personal, conscious Creator and Governor of the universe, named Jehovah ; that he created matter and all other existences out of nothing 6000 years ago ; that he then created one man and one woman from whom the whole human race is descended ; that these two parents of the race were, at first, sinless, perfectly happy and immortal, and were reduced to mortality and misery, and made subject to eternal pains after death, in punishment for eating an apple forbidden to them by Jehovah ; that 2000 years after the creation, the deity chose a man named Abram and his descendants to be his favorite people ; that 1900 years later, he sent Jesus Christ, a portion of himself, down to earth to teach religious truth and suffer death ; that Jesus, portion of the one and indivisible God, lived like a man for 33 years on earth, eighteen centuries and a half ago, and founded the Christian Church, and was crucified ; that his crucifixion atoned for the sins of Adam ; that all men, who believe him to have been a divine Redeemer as set forth in the Bible, shall enjoy ever-

lasting delights in heaven ; that all, who do not, shall suffer endless pains in Hell ; and that the Bible is a work written by divine inspiration, under the immediate supervision of Jehovah, for the express purpose of teaching religious truth to mankind. Christianity is properly the teaching of the Bible, taken as a whole—nothing more and nothing less. That “whole teaching” will be found on examination, to be a mass of almost innumerable and unparalleled incongruities : but they must still be taken together. Christianity must be held responsible for, and credited with, everything contained in the Bible. “Whatever we find there is a part of Christianity, whether recognized as such or not in after ages : whatever we do not find there is no part of Christianity, however early or however general may have been the attempts to interpolate it.”

We then take Christianity to mean every doctrine taught in the Bible and nothing more. But there is a great difference between the Christianity of the Scriptures, and that of many Christians, whose natural goodness, sense and intellectual cultivation are far superior to those of the gospel authors, and who interpret the Scriptures so as to explain away its objectionable features, and enable them to supply the good teachings which are wanting. If Christianity were understood to mean the rules of moral conduct which have served as guides to such men as Milton, Hume, Jefferson, Franklin, Channing, Milman and Arnold, then I for one abandon at once the idea of presenting any “evidences” against it : but it cannot be properly so interpreted, as will, I hope, appear very clearly in the course of this book.

§ 6. In examining whether the Bible be the Word of God, it is proper that we should consider some preliminary questions, such as whether there is an antecedent probability that a book-revelation would be given to man,—what that book-revelation, if given, might be expected to contain, and whether there are any peculiar difficulties in the examination of the subject ? Such questions are perfectly proper. “We\* must suppose that if the Creator would communicate truth to his creatures, he gave them minds

\* MORELL. Philosophy of Religion.

originally capable of sympathizing with it. In a word, the first revelation of God to man must have been an inward revelation." "When this revelation\* [of philosophic reason] is clear and certain by intuition or necessary induction, no subsequent revelation supported by prophecies or miracles can supersede it." If a book-revelation should appeal to reason, and correspond to it, then we may properly ask the preliminary questions, above referred to.

Paley contends that there "is an antecedent probability that God would grant a direct revelation to teach man his duties and the moral nature of the universe, which are not clear by the light of natural religion ; and that it is consistent with the nature of a good deity that he should give some sanction to truth and justice among men, further than that discoverable to the unassisted human reason." I do not admit that antecedent probability. In the first place I deny the existence of such a personal Creator and Governor of the universe, as Paley assumes ; and in the next place I assert, that if such a divinity should exist, there would be no antecedent probability of a book-revelation. He gives man primarily faculties which teach religious ideas ; why should he resort to another method of teaching the same thing ? If it be said that the religion, discoverable by our natural faculties, is imperfect and insufficient for human wants, then I answer that it harmonizes, in that respect, with other parts of nature, none of which are made to secure the perfect happiness or wisdom of men or beasts. The grant of a revelation would imply an attempt to mend an article which does not serve its original purpose. If we assume the existence of a personal deity, we can judge of his character only by his works ; we must not argue that he must do so or so, because, if we were in his place, we should do so. If we argue in that style, we should believe that there is an antecedent probability that God would not create evil, or that he will put an end to it to-morrow. Now we all know by experience the absurdity of that kind of argument ; and therefore we must not use it in setting up an antecedent probability of an external revelation to supply those things in which man's internal organization is deficient. The man who

\* JOHN ADAMS. Letter to Thomas Jefferson, Dec. 25, 1813.

accepts Paley's anthropomorphism,\* should believe that the deity ought to have made men with minds sufficient to discover by natural processes of thought all necessary truths in religion ; or that, if He should see fit to give an eternal revelation, it should not be enclosed in a book, accessible and intelligible to only a small portion of the human race, but written upon the face of nature, visible to every member of the human family, and in characters intelligible to all.

Admitting, however, the antecedent probability that a revelation would be given, is there another antecedent probability that the Bible is that revelation ? Freethinkers say there is not. God should not adopt the same means to teach true religion, which lying priests have used to teach false creeds. False gospels were in use long before the Bible was written ; why could not Jehovah find a new way of recording his doctrine ? Books are, so far as we know, the works of men ; the probability is, that the Bible is the same. There have been at different times and in different countries, not less than two hundred books received as the word of God, each inconsistent with all the others, and all false except, perhaps, one. On that score the antecedent probabilities are one hundred and ninety-nine to one against the Bible.

§ 7. What should be the characteristics of the antecedently-probable book-revelation, judging from other antecedent probabilities ? Alexander, in his *Evidences of* [for] *Christianity*, gives notice that if any such question is to be asked and answered in advance, he will confess judgment at once. " If reason be permitted proudly to assume the seat of judgment, and to decide what a revelation ought to contain in particular ; in what manner and with what degree of light it should be communicated : whether it should be made perfectly at once, or gradually unfolded ; and whether from the beginning it should be universal ; no doubt the result of our examination of the contents of the Bible, conducted on such principles, will prove unsatisfactory, and insuperable objections will occur at every step of the progress." Dr. Alexander appears to acknowledge that

\* Belief in a deity who has the physical form and personality, consciousness, and mental qualities like man.



reason is against him ; but we know nothing of his “ insuperable objections ; ” we are here to find the truth ; and whatever the result of our examination, provided that it be conclusive, it cannot be “ unsatisfactory.”

Reason, “ proudly assuming the seat of judgment,” would probably demand that a book-revelation, before being accepted by man and made the guide of his conduct, should be proved to be of divine origin by conclusive affirmative evidence on each of the following points : That the revelation was written by an author known to us by name and character ; that the book was published by its author ; that it was then received and extensively circulated as a divine revelation ; that it has been preserved in purity as written ; that the doctrines taught, were original with the writer ; that the doctrines are true ; that they were undiscoverable by human reason ; that the doctrines are more powerful for good than any mere human teaching ; and that the revelation is written with superhuman ability, and contains all the information, in regard to religion and morality which was unknown at the time of its publication, undiscoverable by human reason and proper for man to know.

Various able and celebrated advocates of Christianity have commented at length on all these points, as connected with the Bible, and in each have pretended to find strong evidence of the truth of their faith ; and therefore it can hardly be considered unfair to consider them here as essential points. I have said that conclusive evidence on each of these points should be necessary to prove that the Bible is a divine revelation. The burden of proof rests properly upon Christianity : for it is a dictate of the plainest common sense that in religion, as in science and intellectual philosophy, every system should depend on the strength of the evidences in its favor, rather than upon the weakness of the testimony against it. The fact that the Bible is in common acceptation, and that its enemies are and have long been the assailants, does not give its advocates the right to shift the burden of proof upon the other side ; for Christianity, though it may be the established form of faith as regards society in general, is not established in reference to the man who is about to examine, whether it be

true or not ; and such is the position of every man who takes up this book, with intent to give it a fair hearing. However, these remarks about the burden of proof are only intended to fasten the attention of the reader more closely upon the nature of the question. I claim to be able to furnish proof, conclusive, abundant, overwhelming, that Christianity is not of superhuman origin, and to obtain strong if not unanswerable evidence for the negative upon each of the cited points.

There are several other points which it is antecedently probable, should characterize a book-revelation, but upon which the apologists of the Bible are careful to lay no stress. These points are that the revelation should be perfectly true, in all its parts, and perfectly clear in its meaning.

That a revelation should be perfectly true in all its parts, if given, is a doctrine which scarcely requires argument. If God were to write a book to teach truths undiscoverable by man's natural faculties, He would certainly write nothing but the truth ; and He would not commit errors of the same kind with those which He intended to correct. In the desire to tell religious truth, He would not be guilty of scientific, historic or moral falsehood. He would not contradict himself, so that one of the contradictory statements must necessarily be false. In short, His book should be infallibly true in every respect. It is not to be supposed that He would endeavor to supply a great want of humanity, and then supply the want imperfectly. If He should employ men to write His truths, He would see that the writing should be well done,—done so that the object in view should be attained—done in an unobjectionable, and, so far human eyes might discover, a perfect manner. To secure such perfection, He should see that the language expressed the idea fully, and to obtain such security He would naturally inspire His prophets with the very words to be used. And such inspiration is claimed by the writers of the Bible. Moses says, "God spake all these words" (*Ex.* XX. 1), and "The Lord said unto Moses 'Thou shalt say unto the children of Israel'" (*Ex.* XX. 22). After having written the words of Jehovah, the Hebrew lawgiver, still acting under inspiration calls

down curses on "every man that confirmeth not all the words of this covenant to do them" (*Deut. XXVII. 26*). Jesus repeatedly recognised the divine authority of the Old Testament, said that not one jot or tittle of the law should pass away, said that everything written "in the law of Moses, and in the prophets and in the Psalms" concerning him, should be fulfilled, and styled the Pentateuch "The Word of God" (*Mark. VII. 13*). He never hinted that the words were of mere human authority. When he sent out his twelve apostles, he foretold that they should be arrested, and he said, "But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak" (*Mat. X. 19*). This evidently means that Jehovah would inspire them with the very words, and surely the inspiration of a gospel would not be less complete than that for a legal pleading. Paul said that Jehovah "spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets" (*Ileb. I. 1*), and again that "holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (*2 Eph. I. 21*). So also (*Acts IV. 25*) it is said that "God spoke by the mouth of David." In no place do the writers of the Bible give a precise definition of the extent of their claimed inspiration, and the inference to be drawn is, that they acknowledged no limit short of infallibility.

The Christians claim that the Bible is infallible in all important points of doctrine, and such a claim presupposes that there is nothing of human imperfection about the book. If the inspiration be not plenary,—if we admit that there are little errors in it—how can we assert that there are no large ones? When we admit that it is full of human imperfections, we must advise every one to beware that he is not deceived by them. For fifteen centuries after the death of Jesus, the Jewish and Christian churches supposed their sacred scriptures to have been written under a perfect inspiration; and they supposed that this inspiration extended to all transcribers and translators. Thus, when Justin Martyr declared that the seventy-two scribes who translated the Old Testament in Egypt, had been enclosed in separate cells, and without communication with each other, had produced seventy-two complete translations, which were found to agree with each other throughout to the smallest

dot, his statement found universal credit : and his assertion that he had seen the cells (four hundred years after the making of the translation) was considered abundant proof of a proposition which was so very probable in itself. It was supposed in those days, that if God would give a revelation of his will to the men of one generation, he would take care that it should not be corrupted so as to deprive other generations of equal benefits from it. Such opinions continued until after the Reformation. That great revolution was in fact a declaration that the "Bible" must be worshipped, instead of the "Church" which was the idol of Catholicism. But the tide of opinion would not stop with Luther ; it continued to rise, and soon plenary inspiration was in danger. The orthodox churches continued however, to assert the infallibility of their book-revelation until near the beginning of this century, when it was seen that the doctrine of plenary inspiration would certainly be overthrown, and then the Church began to abandon it, for fear of going over with it.

§ 8. Bishop Law (Bishop of Winchester, England, in 1822) in his work designed for the instruction of young clergymen, called *The Elements of Christian Theology*, lays down the doctrine upon this question thus : "When it is said that the Sacred Scriptures are divinely inspired, we are not to understand that God suggested every word or dictated every expression. From the different styles in which the books are written, and from the different manner in which the same events are related and predicted by different authors, it appears that the sacred penmen were permitted to write as their several tempers, understandings, and habits of life directed ; and that the knowledge communicated to them by inspiration on the subject of their writings, was applied in the same manner as any knowledge acquired by ordinary means. *Nor is it to be supposed that they were thus inspired in every fact which they related, or in every precept which they delivered.* They were left to the common use of their faculties, and did not, in every occasion, stand in need of supernatural communication ; but whenever, and as far as, divine assistance was necessary, it was always afforded !" Again he says : "Although it is evident, that the sacred historians *sometimes* [!] wrote under

the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit, it does not follow that they derived from revelation the knowledge of those things which might be collected from the common sources of human intelligence. It is sufficient to believe that by the general superintendence of the Holy Spirit, they were directed in the choice of their materials, enlightened to judge of the truth and importance of those accounts from which they borrowed their information, [and which he states afterwards, were accounts written by uninspired men] and prevented from recording *any material error*." He is here treating of the writers of the Old Testament ; of the writers of the New Testament, his sentiments are the same. He says, "If we believe that God sent Christ into the world to found a universal religion, and that, by the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost, he empowered the apostles to propagate the gospel, as stated in these books, we can not but believe that he would by his immediate interposition, enable those whom he appointed to record the gospel for the use of future ages, to write without the omission of any important truth, or the insertion of *any material error*." And these sentiments are generally received as orthodox—are quoted from Bishop Law, and recommended, though not expressly adopted, by the late Bishop Watson in his answer to Paine, and are laid down in numerous works as the true principles of scripture inspiration. What ideas the profoundly learned Bishop Marsh, one of the professors of Divinity at Cambridge, [England] entertains of the inspiration of the Sacred Scriptures, is evident from his labored scheme to account for the composition of the three first gospels, as given with his translation of Michaelis' *Introduction to the New Testament*, in which he supposes a principal and a supplemental sketch of the Saviour's life, and discourses to have been first drawn up by unknown authors,—to have had various additions made to them as they passed through various unknown hands,—and at last have been digested by Matthew, Mark and Luke, with further additions into the form of their respective gospels. Bishop Lowth, well known for his *Preflections on Hebrew Poetry* and *Version of Isaiah*, represents the prophets as borrowing ideas from one another, and improving or debasing what they thus borrowed, according to the sublimity

of their poetical genius, and the purity of their critical taste—and in so doing does he not degrade them in a great degree from prophets to mere poets? He certainly endeavours to elevate our esteem for their talents as men; but he assists in abolishing our reverence for their writings as flowing from the immediate dictate of God. Bishop Hinds of Norwich says, “It is not therefore truths of all kinds that the Bible is inspired to teach, but only such truth as tends to religious edification; and the Bible is consequently infallible as far as regards this, and this alone.” That is to say, all the remarks in the Bible about history, the creation of the world, science and morality as independent of religion, may be entirely false. And Bishop Hampden of Hereford expresses himself in a similar manner: “Christianity in fact leaves ethical science precisely where it found it; all the duties which ethical science prescribes, remain on their own footing, not altered or weakened, but affirmed and strengthened by the association of religion. And so independent is the science of ethics of the support and ennobling which it receives from religion, that it would be nothing strange or objectionable in a revelation, were we to find embodied in its language much of the false ethical philosophy which systems may have established.” That means that we must not anticipate as a certainty, that God would throw any light on the truths of morality, much less on those of science, in a book-revelation. And Archbishop Whately lends his countenance to these doctrines: “In matters unconnected indeed with religion, such as points of history or natural philosophy, a writer who professes (as the apostles do) to be communicating a divine revelation, imparted to him through the means of miracles, may be as liable to error as other men, without any disparagement to his pretensions; but if we reject as false *any part* of the *religion* which he professes himself divinely sent to teach, we cannot but believe that his pretensions are either an imposture or a delusion, and that he is wholly unworthy of belief.” Bishop Kitto’s *Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature* in the article on “David” contains the following passage. “In the celebrated numbering of the people by Joab (2 S. XXIV, 9) there are 800,000 warriors in Israel, and 500,000 in Judah alone; or according to 1 *Chronicles*

XXI. 5, in Israel 1,100,000, and in Judah 470,000. The two results in *Kings* and in *Chronicles* are here inconsistent ; in both also we see the marks of a later narrator, who is accustomed to use the words Israel and Judah to mean *the ten* and *the two* tribes [as they were divided about half a century after the death of David.]” Such are the opinions common among the leaders of the English hierarchy—that body which is the most conservative and slow-motined of all the Protestant Church. The opinions of a multitude of other clergymen, reputed to be orthodox, and occupying less prominent positions, might easily be adduced, but a mere mention of the names of Coleridge, Morell, Maurice, Kingsley, Arnold and Macnaught must suffice with the following from Neander : “ It must be regarded as one of the greatest boons which the purifying process of protestant Theology in Germany has conferred on the faith, as well as science, that the old mechanical view of inspiration, has been so generally abandoned. That doctrine, and the forced harmonies to which it led, demanded a clerk-like accuracy in the evangelical accounts, and could not admit of even the slightest contradiction in them.”

Some of the orthodox, however, object greatly to these opinions. For instance the Rev. Mr. Noble\* asks : “ Now, how do the freethinkers receive these concessions, so liberally made ? The advocates of revelation may be regarded as saying to them ‘ See ! we have come half way to meet you ; surely you will not obstinately refuse belief, now, that we require you to believe so little.’ What does the freethinker answer ? He says ‘ You are admitting, as fast as you can, that we are in the right. If you, who view the subject through the prejudices of your profession, are constrained to give up half of what we demand, unbiassed persons will augur from the admission, that truth would require a surrender of the whole.’ No, my friends and brethren !” exclaims the reverend gentleman, “ he who would effectually defend the Christian faith must take his stand on higher ground than this. What ! tell the world that to escape the increasing influence of infidelity, they must surrender the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures ! As well might we tell them that to obtain security when a flood is

\* On the Plenary Inspiration of the Sacred Scriptures.

rising, they should quit the top of a mountain to take refuge in a cave at its base.

“ Assuredly, this is a state of things calculated to fill the breast of the sincere and humble Christian with profound concern, if not with deep alarm. On the one hand, he beholds divine revelation assaulted with unprecedented fury and subtlety by those who avow themselves as its enemies ; on the other he sees it half betrayed and deserted by those who regard themselves as its friends. Every devout believer in revelation feels an inward predilection for the opinion that the inspiration of a divinely communicated writing must be plenary and absolute. He feels great pain on being told that this is a mistaken notion ; that he must surrender many things, in the sacred writing, to the enemy, to retain any chance of preserving the rest ; that he must believe the writers of the Scriptures to have been men liable to error, as a preliminary to his assurance that the religion of the Scriptures is true. Surely, every one whose heart does not take part with the assailant of his faith, must be glad to be relieved from the necessity of making surrenders so fatal. The bowed staff eagerly springs back to its natural straightness, when lightened of the weight under which it bent,—so he who has relinquished the doctrine of plenary inspiration, only because he saw no other way of accounting for the difficulties which have been pointed out in the sacred writings, will return to it with joy as soon as he sees how those difficulties may be explained without the hypothesis of error in the inspired penman.” I object to the abandonment of the theory of plenary inspiration no less than does Mr. Noble ; such an abandonment is evidently an evasion—a mere shift to escape responsibility,—a device of a person who sees himself lost in open and fair encounter, and feels forced to resort to every pitiful dodge by which he may hope to prolong a sneaking existence. Under this theory the Christian can listen complacently, while the freethinker proves that no such man as Moses ever existed ; that the Pentateuch was patched together after the reign of David ; that the Mosaic cosmogony is absurdly false from beginning to end ; that the story of the flood contains a multitude of physical impossibilities ; that the morality of both the Old and the New Testament, is



decidedly bad, and that the whole Bible is full of contradictions and defects of composition,—to all this the Christian who rejects plenary inspiration, can listen complacently, and at last answer: “Well, what of it? Those fellows, that wrote the Bible, were men like you and me, and it is none of my business, if they did lie and make mistakes occasionally in matters not connected with religion. You can’t prove the doctrine of the Trinity to be false, and until you can do that, it is of no use for you to argue at me!”

A revelation should be perfectly clear in its meaning, and the language should be interpreted according to the ordinary meaning of the words. No figurative meaning should be understood, unless words were evidently used in a figurative sense, and could not have been intended to be taken literally. In plain historical passages no meaning should be found except the plain historical signification; and in poetical passages, the figures should not be interpreted to mean more than they would mean in similar poetry, making no claim to inspiration. In no case should passages be interpreted as having two significations, for that would imply that they have no sense at all. The Christians, however, seeing the difficulties into which they are brought by the plain rules of common sense interpretation, object to them. They say that a passage, which taken literally, is absurd or evidently untrue, should be interpreted so as to appear reasonable and true. Such rules are adopted in interpreting human laws which, as all know, are frequently very defective on account of the ignorance, carelessness, or mental weakness of their compilers. But how shall we justify the application of these rules to the interpretation of a book which claims to be of divine origin, to have come from an author free from the ignorance, carelessness, and mental weakness of human lawgivers? A genuine revelation needs no such protection; false ones might be and have been screened by it from exposure. Kant remarks that “the moral philosophers of Greece and Rome explained the grossest legends of their polytheism as the mere symbolical representation of the attributes of the one divine being, and gave a mystical sense to the many vicious actions of their Gods, and to the wildest dreams of their poets, in order to bring the popular faith, which it was not expedient to des-

troy, into agreement with the doctrines of morality. The Mohammedans gave a spiritual meaning to the sensual descriptions of their paradise, and thus the Hindoos, or at least the more enlightened part of them, interpreted their Vedas." If we were arguing against the divine authority of the Koran, or any other pretended revelation, we should object to such rules of interpretation as would deny the plain meaning of all the untrue and objectionable passages ; and so we must do with the Bible. If the advocates of forged gospels are permitted to hide behind the screens of partial inspiration and figurative language, and are justified by the public in such hiding, then their entire expulsion from the fields of philosophy must become a matter of exceeding difficulty ; but if they will stand up and fight fairly on the ground of plenary inspiration, and plain interpretation, they shall at least have the glory of honorable death. "Some, indeed, there are," says Jenyns, "who by perverting the established signification of words (which they call explaining,) have ventured to expunge important doctrines out of the Scriptures for no other cause than that their weak reason rebels against the mysterious truths of revelation, and they argue thus : 'The Scriptures are the word of God ; in this word no propositions contrary to reason can have a place. These propositions are contradictory to reason, and therefore they are not there'. But if these bold assertors would claim any regard, they should reverse their argument, and say : 'These doctrines make a part and a material part of the Scriptures ; they are contradictory to reason ; no proposition contradictory to reason, can be a part of the word of God, and therefore neither the Scriptures, nor the pretended revelations contained in them, can be derived from him'".

§ 9. I shall endeavor to prove that the Gods and heroes of the Bible,—Jehovah, Jesus, Paul, the Prophets, Apostles, and the Jewish people,—were subject to a full share of human weakness and wickedness, and that they are not proper models for the practice of enlightened nations of this age ; that the Biblical doctrines of a personal devil, a material hell, immediate divine government, and the entrance of devils into the human body, are most gross and superstitious ; that the story of creation in Genesis is

false ; that the Scriptures are full of glaring discrepancies and inconsistencies ; that the morality of Jehovah and Jesus is bad ; that the Biblical doctrines are not original ; that Christianity is a source of evil, independently of its falsehood ; that the record of the so-called miracles and prophecies of the Bible prove the untruth of the book ; that the Biblical books were not written by their alleged authors ; and that the fundamental speculative doctrines of Christianity are false.

§ 10. Before commencing the argument, it may be proper for me to admit, in whole, or in part, such allegations of the Christians as have a bearing upon the question at issue, and which I do not intend to deny. I admit then that the Jews were enslaved in Egypt ; that they emigrated thence to Palestine about 1500 B. C. ; that their history from 1000 B. C., to 400 B. C., as recorded in the Books of Kings and Chronicles, is in the main correct ; that the Pentateuch was received by them as of divine authority as early as 500 B. C. ; that about 175 B. C., they received as inspired all the books of the Old Testament, substantially the same as we now have it ; that about the beginning of the common era a man, named Jesus, was born in Judea ; that he claimed to have a divine mission ; that he was executed by the Romans ; that persons claiming to be his followers, laid the foundation of the present Christian churches ; that the four first books of the New Testament, probably nearly the same as we have them now, were written by members of these churches, extensively circulated, and received as inspired as early as 150 A. D. ; that all the books of the present New Testament were received as inspired by Christian churches about 400 A. D. ; that the general outlines of Paul's history, as given in the New Testament are correct ; and that all the epistles ascribed to him, except that to the Hebrews, are genuine.

## CHAPTER III.

### JEHOVAH A BARBAROUS DIVINITY.

“ O thou, who in the heavens dost dwell,  
Who, as it pleases best thyself,  
Sends one to heaven and ten to hell,  
A' for thy glory  
And no for any gude or ill  
They've done afore thee ! ”—BURNS.

“ Every man's elevation is to be measured first and chiefly  
by his conception of this great being.”—CHANNING.

§ 11. Nearly all known nations or tribes of men believe in the existence of a divine person or persons, upon whom they bestow the qualities which form their ideal of perfection. To use the words of Schiller, “ Man paints himself in his gods.” Barbarous tribes have barbarous gods with gross material forms : and enlightened men have immaterial gods with high moral and intellectual attributes. Thirlwall in his *History of Greece*, speaking of the Grecian conception of Jupiter, the supreme divinity, says “ Even this greatest and most glorious of beings, as he is called, is subject like other gods to passion and frailty, for though secure from dissolution, though surpassingly beautiful and strong, and warmed with a purer blood than fills the veins of men, their heavenly frames are not insensible to pleasure and pain ; they need the refreshment of ambrosial food, and inhale a grateful savor from the sacrifices of their worshipers. Their other affections correspond to the grossness of their animal appetites. Capricious love and hatred, anger and jealousy, often disturb the calm of their bosoms : the peace of the Olympian state might be broken by factions and even by conspiracies formed against its chief. He himself cannot keep perfectly aloof from their quarrels ; he occasionally wavers in his purposes, is overreached by artifice, blinded by desire, and hurried by resentment into unseemly violence.” Such was the Olympian Jupiter, whose character is adduced by the Christians as proof in itself of the falsehood of the Greek mythology, and they point with triumph to the exalted Jehovah, as evidence of

the truth of their creed. Bishop Watson, in replying to Paine, said, "An *honest man*, sincere in his endeavors to search out truth, would examine first whether the Bible attributed to the Supreme Being any attributes repugnant to holiness, truth, justice, goodness—whether it represented him as subject to human infirmities." We shall then examine. The Hebrew Scriptures were published among a rude people, and, if of human origin, probably represent Jehovah as a coarse, rude being; but if those Scriptures were written by Jehovah himself, we shall find the divine nature represented as pure and perfect.

§ 12. *Jehovah is a biped.* According to Genesis (*I. 26. 27*) man was created in Jehovah's "image:" and since man is a biped, Jehovah must be the same. It was the common belief in ancient times that the gods have bodies like men, and if Moses had had a different opinion he would not only have said so in unequivocal language, but he would have carefully avoided any assertion that divinity and humanity are encased in similar "images." Jehovah not only has the biped organization but he also uses his organs as men do. He walked "in the garden in the cool of the day" (*Gen III 8*), selecting an agreeable time for a promenade. He "appeared" to Abraham, and took dinner with the patriarch, the meal being composed of veal, butter and milk. The two had a long conversation, which is preserved word for word. The mortal biped gave some very good advice to the immortal, who was about to "go down and see whether" Sodom and Gomorrah were so wicked as people said (*Gen XVIII*). So too he went "down" to confound the Babelites. He "spoke unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend" (*Ex. XXXIII. 11*), and afterwards he was so gracious as to show to the law-giver his "back-parts" (*Ex. XXXIII. 23*), whereby the latter was no doubt highly edified. As becomes a great potentate Jehovah has reception days, when he welcomes angels who are employed in carrying his messages and attending to his business in places where he cannot attend in person. It was on such a day, "when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them," that the conspiracy was formed between Heaven and Hell for the overthrow of Job (*Job. I. 6*). That Jeho-

vah has a voice is clearly implied by the numerous conversations which he held with Abraham, Moses and others : and we learn that his voice bears a great resemblance to that of man. Samuel, when he heard it, supposed that it was the voice of Eli (1. S. III. 8). The Almighty is not without mechanical skill, for it is written that “unto Adam also and unto his wife did the Lord God make coats of skin and clothed them” (*Gen III. 21*), and as the Father thus tried his hand at tailoring, so the Son subsequently became a carpenter (*Mark VI. 3*). After work, rest is required for Gods as well as men : and so “In six days the Lord made heaven and earth and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed” (*Ex. XXXI. 17*). He dwelt only among his chosen people, never making himself manifest to the Heathens unless when fighting for his followers. Judea was his country, Jerusalem was his city, the Temple was his house, and the Ark was his throne. The Jews exclaimed “Oh thou God that *dwest* between the cherubim” (*Ps. LXXX 1*), which were figures on the ark. Jesus said his Father was in “heaven,” and when he was baptized, the Holy Ghost in the shape of a dove came down from the home of the Three : and the divine Jesus “is gone into heaven, and is on the *right hand* of God” (1. *Pet. III. 22*). So far as we can form an opinion from the language of Genesis, the authors of that book supposed man’s mental constitution to have been originally different from that of Jehovah chiefly in the knowledge of good and evil ; and after that difference had been removed by eating the forbidden fruit, the creator remarked that the mortal had “become as one of us” (*Gen III. 22*). This doctrine that the Deity is similar to man in his material organization, physical form, and his mental constitution, is called Anthropomorphism.

Palfrey\* speaks as follows of the narrative in the eighteenth chapter of Genesis : “Jehovah journeying like an opulent traveller with two attendants, approaches Abraham’s tent in the heat of noon, and accepts his hospitable offers of water for his feet, and refreshment for his hunger. In recompense of this entertainment, he makes a promise to his attentive hosts of that blessing on which their hearts

\* Lectures on Jewish Antiquities. Lec. XXIII.

are most set, while he rebukes Sarah for her incredulity, and the indecorous levity of its expression. The interview over, he proceeds on his way towards Sodom, and tells Abraham, who has respectfully accompanied him, that his purpose is to see whether tidings which have been brought to him of the iniquity of that place, are well founded. Like an obliged and grateful guest, he listens patiently, as they walk, to Abraham's solicitations for mercy for his neighbors. He sends his servants forward to make the scrutiny on which he is intent; and the truth of the unfavorable reports being ascertained by their experience, he proceeds to the accomplishment of his work of vengeance, sparing only the family in which his messengers had found safety and protection. What intelligent friend to the Divine Mission of Moses will be prepared to say that such views of God and of his agency as are presented in these particulars, were set down by him as just representations?"

§ 13. *Jehovah is represented in the Bible as cruel and bloodthirsty.*

The Lord hath sworn that he will have war with Amalek from generation to generation. *Gen. XVII. 16.*

He slew 500,000 men of Israel. *2 Ch. XIII. 15-17.*

He sent a pestilence to destroy 70,000 Israelites. *1 Ch. XXI. 15.*

He vexed Israel with all adversity. *2 Ch. XV. 6.*

He punished his true prophet for being innocently deceived, and permitted the deceiver to go unharmed. *1 K. XIII. 1-25.*

The Samaritan women with child should be ripped up. *Hosea XIII. 16.*

Jehovah destroyed 185,000 men in one night. *2 K. XIX. 35.*

He slew 50,070 Bethshemites for innocently looking into the ark. *2 S. VI. 19.*

He smote Uzzah for piously putting up his hand to save the ark from falling. *2 S. VI. 6, 7.*

He inflicts punishment on the third and fourth generation. *Deut. V. 9;*

"The anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel and he moved David against them to say, 'Go number Israel and Judah'". *2 S. XXIV. 1.* In accordance with

that instigation of Jehovah, David took a census of all the Jews. After he had done so, he came to the conclusion, for reasons not explained, that he had committed a great sin and prayed to the Lord for pardon (2. S. XXIV. 10). The latter however had determined to avail himself of the pretext to gratify his hate against his "peculiar people", and refused to be appeased. Nevertheless he was willing to give David a choice of evils, and sent word to him, saying, "Choose thee either three years famine, or three months to be destroyed before thy foes, while that the sword of thine enemies overtaketh thee, or else three days the sword of the Lord, even the pestilence in the land, and the angel of the Lord destroying throughout all the coasts of Israel". "And David said", "Let me fall now into the hand of the Lord". "So the Lord sent pestilence upon Israel; and there fell of Israel seventy thousand men" (1. Ch. XXI. 12-14). Here is a precious case of barbarity! Jehovah wants an excuse for gratifying his malice against a whole people, and he induces their monarch to do an act which was not evil in itself and which does not appear from the record in the Bible to have been undertaken with any bad motives or to have been executed in an evil or inefficient manner, and when the act is done, although the agent confesses his sin (where none existed), and prays for pardon, the Lord persists in taking vengeance by slaying seventy thousand persons, and inflicting great consequent misery upon their numerous relatives: and all this upon persons who had nothing to do with the alleged sin, which was no sin, and which, even if it had been sin, would properly have been chargeable only to Jehovah, its instigator.

"Israel joined himself to Baal-peor; and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel. And the Lord said unto Moses. 'Take all the heads of the people and hang them up before the Lord against the sun. *that the fierce anger of the Lord may be turned away from Israel.*' And Moses said unto the judges of Israel, 'Slay ye every one his men that were joined unto Baal-peor.' And, behold, one of the children of Israel came and brought unto his brethren a Midianitish woman in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And when Phineas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest saw it, he rose up from among the congregation, and took a



javelin in his hand : And he went after the man of Israel into the tent and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel and the woman, through her belly. So the plague was stayed from the children of Israel." *Num. XXV. 3—13.*

Jehovah appeased by human sacrifice, not only stayed the plague, but he honored Phineas and his seed with everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and his deed was "counted to him for righteousness unto all generations of men forever more". *Ps. CVI. 31.*

"I [Jehovah] gave them [the Jews] also statutes that were not good and judgments whereby they should not live, and I polluted them in their own gifts, in that they caused to pass through the fire all that opened the womb, that I might make them desolate, to the end that they might know that I am the Lord." *Ezek. XX. 25.*

Thus God "caused" the Jews to be guilty of offering human sacrifices !

"Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, [to Saul, King of the Jews] 'I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt [400 years previously]. Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not : but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass. \* \* \* And Saul smote the Amalekites. \* \* \* But Saul and the people spared Agag [the king] and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs. \* \* \* Then came the word of the Lord to Samuel saying, 'It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king ; for he is turned back from following me and hath not performed my commandments' [in saving Agag and the cattle]. \* \* \* And Saul said unto Samuel \* \* \* 'The people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the thing which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the Lord, thy God in Gilgal. \* \* \* I have sinned ; for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and thy words ; because I feared the people and obeyed their voice. Now therefore I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me that I may worship the Lord.' And Samuel said unto Saul, 'I will not return with thee ; for thou hast rejected the Word of the Lord and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king over Israel.' \* \* \* And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal." *1 S. XV. 2—33.*

"And the Lord said, 'Who shall entice Ahab, King of Israel, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead ?' And one spake, saying after this manner, and another after that manner. Then came there out a spirit and stood before the Lord, and said, 'I will

entice him.' And the Lord said unto him, 'Wherewith?' And he said, 'I will go out, and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' And the Lord said, 'Thou shalt entice him, and thou shalt also prevail; go out and do even so.'" 2 *Ch. XVIII.* 19—21.

The seventh chapter of the book of Joshua contains an interesting story of Achan. This individual was a soldier in the gang of robbers or fillibusters, with which Joshua conquered Jericho. Contrary to the orders of his leader, Achan kept some of the spoil of the city, for the prophet had ordered that not only all the men, women, and children in the city should be slaughtered, but that the property should be destroyed, and nothing kept as spoil. This was Jehovistic morality in early ages, and although we should consider such conduct highly barbarous now, perhaps it was very proper and humane then. Well! nobody noticed at the time that Achan took of the forbidden spoil; but not long afterwards, an army, sent by Joshua to treat the city of Ai to the same benevolence shown to Jericho, was defeated. Joshua was greatly afflicted at the news, and began to think that Jehovah was not so valuable a friend as he had once supposed. He lamented that his tribe had followed the directions of the Lord in entering Canaan, and exclaimed, "Alas! Oh Lord God, wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites, to destroy us"? God Almighty replied, not without indignation: "Get thee up! Wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned", Achan actually took several pieces of jewelry and other trifles at the destruction of Jericho, and now has them in his possession. Now, therefore, let him "be burned with fire, he, and all that he hath"; and "neither will I be with you any more, unless ye destroy the accursed thing from among you". Thereupon, Achan, "and his sons, and daughters", (what business had they to be a sinner's children?) "were stoned with stones", and "burned with fire". This act of humanity and piety having been faithfully performed, "the Lord turned from the fierceness of his anger", and to show that he was really propitiated, he directed Joshua to send another army against Ai, which he did, and the result was the destruction of Ai, and the massacre of all its inhabitants, who were "utterly destroyed"

“ All the spoil of these cities [the capitals of five kingdoms hostile to the Hebrews] and the cattle, the children of Israel took for a prey unto themselves; but every man they smote with the edge of the sword, until they had destroyed them, neither left they any to breathe. As the Lord commanded Moses, his servant, so did Moses command Joshua, and so did Joshua; he left nothing undone of all that the Lord commanded Moses. \* \* \* \* There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, save the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon; all other they took in battle. For it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favor, but that he might destroy them, as the Lord commanded Moses”. *Joshua, XI. 14—20.*

While David reigned, a three-years' famine came upon the land of Israel, and oppressed the people sorely. The royal prophet, knowing that not a sparrow falls, except by the will of Jehovah, who rules the whole universe by the immediate exercise of his will, applied to the Lord to know why this famine had been inflicted upon the land. The Almighty replied, that it was because Saul had oppressed the Gibeonites, with whom the Israelites had entered into a treaty of friendship in the days of Joshua (*Josh. IX. 3. 16*). Saul's motive in this oppression was “zeal to the children of Israel and Judah” (*2. S. XXI. 2*). But the Lord was highly dissatisfied with that mode of showing zeal, and was determined to have revenge. Instead of taking it, however, upon Saul, or upon his people during the lifetime of that monarch, Jehovah waited until many years after his death, and then took vengeance, not upon the descendants, or friends of Saul, but upon the whole nation. David, being a prophet, understood that he should wash the hands of Israel free from this stain, and for that purpose he sent asking the Gibeonites, what atonement they would have for the injustice wrought upon them by Saul. They replied that they would be satisfied, if David should deliver to them seven of the sons of Saul to be hanged. David, without hesitation, complied by giving them two sons and five grandsons of Saul. These sons were the brothers of David's wife, Michal, and the five grand-sons of Saul were sons of Michal by another husband. Thus David gave up two brothers-in-law, and five step-sons to the hangman; but Jehovah appears to have been satisfied with the atonement, for after

the sacrifice he "was entreated for the land" (2 S. XXI. 14), and he put a stop to the famine.

The XXXIst chapter of Numbers contains an account of a war between Israel and Midian, commenced by the order of Jehovah, who ordered his chosen people to take vengeance on the heathen tribe. The Jewish army invaded the Midian territory, "slew all the males", "burned all their cities", and "took all the women of Midian captives with their little ones". No sooner had Moses learned that the army had spared the women, than he "was wroth with the officers of the host", and forthwith issued his orders as follows: "Kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him. But all the women-children that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves". Of women that had not known man by lying with him, there were thirty-two thousand, and of these "the Lord's tribute" was thirty-two persons. "Bishop Watson, in his *Apology for the Bible*, says: 'I see nothing in this proceeding but good policy, combined with mercy'! This remark is followed by some ill-advised declamation. The coarse writer (Paine), against whom he professes to argue, had said that the Midianitish virgins 'were consigned to debauchery by the order of Moses'. 'Prove this', says the Bishop, 'and I will allow that the Bible is what you call it, —a book of lies, and wickedness, and blasphemy'. The promised concession is equally liberal and injudicious. As a matter of fair statement, the word 'debauchery' is objectionable from its association with modern manners and sentiments. But if we receive the Pentateuch as true, the difference between the actual lot of the Midianitish virgins, and what it is represented to have been by the use of that word, is very narrow and unsafe ground on which to peril the whole credibility of revealed religion.

"It may be said, in defense of the Jews, that their conduct toward the Midianites was not more barbarous than that of other ancient nations in their wars with each other. This defense, if the massacre, according to the account, had not been perpetrated by the express order of Moses, is in opposition to the more humane purpose of the army and its leaders. As the case now stands, this apology implies the

proposition that Moses was commissioned by God to sanction and perpetuate the barbarism of his age".\*

The following are instructions given by Jehovah to guide his "holy people" in conduct toward heathen nations.

"When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it. And it shall be if it make thee answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be, that all the people that is found therein, shall be tributaries unto thee, and they shall serve thee. And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it. And when the Lord thy God, hath delivered it into thy hands, then thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword. *But the women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoils thereof, shalt thou take unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the Lord, thy God, hath given thee.* Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities which are very far off from thee which are not of the cities of these nations [the heathen occupants of the promised land]. But of the cities of these people, which the Lord, thy God, doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save nothing alive that breatheth." *Deut. XX. 10-16.*

The land which was to be treated in this style by a band of barbarians from the wilderness, under divine command, was already highly civilized, with large cities "walled up to heaven," and the land was highly cultivated, "flowing with milk and honey." *Ex. III. 8. Num. XIII. 27, 28. Deut. VIII. 7-9, IX. 1.*

§ 14. I know of only one noteworthy attempt to justify Jehovah for such deeds of cold-blooded cruelty as are recorded of him in this section in selections from his own autobiography. Watson, in replying to the strictures of Paine upon the command for the destruction of all the males and married women of a heathen tribe, says: "You think it repugnant to his [God's] moral justice, that he should doom to destruction the crying or smiling infants of the Canaanites. Why do you not maintain it to be repugnant to his moral justice, that he should suffer crying or smiling infants to be swallowed up by an earthquake, drowned by an inundation, consumed by a fire, starved by a famine, or destroyed by a pestilence? The Word of God is in perfect harmony with his work; crying or smiling infants are subjected to death in both. We believe that the

\* NORTON.

earth, at the express command of God opened her mouth, and swallowed up Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, with their wives, their sons, and their little ones. This you esteem so repugnant to God's moral justice, that you spurn as spurious, the book in which the circumstance is related. When Catania, Lima and Lisbon were severally destroyed by earthquakes, men, with their wives and their sons, and their little ones were swallowed up alive,—why do you not spurn as spurious the book of Nature in which this fact is certainly written ; and from the perusal of which you infer the moral justice of God ?” This argument implies that Jehovah is the author of evil, a doctrine which Christian philosophers do not assert. But if Jehovah be the author of evil, can he be worthy of worship ? Shall we adore in a God the same act which we punish in men with death ? When a man sets a ship on fire and causes the death of several hundred persons by burning and drowning, he is a horrible wretch, against whom all the world is in arms ; but if Jehovah strikes another ship with lightning, and burns it up, causing equal misery and loss of life, it is all right.

§ 15. *The Bible represents Jehovah as partial.* He selected the Jews to be his favorite nation ; he gave them laws and rulers, and cared for their welfare, while he was utterly careless for the fate of other nations.

“Thou [Israel] art an holy people unto the Lord thy God, the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are on the face of the earth.” *Deut. VII. 6.*

“I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God.” *Ex. VI. 7.*

“Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation.” *Ex. XIX. 6.*

Jehovah hath chosen the Jews “for his inheritance.” *Ps. XXXIII. 12.*

“Ye shall not eat of anything that dieth of itself ; thou shalt give it to the stranger that is in thy gates that he may eat it ; or thou mayst sell it unto an alien.” *Deut. XIV. 21.*

“Thou shalt have all the heathen in derision.” *Ps. LIX. 8.*

“I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance.” *Ps. II. 8.*

§ 16. *The Bible represents Jehovah as ignorant and weak.*

Jehovah tried to find out what was in Hezekiah's heart.  
2 *Ch. XXXII.* 31.

He sent to have the length and breadth of Jerusalem measured with a tape. *Zech. II.* 2.

He went to Balaam for information. *Num. XXII.* 9.

He inquired for information. 2 *Ch. XVIII.* 19.

He could not conquer chariots with scythes. *Jud. I.* 19.

“And it came to pass by the way that the Lord *met* him [Moses] and *sought* to kill him” (*Ex. IV.* 24), but as it appears, did not succeed, for Moses lived forty years or more afterwards. I wonder whether it was a fair fight. Perhaps Moses took “a foul hold.”

Some years after Jehovah had selected Abraham to be the father of the chosen people, and had notified him of the choice, and had repeatedly spoken to him about that and other matters, after Isaac was born in accordance with the divine promise and in violation of all the rules of probability, after the Divine Majesty had repeatedly appeared in person to the eyes of the great patriarch, after the memorable destruction of Sodom and many other striking exhibitions of divine power, the Lord was still in doubt whether Abraham really believed in Him; and, to satisfy Himself, He ordered Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac. Abraham did not stop to parley as he had previously done with success in pleading for Sodom, but he prepared the altar, tied his son hand and foot, and raised the sacrificial knife to let out the blood of the intended victim, when the Lord, satisfied that Abraham was in earnest, revoked the order of the sacrifice, saying, “*now* I know that thou fearest God, *seeing* that thou hast not withheld thy son” (*Gen. XXII.* 1-14). It is singular that God did not know it before.

“Thou shalt remember all the way, which the Lord thy God, led thee these forty years in the wilderness to humble thee, and to *prove* thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep his commandments.” *Deut. VIII.* 2.

§ 17. *The Father of the Universe is depicted in the Hebrew Scriptures as changeable and frequently repentant.*

Jehovah wavered in his intention. *Num. XXXIII.* 55, 56.

He repented having made Saul king (1 *S.* XV. 10, 11, 35). He had previously given Saul another heart and promised to be with him. 1 *S.* X. 7, 9.

The Lord repented of the evil he was about to do to Jerusalem. 2 *S.* XXIV. 16.

He was grieved for the misery inflicted by himself on Israel. *Jud.* X. 16.

He repented of the evil he had done to Israel. 1 *Ch.* XXI. 14, 15.

He repented of the evil he was about to do to Israel. *Jer.* XXVI. 13.

“And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.” *Gen.* VI. 6.

“And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim and Ashteroth, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the Lord and served him not. And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hands of the Philistines, and into the hands of the children of Ammon. And that year they vexed and oppressed the children of Israel eighteen years, all the children of Israel that were on the other side Jordan, in the land of the Amorites, which is in Gilead. Moreover, the children of Ammon passed over Jordan to fight also against Judah and against Benjamin, and against the house of Ephraim; so that Israel was sore distressed. And the children of Israel cried unto the Lord saying, ‘We have sinned against thee, both because we have forsaken our God, and also served Baalim.’ And the Lord said unto the children of Israel, ‘Did not I deliver you from the Egyptians, and from the Amorites, from the children of Ammon and from the Philistines? The Zidonians also and the Amalekites and the Moabites did oppress you; and ye cried to me and I delivered you out of their hand. Yet ye have forsaken me and served other gods; wherefore I will deliver you no more. Go and cry unto the gods whom ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation.’ And the children of Israel said unto the Lord, ‘We have sinned; do thou unto us, whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; deliver us only, we pray thee this day.’ And they put away the strange gods from among them, and served the Lord; and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel.” *Jud.* X. 6–16. And the Lord raise up Jephthah who delivered them. *Jud.* XI. 29, 32.

Hezekiah was “sick unto death”, and the Lord sent word to him, saying, “Let thine house in order, for thou shalt die.” Hezekiah demurred saying, “Remember Lord,



I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart." And Jehovah was turned from his purpose and sent word to Hezekiah, "I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears ; behold I will add unto thy days fifteen years." *Is. XXXVIII.* 1—5.

"And the Lord said, 'Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me : and if not, I will know ! And the men [Jehovah's angelic spies] turned their faces from thence and went toward Sodom ; but Abraham stood yet before the Lord. And Abraham drew near, and said, 'Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked ? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city ; wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein ? That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked ; and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee ; shall not the judge of all the earth do right ?' And the Lord said, 'If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.' And Abraham answered and said, 'Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes ; peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous ; wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five ?' And He said, 'If I find forty and five, I will not destroy it.' And he spoke to Him yet again and said, 'Peradventure there shall be forty found there.' And He said, 'I will not do it for forty's sake.' And he said unto Him, 'Oh, let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak ; peradventure there shall thirty be found there.' And He said, 'I will not do it, if I find thirty there.' And he said, 'Behold now I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord ; peradventure there shall be twenty found there.' And He said, 'I will not destroy it for twenty's sake.' And he said, 'Oh, let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once, peradventure ten shall be found there.' And He said, 'I will not destroy it for ten's sake.' And the Lord went His way as soon as he had left communing with Abraham ; and Abraham returned unto his place." *Gen. XVIII.* 20—33.

In old times Jehovah was much more sociable with men than he is now-a-days, as the above narrative may testify. He seems to have taken the advice and rebukes administered to him by the mortal biped in a very christian spirit. The preceding and the two succeeding extracts contain the records of the most remarkable confabs which he ever held with men.

“And the Lord said unto Moses, ‘Go, get thee down: for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves: they have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, these be thy Gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up, out of the land of Egypt’. And the Lord said unto Moses, ‘I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiff-necked people: now, therefore, let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation’. And Moses besought the Lord, his God, and said ‘Lord, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt, with great power, and with a mighty hand’. Wherefore should the Egyptian speak and say, ‘For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth.’ Turn from thy fierce wrath and *repent of this evil* against thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swearest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of, will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it forever. And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.” *Ex. XXXII. 7-14.*

Moses who was learned in all the wisdom of Egypt was a sage counsellor, and his superiority to Jehovah, who had probably had little intercourse with polite society, is evident from this story. Nevertheless it appears from the following narrative that the Lord did not profit much by the good advice of his Prime Minister.

“And the Lord said unto Moses, ‘How long will this people provoke me? And how long will it be ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have showed them? I will smite them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and will make of thee a greater nation and mightier than they’. And Moses said unto the Lord, ‘Then the Egyptians shall hear it. (for thou broughtest up this people in thy might from among them); and they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land: for they have heard that thou, O Lord, art among this people, that thou Lord, art seen face to face, and that thy cloud standeth over them, and that thou goest before them by day-time in a pillar of cloud, and in a pillar of fire by night. Now if thou shalt kill all this people as one man, then the nations which have heard the fame of thee, will speak saying, Behold the Lord was not able to bring this people into the land which he swore unto them, therefore he hath slain them in the wilderness. And now, I beseech thee, let the power of my Lord be great, accord-

ing as thou hast spoken, saying The Lord is long-suffering and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation. Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people, according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people from Egypt, even until now'. And the Lord said 'I have pardoned according to thy word''. *Numbers XIV. 11-20.*

§ 18. Is the reader not satisfied that Jehovah was a barbarous divinity? Was he not a horrible divinity, suited to the ideas of a superstitious, semi-barbarous people, filled with presumption that they alone had favor with God, and rights among men? If a powerful, unscrupulous, tyrannical priesthood had desired to fill their followers with hatred and contempt for all foreigners, could they have devised a more efficient means for attaining their end, than that of establishing the worship of a deity with such a character as the Hebrew Jehovah? Reader, is he your God? Do you worship him? Do you believe the quotations, which I have made in this chapter from the Bible, to have been written originally at his dictation? Do you think the words and deeds, ascribed to him in those quotations, to be consistent with the attributes of perfect love, mercy, justice, and wisdom? Or if you reject such portions of the Bible, why not reject all of it? How can one portion of it be inspired, and another portion be not only uninspired, but written under the influence of baleful superstitions? If you deny the truth of Moses when he described himself as more wise and merciful than Jehovah, (as he does virtually in the last quotation made) how can you accept with full faith the story of Adam's fall, written by that same Moses? And if you reject the myth of the fall by Adam, how were you saved by Jesus? And how could Jesus have possessed more than human wisdom, when he recognized the immediate divine authority of Moses?

There are some passages (comparatively few in the Old Testament), which represent Jehovah as just, merciful and loving; but they are contradicted by those quoted, and by hundreds of others, and indeed by the general spirit of the law. The deity of the New Testament as compared with the Mosaic divinity, is a pattern of mildness and good manners in his ordinary conduct, but his barbarous

character is evident from his condemnation of all, who do not worship him, to infinite and eternal suffering in a lake of fire and brimstone. Paul says "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (*Heb. X. 31.*). He might have added "It is a fearful thing to fall into the jaws of a blood-thirsty and infuriated Tiger".

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## CHAPTER IV.

### JESUS NOT A PERFECT MORAL HERO.

"You will next read the New Testament. It is the history of a personage called Jesus. Keep in your eye the opposite pretensions; *first*, of those who say he was begotten by God, born of a virgin, suspended and reversed the laws of nature at will, and ascended bodily into heaven; and *secondly*, of those who say he was a man of illegitimate birth, of a benevolent heart, enthusiastic mind, who set out without pretensions, ended in believing them, and was punished capitally for *sedition*, by being gibbeted according to the Roman law.—THOMAS JEFFERSON.

§ 19. The Bible represents Christ, the alleged Savior and great teacher of mankind, as a character with little title to our reverence or admiration. Although nominally a God, he was in every essential respect a man, and and as such he must be judged. If the Christian doctrines be true, Jesus, whether human or divine, is, in either case, the great teacher, the representative on earth of the Deity, and he should be our greatest and most admirable character—a hero in every true sense of the word—pure and great above all other men. This purity and greatness should be not only existent but also perceptible. Unless such qualities were exercised, they would be of no benefit; and if they were exercised the inspired writers of his life must have known, and should have made a record of their manifestations. The advocates of Christianity boast loudly of the pure and exalted character of their Redeemer, as

shown in the history of his life, and point to his words and deeds as greater taken together than the words and deeds of any other man ever were or ever can be—as in themselves conclusive evidence of his divine mission. Infidels, while denying all claims of the Bible to inspiration, and asserting that Jesus was a man like other men, have generally admitted that he was a very great and good man. Such men as Hennell, Franklin, Strauss, Rousseau, Goethe, Voltaire, Paine, Wieland, Byron, Rammohun Roy, Emerson and Carlyle, have paid high tributes to his moral character, some of them saying that he never had an equal among men. Almost, if not entirely alone, in taking ground against such great authority, yet in justice to the subject, and to my own views, I must contend that an examination of the record will show that Jesus exhibited no high talent, or heroic character, but on the contrary will show that his doctrines were all borrowed, that his moral teachings were in many important particulars unsound and defective, that his conduct was frequently that of a weak and timorous man, that he often prevaricated in regard to his doctrine, that he adopted ancient superstitions, and that not Jesus, but Paul is the hero of the New Testament, the author of the books, the teacher of the doctrine and the founder of the Christian Churches now in existence.

§ 20. We must consider the overthrow of the exclusive rude, tyrannical and form-bound creed of Moses, and the establishment on its ruins of the mild, comparatively liberal and universal Christian religion as a blessing to humanity, more particularly since that religion, under the concurrence of a multitude of causes, has been adopted by a multitude of nations who were previously under the dominion of worse forms of faith. Jesus was undeniably the occasion of that reform, and while engaged in the labors which aided to bring it about, he was put to death. There is a true nobility in working for a good cause, with a clear comprehension of its goodness, and from pure motives; there is a high heroism in the continuation of such work, when faithfulness to it is threatened with death; and moral greatness rises nearly if not quite to its highest possible manifestation in the wise, enlightened and prudent man who unflinchingly faces and meets death rather than fail in what he considers

his duty to truth. Jesus was executed ; he was executed because his conduct or his doctrines were obnoxious to persons in power ; and we have no reason to question the purity of his motives. If his doctrines were enlightened and good, and if his death was caused by his persistence in teaching them, after he foresaw the danger of death, we cannot deny our warm admiration to him. High heroism requires, as I understand it, a large degree of both intellect and moral purpose. Great genius without goodness, and great goodness without perspicuous sense are both, to some extent, unadmirable. The good purposes, and the great devoutness of Jesus I admit, but I deny his claim to high heroism, because his mind was narrow, and many of his teachings false—as I hope to prove presently.

If it be plain that Jesus sought to overthrow the Jewish law, that he sought to establish upon its ruins, a permanent, universal and form-free religion,—if he foresaw and sought the development of Christianity as interpreted of late years by Channing, Palfrey, Arnold, Milman, Morell, Schleiermacher and hundreds of other good, great, and in every respect admirable men—or even if he foresaw and sought only the development of his religion as illustrated in the history of Christendom for the last eighteen centuries, then we can not for one moment deny his *heroic* merit. But what evidence is there that he had such foresight and purposes ? It is true that, according to the Evangelists, he used many expressions implying the overthrow of the Mosaic law, and the adoption in its place, of a universal faith. He said the “law was until John” the Baptist, thus giving his hearers to understand, that the old Jewish law was of no force subsequent to the preaching of John. He said that the man who should follow him, renounce pecuniary wealth and observe the ten commandments, would be perfectly righteous. He said that the whole law consisted in doing to others as we would have them do to ourselves. He declared “Not that which goeth into the mouth of a man defileth, but that which cometh out.” He made a practice of speaking with great disrespect of the Scribes and Pharisees—by whom he meant the Levites (the heirs of Jehovah’s ministry forever, according to the Mosaic law), and he said, a man could not enter the king-

dom of Heaven unless he were more righteous than they ; and he declared that no man born of woman, was greater than John the Baptist who styled the Levites “ a generation of vipers ” and paid no regard to the Mosaic ceremonial. Finally it is reported that Jesus, in his last charge to his disciples, directed them to preach the gospel to “ all nations.”

If we admit these statements to be true, we must also admit that Jesus intended to overthrow the Mosaic Law : but unless they be proved to be true, we have no reason to believe that he had any such intention. By examining the New Testament, we find them to be contradicted, in a great many passages—the contradiction being absolutely irreconcilable ; and the weight of the passages and inferences being entirely against the above statements. But we find that Jesus admitted the inspiration of the Hebrew Scriptures ; he declared he had not come to destroy the law and the prophets, of which every jot and tittle should be fulfilled ; that he spoke approvingly of sacrifices (*Mat. V. 23*), and of fasting (*Mat. VI. 18*) ; that when accused of violating the Sabbath, he did not deny the sanctity of the day, but pleaded in justification that his actions had not violated its holiness ; that he spoke of Jerusalem as the Holy City, and the Temple as the House of his Father ; that he directed a cleansed leper to show himself to the priests, and “ offer the gift that Moses commanded for a testimony unto them ” (*Mat. VIII. 4*) ; that he said the priests sat in “ Moses’ seat ” and *directed the people to obey them* (*Mat. XXIII. 3, 4.*) ; that when a Gentile woman addressed him, he repulsed her rudely, and said his mission was only to the Jews (*Mat. XVI. 23*) ; that he ordered his apostles to preach to the children of Israel only (*Mat. X. 5, 6.*) ; that he never preached to the Gentiles, and had no Gentile among his apostles, and none among his disciples. Here are two classes of statements entirely irreconcilable, reported by the same authorities, and if considered by themselves, of equal probability. We must then look to the context, and the history of the Christian Gospel and Church, for additional light, and we shall find much testimony, going to show that Jesus was not an enemy of the ceremonial observances of the Mosaic law, but that he taught his followers to believe that sacrifices, circumcision,

and the blood of Abraham were absolutely necessary as passports to divine favor.

In the *first* place, we must remember that the early Christians were divided into two classes of the Jew and Gentile converts ; and that many of the Jewish Christians were "Judaizing" in their creed ; that is to say, they asserted that Jesus had not abrogated any portion of the Mosaic law, nor denied the superior merit of the blood of Abraham. The Gentile Christians said that the blood of Abraham had no preference before God, and that all the law of Moses, save the commandments was set aside. The New Testament was selected by councils composed entirely of the Gentile converts, and of course they would not be disposed to adopt a gospel denying their own admissibility into Heaven. There were early gospels current among the Judaizing sects, but they are now lost, and we do not know their contents. We have no record of the history of the early Christian churches in Jerusalem or Judea ; and, so far as we know, there is no church now existing, which derives its doctrines from them. Thus we derive all our information of the teaching and history of Jesus, from a sect which was engaged in a dispute in regard to the nature of his doctrines.

*Secondly* : "Jesus \* faithfully observed the forms of the Jewish law" ; and when he was accused of violating it, he always justified himself by acknowledging its validity, but urging that his act was not in violation of it. Now, such conduct is entirely inconsistent with the supposition that he considered the ceremonial law to be a mere mummery. The earnest religious reformer, who seeks to establish a new faith, and believes the ceremonies of the old faith, which stands in his way, to be useless observances, will declare himself their bitter enemy ; for, indeed, he must wean the people from them, before he can make way for his new doctrine. He who directly or indirectly countenances a religious mummery, gives aid and comfort to the church and creed with which it is connected.

*Thirdly* : The twelve apostles who had been taught and ordained by Jesus, complied during his life and after his death with the ceremonial commands of the Mosaic law,

\* NEANDER. Planting of the Christian Church. Book, III. Ch. III.



and they had no thought of recognizing any one as a Christian who should neglect them. Some years after the crucifixion (eight years according to the chronology in the Bible published by the American Bible Society), Peter, the chief of the apostles, made a visit to Cesarea (*Acts X. 24—48*), where he fell in with some Gentiles, who believed, having been converted probably by Paul. He delivered a sermon to them, beginning “of a truth, *I perceive* that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation, he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him”. The whole expression shows that the doctrine was a new one to him. When Peter returned to Jerusalem, “the apostles and brethren that were in Judea”, having heard of his keeping company with uncircumcised Gentiles, eating with them, and even recognizing them as brethren in Christ, were so much alarmed at his unheard-of conduct, that they called him to a public account for it (*Acts XI. 1—18*). He confessed the charges against him, and made a speech in self-defense. And how did he justify himself? By appealing to the notorious doctrine of the Church? Not at all. By appealing to the words of Jesus, as authority for admitting uncircumcised Gentiles into the Church? Never a word of it. He did not recall to the mind of his hearers any teachings of their divine master in regard to the equality of all men before God, to the absurdity of all ceremonies, the all importance of form-free love of God and man. No! These new principles he had learned not from Christ, not from his brother apostles, not from the church. How then did he learn them? He learned them from a dream—from a dream which he had all to himself a few weeks previously. While he was in Joppa, just before going to Cesarea, he had a vision, in which a cloth was let down from heaven, containing a number of clean and unclean animals, and a voice ordered him to slay and eat. Peter, in vision, accustomed to communication in that way with the heavenly powers, and knowing Jehovah's voice, with a very commendable degree of prudence refused, and said: “Not so, Lord, for nothing common or unclean hath ever at any time entered into my mouth.” But the voice answered me [Peter], again from heaven: ‘What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common’. And this was done three times;

and all were drawn up again into heaven". That was how Peter learned that circumcision was bad, and pork good. "The apostles and brethren that were in Judea", believed his story of the vision, and received it as a complete justification; but they were nevertheless astonished at it, and exclaimed "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life"! Previous to that time, they did not even know that Gentiles could get to heaven at all! Such is the inevitable conclusion from the whole narrative. Then Jesus never taught his apostles that his purpose was to overthrow the Mosaic law, and establish in its place a universal religion. He never taught that the Gentiles should be admitted into the church, never taught that they should be saved without circumcision.

*Fourthly:* The first and chief Christian missionary to the Gentiles, the missionary who claimed them as his exclusive field, was Paul, who received none of his teaching from Jesus, and was a bitter enemy, a savage persecutor of the Christians until two years after the crucifixion. Peter said "God made a choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the Gospel and believe" (*Acts XV. 7*). In that phrase Peter recognized no associate as chosen by God to aid him in converting the heathen. But what does Paul say to that? He says: "The Gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the Gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter" (*Gal. II. 7*). He claimed that the field of the uncircumcised was his own exclusively. And how was it that, if Peter was chosen by God as apostle to the Gentiles, that he had no vision until after Paul was converted, and had preached to the heathen for six years? (*Acts IX. 20—X. 20*). Peter's vision was a great waste of dream-stuff; he might have obtained all his information from Paul, who had made that same doctrine common about the country for years. Paul was proud of the originality of his doctrine, and he says "I neither received it from man, neither was I taught it, but by the [special and secret] revelation of Jesus Christ" *Gal. I. 12*.

*Fifthly:* All the Christians in Jerusalem a quarter of a century after the death of Jesus, were "zealous" observers

of the Jewish law (*Acts XXI. 20*). “The \* Jews and Christians united in the worship of the temple until the destruction of the city. The evidences of this fact are to be found not only in the New Testament, but it is clear that there must have been a continual war between Levites and the followers of Jesus, if the latter had neglected the service of the temple, of which we have no rumor”. “The Jewish Christians † from their first appearance as a heretical sect [that is as I understand it from the time that Paul began to preach the neglect of the Mosaic ceremonies] did not regard the books of the New Testament as *sacred* books. Their sacred books consisted of the Old Testament of which they considered the canon as closed. They rejected the epistles of St. Paul, not because they doubted their genuineness, but believing them to be genuine, and viewing him as an apostate from their law. No Gospel, except that of Matthew, nor any other books of the New Testament, was in common use among them. They did not, like the vast majority of Christians, regard Jesus as the founder of a new religion, but only as a restorer of their old religion to its original purity. To think otherwise was in their opinion ‘to apostatize from Moses’ (*Acts XXI. 21*), as St. Paul had taught his disciples to do. In acknowledging Jesus to be the Messiah, they regarded him as the Messiah of his followers among the nation, and of such others as might, upon certain terms, be associated with them; and probably thought much less of what he had done or taught, than of what he would hereafter do for them at his expected re-appearance upon earth. According to Jerome, they were anticipating, even in his time, the worldly delights of the coming millenium”. “At the end of the second century, the Jewish Christians, in general, with, perhaps, some individual exceptions, were regarded as heretics under the name of Ebionites”, ‡ and before the end of the fifth century, that sect had disappeared, and with it the remnants of the Jewish churches (if that name could be given them) established by Jesus and his apostles. From first to last we find these Jewish Christians differing in doctrine

\* SCHLEIERMACHER. *Geschichte der Christlichen Kirche.*

† NORTON. *Genuineness of the Gospels.*

‡ The Same.

from Paul ; and when we consider the great improbability that they should change their faith, while they must have known that it was rapidly gaining ground elsewhere, we must conclude that their creed was the same at the end of the second century as in the middle of the first.

*Sixthly* : Jesus selected twelve apostles—one for each Jewish tribe and none for the Gentiles ; and he promised them that “ When the son of man shall sit on the throne of glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel ” (*Mat. XIX. 28*). No place is left here for a thirteenth apostle, nor is any account taken of those whom he should convert.

*Seventhly* : Jesus did not teach the doctrines which have been made the corner-stones of the new faith built upon the ruins of the Mosaic ceremonies. If he had intended to teach a new religion he would certainly have used the words “ new covenant ” or some equivalent, but that was left for the author of *Hebrews*. If Jesus had intended to teach that his religion should be universal, he must have said something of the expiatory virtue of his blood, as sufficing to wash out the sin of Adam, but he said nothing of that kind. He never used the words “ expiate ”, “ expiation ”, “ atone ”, “ atonement ”, “ redeem ” or “ redemption ”, or any equivalents. He never used any words implying that by Adam’s sin, men were condemned to hell. He knew very well that the Jews understood the punishment of Adam to have been confined to this world alone, and yet he never corrected the opinion, which according to Paul is entirely erroneous. It was because all men were condemned to hell for Adam’s sin that salvation became possible, but Jesus never hinted the possibility of such salvation. Now, surely modesty could not have prevented Jesus from teaching the main points of the religion which his followers were to believe, neither could he have omitted such teaching out of mere neglect nor if he had taught it, could his biographers have failed to record it : therefore we must conclude that the present Christian doctrines of salvation and atonement formed no part of his teaching. It was by virtue of the atonement that salvation was placed within the reach of all men, according to the present Christian doctrine, but Jesus taught nothing of that kind to his

apostles. A child twelve years of age, could now teach Peter and John in the fundamental doctrines of Christianity ! Such a child could teach even Jesus himself, for when the latter was asked by a young man what he should do that he might have "eternal life" (*Mat XIX. 16-22*), he gave an answer which entirely ignored the chief truths of his Gospel as now taught. The twelve apostles might well distrust Paul when he taught doctrines which, as he pretended, were revealed to him by Jesus, and which were irreconcilable with the doctrines which Jesus had taught while on earth. Besides if he had seen fit to make a subsequent revelation he was bound in honor and policy to make it to them, at least as soon as to any one else, more especially after he had promised them that he would "guide them into all truth" (*John XVI. 13*), and that the Holy Ghost should teach them "all things" (*John XIV. 26*). Neither did Jesus use the words "Incarnation" or "Trinity", or any equivalent words, signifying doctrines entirely irreconcilable with the Mosaic theology. When we consider these things, we must conclude either that the Christianity of the present age is not the teaching of Jesus, or else that his teaching is not truly represented in the four Gospels. It is clear to any reasonable man that the teachings of Jesus, as given by the Evangelists, could not be made the basis of a separate and durable church, and his teachings would have expired with the Ebionites, if Paul had not seen fit to take them as a foundation for a great scheme which proved successful beyond example.

The weight of this evidence appears to me irresistible. Jesus respected and taught his disciples to respect the ceremonial law of Moses : he thought that Israelitish blood, circumcision, sacrifices, and fasting were necessary as means of attaining the favor of Jehovah : and he did not intend or conceive the establishment of a universal religion, in which all men should be considered as equal before God. His highest ambition was either to found a new Jewish sect, or to lead his people in a revolt against the Romans, and to discover which of these was his purpose is now impossible for want of information. In no case does his teaching, so far as considered in itself, entitle him to our admiration as a great moral hero.

§ 21. It will hereafter in the course of this work (Ch. XVI.) be conclusively shown that there is no important original doctrine among the teachings of Jesus ; and it has never been asserted that he furnished any new light to the understanding, or produced any new evidence of the dogmas which he taught at second hand. What proof have the Christians to-day of the truth of the immortality of the soul, more than Socrates had? Not a particle, except such as they get by shutting the eyes of their reason and opening the mouth of their credulity. The morality of the Bible is properly the subject of a separate chapter, (see Ch. XV), but a few remarks may be made here on the more prominent doctrines of Jesus. Many of his virtues were of a monkish cast. He taught humility, charity, love to all men, utter neglect of pecuniary wealth, passive submission to evil and oppression, and fasting (*Mat. VI. 18*). He never directed his disciples to marry, or to labor, or to exercise that prudence in pecuniary matters which is necessary for the welfare of the family. He even went so far as to recommend self-castration. He neglected to teach much which a great moralist should have taught : he never condemned polygamy and slavery, those "twin-relics of barbarism", he never taught the rights of self-government and religious toleration : indeed, he never hinted that men had any inalienable rights. He never recognized, directly or indirectly, the great maxims of political, social and religious freedom and equality, on which much of our modern morality is based.

§ 22. The conduct of Jesus was frequently that of a weak and timorous man. The Jews sought repeatedly to kill him, and when he had an opportunity he as often fled and concealed himself (*John VIII. 59, XI. 54*), exhibiting little of that heroism which taught Socrates to refuse to escape when his friends had bribed the jailor. He spent little time in the cities, having gone to Jerusalem only three or four times in his life, and having remained there only a few days at a time. He was unable to make converts in the towns, and did most of his teaching among the rude Galileans. He even prohibited his disciples to reveal his claim to the Messiahship (*Mat. XVI. 20—28. Mark. VIII. 30*). When the Roman soldiers at last arrested

him, they found him if not secreted, at least on a solitary portion of the Mount of Olives. They required a guide not only to point out the place, but also the person. So little was this king of the Jews known, that the Romans were compelled to pay one of his apostles to turn traitor and act as guide.

The near approach of death was so fearful to him that he was quite unmanned. He prayed, " 'Father, if thou be willing, *remove* this cup from me ; nevertheless, not my will but thine be done.' " And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an *agony* he prayed earnestly ; and his sweat was it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (*Luke XXII. 42, 44.*) Is that the conduct of a great man ? How different the deportment of Socrates who drank the fatal hemlock in the midst of his disciples, not sweating, and praying in agony, but apparently the happiest and most composed of the whole company ! *His* personal character was such that his friends were never more attentive and reverential than after his arrest, while the followers of Jesus with the exception of one or two fled at the approach of misfortune and never went near him, until after his crucifixion. Socrates died contentedly with no repining at his fate ; while the agony and despair of Jesus appear to have increased till the final moment of his life, and with his last words, he uttered a reproach against his Deity, " My God, my God ! Why hast thou forsaken me ? " (*Mark. XV. 34.*)

It seems that Jesus was a poor judge of character and not capable of exercising any great influence on his intimate acquaintances ; otherwise he would not have been betrayed. He admitted that he had been deceived in Judas by saying that the treachery of the latter was the fulfilment of the words of David, " *Mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread hath lifted up his heel against me* " (*John XIII. 18. Ps. XLI. 9.*)

Jesus was not free from many low superstitions received by the Jews of his age. He believed that certain diseases, common among men, were caused by the entrance of devils into the human body (*Mat. XII. 22—28*) ; he admitted the power of sorcerers to perform miracles (*Mat. VII. 22, 23*) ; and on one occasion he asserted that a man had been

blind from his birth, "that the works of God should be made manifest in him," by a miraculous cure at the hands of Jesus. The poor blind man would probably have preferred that God had found some other occasion for making his works manifest.

§ 23. In several recorded instances, Jesus showed a petty spitefulness, inconsistent with greatness of soul. Once upon a time (*Mark. XI. 11—14, 20, 21*), he, with some disciples, was going from Bethany to Jerusalem, when he was hungry,

"And seeing a fig-tree afar off, having leaves, he came if haply he might find anything thereon; and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; *for the time of figs was not yet.* And Jesus answered [was that word inspired?] and said unto it, 'No man eat fruit of thee hereafter forever.' And his disciples heard it. \* \* \* And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig-tree dried up from the roots. And Peter calling to remembrance, saith unto him, 'Master, behold the fig-tree, which thou cursedst, is withered away.'"

It is said that Zeno, the Stoic, once ran against a stone-table in the dark and hurting himself upon it, was so enraged that he took revenge by breaking the table to pieces with a hammer; so the act of Jesus was not without a precedent. Zeno, however, did not know that the table was there; but Jesus knew it was not the season for figs.

Notwithstanding the fact that "most of his mighty works" were done in Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, those towns furnished no converts to his doctrine and he vented his spite in curses upon them, saying

"Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, in sackcloth and ashes. But, I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, thou shalt be brought down to hell; for if the mighty works which were done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained till this day. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom, in the day of judgment than for thee" *Mat. XI. 20—24.*

Is that admirable? Are cities morally responsible? Were there not many people in those towns, who had never



heard his doctrine? Were they worse than the Sodomites? Were miracles a proper proof of doctrines?

§ 24. The language ascribed to Jesus in his conversation and disputation, often exhibits a narrow mind and a quibbling, shuffling disposition. Matthew (*IV.* 1, 2, 8, 9, 10) relates that "Jesus was led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterwards a-hungred. \* \* \* The devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, 'All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.' Then saith Jesus unto him, 'Get thee hence Satan, *for* it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord, thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.'" This story is related with all gravity by the first three Evangelists as though they believed it to be literally true. They make Jesus as great a pedant as themselves. He refused to worship the devil, not because it was wrong, but because it was contrary to Scripture.

Jesus, while speaking to the Jews in the temple, said, "I and my Father are one." Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, "Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?" The Jews answered him saying "For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy and because that thou being a man, makest thyself God." Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in the law, I said ye are gods?" What pitiful subterfuges for a divinity! He claimed divinity (as the Trinitarians say) equal to that of Jehovah—rank blasphemy as a man could commit; and when threatened with the punishment affixed to the crime by law, he pleads that Jehovah had once said, "Ye [all the Jews] are gods; and all of you are children of the Most High" (*Ps. LXXXII.* 6). He sneaks out of the danger by pretending that in saying he was a god, he meant no more than that he was a god in the sense that all the Jews were. Such a miserable dodge would disgrace a second-rate village pettifogger. And then his pretense of ignorance that he had committed blasphemy by asking for which of his "good works" they would stone him!

As though I should go out into the street, and furnish aid to a number of suffering persons, and then knock a man down unjustifiably, and upon being arrested for the offense should ask the policeman for which deed of charity he had arrested me.

“There came to him [walking in the Temple] the chief-priests, and scribes, and the elders, and said unto him: ‘By what authority doest thou these things [his miracles]? and who gave thee this authority to do these things?’ And Jesus answered and said unto them ‘I will also ask of you one question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, was it from Heaven or of men? Answer me!’ And they reasoned with themselves, saying ‘If we shall say ‘from Heaven,’ he will say ‘Why then did ye not believe him.’ But, if we shall say ‘of men’: they feared the people; for all men counted John, that he was a prophet, indeed. And they answered and said unto Jesus, ‘We cannot tell!’ And Jesus answering said unto them, ‘Neither do I tell you, by what authority I do these things.’” *Mark XI. 27-33.*

It is singular that inspiration did not protect the Evangelist from such confusion and absurdity, as results from his awkward change from “we” to “they” in the remarks of the Pharisees, when they “reasoned with themselves.” Jesus dodged their question which threatened to get him into trouble, by asking one which, if answered candidly, would get them into trouble, and the parties quit evenly; neither having acquired any honor, or having shown any very candid disposition. It is not stated that they had any improper object in making this inquiry which was in itself perfectly proper, himself having admitted that wicked men might prophesy, and cast out devils, and do wonderful works (*Mat. VII. 22, 23*). If the question was asked from good motives, he should have answered it directly, and explicitly; if it was asked from bad motives, he should not have answered it at all.

So on another occasion, certain Pharisees sought to embroil him, by getting him to commit himself for or against the Roman dominion. If he spoke against the Emperor he would be guilty of treason, and in danger of losing his head; if he spoke in favor of the Romans, he would offend the Jews, who had a bitter hatred for the foreign yoke, and whom it was necessary to conciliate before he could convert.

The Pharisees asked, "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cesar or not?" But Jesus perceived their wickedness and said; 'Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Show me the tribute money.' And they brought unto him a penny. And he said unto them, 'Whose is this image and superscription?' They said unto him, 'Cesars.' Then said he unto them, 'Render *therefore* unto Cesar the things which are Cesars.'

In this reply Jesus used a contemptible quibble, speaking as though the image and superscription on the coin gave Cesar an everlasting property in it, and as though the Roman government had not paid it out for a fair consideration. 'Render *therefore*' because Cesar's head and name were on the coin. How would it have been if the coin had been from a Greek mint? He asked for the "tribute money." Now the question was, whether there should be any tribute money. Had not his opponents been so simple as to submit to his assumption of the question at issue by offering him a coin as "tribute money," they would have effectually prevented his quibbling reply. The question which they asked was a proper one—it was an important and intricate moral question on which the views of the people were divided; and as a teacher of morality, it was his duty to meet it fairly, to give a correct decision, and to base it on correct grounds. The decision as given is right, but its effect is spoiled by the reasons why. If a man say, he is a member of the democratic party, I find no fault with him for that; but if he say, he is a democrat because Gen. Jackson appointed his father to a postmastership, I must despise his democracy. If Jesus had said, "Moral duty requires you to pay tribute to Rome," or if he had said, "Pay tribute to Rome, because a refusal will bring war and disaster on our country," no one could find fault; but he makes himself ridiculous when he says that tribute should be paid, because Cesar's name was on the coin. No baseness of motive on the part of the Pharisees could justify his reply; as a moralist his words were addressed to the whole human race.

The conduct of Jesus in the case of the woman taken in adultery (*John VIII.* 1-12), is praised very much, with very little reason. When he was in the temple one morning, the Pharisees, "that they might have to accuse him," took to him a woman, who had been arrested in the act of

adultery, and asked him what should be done with her. Under the Jewish law, adultery was a crime punishable with death (*Deut. XXII. 22.*). Jesus assumed the function of judge unhesitatingly, and without inquiring into the testimony to see whether the woman was really guilty, or what the circumstances, if guilty, he replied "He, that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone." And the Pharisees let the woman go. Now, certainly Jesus was not the only man in the world who would be loth to see every woman stoned to death, who might be taken in adultery—an offense seldom productive of any direct evil, and often committed under palliating circumstances. As for the idea that men should be slow to stone others for sins no greater than their own—that the beams in one's own eyes should be considered, as well as the motes in the eyes of others,—that was as old as human nature. Adam probably made some such remark as that, the first time that Eve scolded him. But Jesus said, "let him that is *without sin*;" did he mean that none but sinless men have a right to punish others? or what was his meaning?

A Gentile woman applied to Jesus, calling him the son of David, to cure her sick child. He answered her, "I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Then came she and worshipped him, saying, "Lord help me!" But he answered and said, 'It is not meet to take the children's bread and throw it to the *dogs*' (*Mat. XV. 23-28*). He was very complimentary to the Gentiles. They were but "dogs" as compared with the precious Jews, who would be robbed of their exclusive privileges, if he should speak a word to effect a miraculous and instantaneous cure of the suffering child. The poor woman continued her solicitation, and in consideration of her great faith—and not for the sake of afflicted humanity at all, without any abatement from his general principle that it would be great waste to heal or save a Gentile—he wrought the cure.

§ 25. I shall next endeavor to show that Jesus was probably executed for sedition, under the Roman laws. The violation of human laws does not necessarily imply moral wrong; for the laws may be unjust. But in the case of the Roman laws against treason, Jesus himself admitted

their substantial justice. He told his followers that sedition was a sin, and thereby indirectly approved substantially of the laws providing for the punishment of that crime. He was executed in accordance with the forms of law, after trial before a Roman court. The Evangelists say that the only accusation against him was violation of the Mosaic Law, and that the sentence of death was given under that accusation. There is cause to doubt whether this assertion be true. The Mosaic code was not recognized as sacred or binding, nor its violation as criminal by the Roman law ; and it is not probable that a sentence of death would be pronounced in notorious disregard of the law, by officers who could take no interest in the alleged transgression. Besides we find that Jesus might legally have been executed for offenses against the Roman law. While he was on trial he admitted that he claimed the title of "the King of the Jews," and the mere assumption of that title, under his circumstances was a capital crime—more particularly, if assumed without the explanation which Christians now give, that his kingdom was entirely spiritual, and which Jesus himself refused to give to the court. Indeed, under the circumstances, if Jesus had been accused of sedition, the Romans must have found him guilty under their law, and have sentenced him to death. The Jews were very impatient of the Roman yoke, and anxiously wishing that some one would raise the standard of rebellion with a prospect of success. They were expecting a Messiah, foretold by their prophets, who should be a descendant of David, should become their King, should free them from foreign servitude, and reestablish the kingdom of Israel with all the glory, power and prosperity, which it has enjoyed during the reign of David. So soon as this Messiah should appear, it was a well-understood matter among the Jews that they should all rally to his standard against the impure Gentile oppressor. Under this state of affairs, the Romans heard that an obscure individual was going about among the people in the different provinces of Judea, preaching and organizing a party, and ordering his adherents to follow him. In time, they heard that this would-be leader of men was named Jesus, that he claimed to be a descendant of David, and to be *the* Messiah. Of course,

the Romans could not understand that word in any other meaning than the one given to it by all the Jews,—the founder of a new era of national independence and prosperity—the leader of a revolt. He was arrested, and he asserted in open court that he was “the King of the Jews.” That assertion unexplained was the confession of a capital crime for one in his circumstances. He refused to explain. If he had had no intention to violate the Roman law, he could certainly have produced abundant evidence that he had no criminal intent, and refusing to produce it, he was the cause of his own death.

The theory that Jesus was crucified for sedition is confirmed by the superscription placed on the cross, and by the taunts of the people. Pilate, far from being indifferent to the execution, wrote the taunting sign “This is the king of the Jews.” And the spectators wagged their heads at him, and ridiculed “the king of the Jews.” They said nothing of his enmity to the laws of Moses, nothing of his being a false prophet or a blasphemer. Now, if he had been executed at the instance of the Jews for violation of their laws, they would have taunted him with words referring to his religious pretensions; and they would never have ridiculed an attempt, made by him to free them from the yoke which every day galled every man of the race to the bone. They might think a proposed revolt injudicious, but the fear of others of their race, if not their own sympathies would prevent them from ridiculing its author. It is not the nature of men sorely oppressed to insult the memory of one of their kin, who has died in resisting the oppressor.

§ 26. Let it be granted, however, that Jesus was executed, not for sedition, but for offenses against the Jewish law; and let us ask whether he was guilty of any capital offense under that law. The Levites said “We have a law, and by our law he ought to die” (*John XIX. 7*). The law is in our possession, and we can examine whether he was guilty. Jesus had admitted the divine authority of that law, and therefore Christians have no right to complain on the score of justice, provided that the execution was legal. The question is not one of morality, but of legality. Was Jesus guilty of blasphemy? And was the punishment of blasphemy death? If both these questions be

answered in the affirmative, then we must say that he was put to death legally under laws which he pretended to have himself written ; and his followers could have no right to complain of his having been executed unjustly.

The claim of divinity is recognized by all lexicographers as a kind of blasphemy, and under all codes of ecclesiastical law, it is held to be one of the most flagrant forms of the crime. If a man should say now that he is God Almighty, Christians would say he blasphemes. But that is the very offense of which Jesus was guilty. He said " I and my Father [Jehovah] are one " (*John X. 30*). This he retracted when the Jews were about to stone him, by saying that he was a god in the sense that all the Jews were gods, and sons of the most High, as the Psalmist had declared them to be. That retraction, however, did not destroy the previous crime. Afterwards, on trial, he said that he was the son of God, and should be seen " sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven " (*Mat. XXVI. 64*). These words as well as those above quoted were immediately declared to be blasphemy by the Jews who heard them : and on the former occasion, Jesus did not deny the blasphemy of the meaning as understood by them, but said that they had misunderstood him. The repetition of words amounting to the same thing on trial, must have removed any doubt upon the mind of the judges. The Christian may say that the claim of divinity, though blasphemous if made by any man, was not so when made by Jesus, because he was really divine. But he bore the shape of a man ; he had used words which were criminal by the law ; he was arrested like a man for the offense ; he was tried by human judges ; the use of words, blasphemous in their ordinary acceptation, was proved ; and this proof was sufficient, if not rebutted, to require his condemnation. The burden of proof then rested upon him ; it was his place to show that the words were not criminal, or that, what was blasphemy in others, was not blasphemy in him. He failed to furnish that proof, and he was legally found guilty.

In codes of criminal law it is, and was customary to prohibit and affix penalties to crimes such as murder, robbery, etc., and leave the meaning of those words to be fixed by judicial decisions. Thus, " blasphemy " is declared to be a

capital crime in the Pentateuch ; but there is no definition of the word in the Bible. It, however, appears to have been applicable to many offenses against the dignity of God, and the inspiration of his law. Thus the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (X. 28) says "He who despised Moses' law, died without mercy". Now, Jesus despised the Mosaic law ; that is to say, he treated some portions of it as of no authority, more particularly in regard to marriage, divorce, swearing, revenge, etc., and for this he was guilty of a capital crime.

Moses gave his law to last forever, forbade any change in it by addition or diminution (*Deut. IV. 2*), and called down curses on him who should not confirm all its words to do them (*Deut. XXVII. 26*). He also said that the Levites were the heirs of Jehovah's ministry forever (*Deut. XVIII. 5*), ordered the children of Israel to forsake them not so long as they should live upon the earth (*Deut. XII. 19*) and decreed that he who should "do presumptuously" and should not "hearken unto the priest that standeth to minister there before the Lord", should die (*Deut. XVII. 12*). All the various offenses here prohibited, are not expressly classed under the head of blasphemy, yet they were probably understood to belong there. That Jesus committed these offenses, is not to be denied. The punishment of blasphemy, under the Mosaic code, was death. "He that blasphemeth the name of the Lord", says the Lawgiver (*Lev. XXIV. 16*) "shall surely be put to death". Again, the prophet, who should speak words which God had not commanded him to speak, should die (*Deut. XVIII. 20*). The prophet here would be interpreted to mean any one who claimed a divine mission ; and when put upon trial, the accused would have to prove the truth of his prophetic character by doing such miracles, as were reported to have been done by the early prophets of the nation, when they sought to convince the people of their authority. Such miracles Jesus did not perform before the court, nor before the Scribes and Pharisees who asked for "signs" from him, and thus again we must conclude that he was guilty of a capital offense against the law of Moses, and that he deserved death, if the law was just.

§ 27. The history of Jesus may be hunted through in



the vain search for the record of one noble action, of one great and original doctrine, of one eloquent speech. No man could live to the age of thirty years, without having frequent opportunities to show his disposition and abilities in his actions. A magnanimous soul will find occasions to perform magnanimous deeds ; and since the Evangelists, knowing, as they did, by inspiration, all that he had ever done, have recorded no magnanimous deeds of him, we must presume that he never did any, and that he wanted greatness of mind. No one has claimed that his miracles, if wrought as reported, evince any great moral qualities ; for it was a Biblical doctrine that bad men might perform miracles. The sermon on the mount [*Mat. VI V. VII.*], is undoubtedly more creditable to Jesus than any thing else that he ever said or did ; but there is no divine wisdom about it. It appears very holy to those who believe the New Testament inspired, for such a belief is like a pair of strongly colored spectacles—it completely changes the appearance of every thing which a man looks at.

The true hero of the New Testament, the author of the books, the teacher of the doctrine, and the builder of the churches was not Jesus, but Paul. Jesus taught his doctrine for only two or three years, and spent a considerable portion of that time in the wilderness. He made few converts ; he did not commit his doctrine to writing. There is nothing of his composition in the New Testament, though the Evangelists pretend to report his literal words on many occasions. We know nothing of the events of his life from the time he was twelve, until he was thirty years of age. We know little of the details of his travels after he declared his mission. Of Paul, on the contrary, we know much. The *Acts* is a better and more complete history of Paul than can be found of Jesus in all the four Evangelists. His voyages and their incidents are related with a historic consecutiveness and detail. His words are written down particularly. Paul preached the Gospel actively for a quarter of a century, and was fortunate enough to be enabled to commit his teaching to writing, which is now the largest and most important portion of the New Testament. Paul was the author of much of the present Christian doctrine. Jesus prevaricated, as we have seen ; Paul “ took the bull

by the horns"; from the very beginning, he declared "war to the knife" against all the Mosaic ceremonial, and he fought the battle vigorously, never yielding ground, except on one occasion, when he saw that he must lie, or suffer martyrdom: and he preferred the lying. It is to Paul that the Christian world is indebted for the abolition of circumcision, of sacrifice, the Mosaic Sabbath, the hereditary priesthood, the law of unclean meats, and all the ceremonies of the old law; or rather, it is to Paul that Christianity owes its existence, for without his agency, it would never have extended beyond Judea, and there it would soon have died out, because it lacked vital power as taught by Jesus and the legitimate apostles. Jesus organized no Churches, and established no congregations, without which there could be no permanency, and extensive influence. Paul did organize Churches, and he organized nearly, if not quite all the Churches from the which Christian world has obtained its teachers and doctrines. The Jewish Christians, those who had been converted by Jesus and his legitimate apostles, adhered so strictly to the Mosaic law, that Paul's followers would not recognize them, and they were soon given over to the devil as hopeless heretics. Paul then is the true hero of the New Testament, and what kind of a hero, we shall see in the next chapter.

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## CHAPTER V.

### PAUL AN IMPOSTOR.

“That fellow Paul—the *parvenu*”.

ST. PETER, *In the Vision of Judgment*’.

§ 28. In this chapter I shall attempt to prove that Paul was not a true convert to the doctrine of Christ, that he joined the church from base motives, that he was not recognized as a good Christian by the Churches in Judea, nor as an apostle by the twelve chosen by Jesus, and that the Jewish Christians hated him to such an extent that his life was not safe among them. This proof, if produced, will be a severe blow at the divine inspiration of the New Testament, the true hero of which is Paul.

Some reader may say in the beginning, that “such attempt to prove Paul an impostor, must fail, for the proofs of his piety are familiar to all. No one can be ignorant of his powerful exhortations to humility, charity, forbearance, forgiveness of injuries, brotherly love, and submission to the powers that be : and no one who comprehends the force of these exhortations can believe them to come from a wicked man.” But to this I reply that it is an easy matter for a knave to repeat pious doctrines, and even the devil has been known to quote Scripture with a good grace. Besides many men preach morality with all sincerity but do not always practise it,—the flesh being often too strong for the weakness of the spirit. Society is not always governed in its views of a man’s character, by the doctrines which he teaches. When a priest or clergyman is accused before the Church of adultery, people do not say he must be innocent because he preaches “*such* virtuous doctrines”, but they ask, “What are the proofs”? “Call up the witnesses!” “How many are there”? “What did he do to them”? Even the most pious like to know the full particulars, for although we do not wish that an honest man were a rogue,

yet we wish to know who the rogues are. Now, I accuse Paul of imposture, and demand an examination of the witnesses.

All our knowledge of the Christian Churches for thirty-five years subsequent to the crucifixion of Jesus is derived from the *Acts of the Apostles* and the epistles of Paul as contained in the New Testament. In giving the history of Christianity, during this period, the best modern Church historians place very little reliance upon information from any other source. They refer to traditions given in the writings of the Christian fathers, but speak of them as wanting in trustworthiness. The book of the *Acts* was written by a friend and companion of Paul (*Acts XXVII. 2*), and tradition says it was read and approved by him. It is to a great extent a history of Paul, and much of the information in it was evidently obtained from his lips. Indeed, most of the information, which will appear important to us here, could have been obtained by no other means, so easily and naturally. Thus, we may consider all our church-history for half a century subsequent to the crucifixion as coming from Paul. The only security for his truthfulness, the only external check upon him, was the knowledge of other men, who might bring him into disgrace, if he should lie. But the more important facts, those which might be disputed, and which he might be interested in misrepresenting, occurred in Judea, far from his place of residence (Rome) a quarter of a century before the records were published: and the publication was made among the Greeks and Roman congregations, who knew nothing of the facts, who had little intercourse with Jerusalem, and who were interested with Paul in the matters in dispute. The genuineness of the *Epistle to the Hebrews* is denied by many of the Christians and by me. There is a tradition that Peter went to Rome, but the tradition comes on a very questionable shape and from unreliable source; and it is contradicted by the silence of Paul in all his Epistles, and particularly in one passage (*Col. IV. 10. 11*) where he refers to his associates, and by the express language of the first Epistle of Peter, (*1. Pet. I. 1*), which mentions him as an apostle to "the strangers throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia", and is written from

Babylon (1. *Pet.* V. 13). Catholics say that by Babylon he means Rome : for they want to prove that Peter was at Rome and founded their holy church. Many Protestants say he meant Rome, when he said Babylon : for they want to prove that Rome is the "whore of Babylon" spoken of in Revelations. But when we remember that in the time of Jesus there were still many Jews about Babylon, descendants of the Babylonian captives, we cannot reject the plain meaning of the word, confirmed by the first verse of the Epistle.

There is no reason why we should not exercise a wholesome discretion in reading Paul, for we know that the apostles, chosen by Jesus during his life, and benefited by his constant companionship and teaching, were not free from sin. Witness the conduct of Peter in denying his Savior, that of John in presumptuously asking for seats on the right hand and on the left in the new kingdom, and of James in desiring to destroy an unbelieving village. These were the favorite apostles of Jesus during his life, and the leaders of the Church after his death. Surely, if they might sin, Paul might too. Let us beware then, that if he should sin, we be not deceived by him.

The first mention, made of Paul in the New Testament, is in the *Acts*, where it is said that when he, then called Saul, was going to Damascus (two years after the crucifixion, according to the chronology received by the Church) to persecute the Christians, he was suddenly surrounded by a great light, and a voice from heaven demanded why he persecuted Jesus, and ordered him to become a preacher of the Gospel. This miracle made him a Christian : he went on to Damascus, and a few days afterwards began to preach the religion of Christ. There are three accounts of this miracle in the New Testament, and each is inconsistent with the other two. One account says the men with Paul fell down : another that they stood up : one says that Paul received his commission as apostle on the spot : another that his orders were communicated to him in Damascus. The first narrative tells us that the men with Paul heard a voice, but saw no man : the second narrative says they saw the light, but heard not the voice. For the particulars of these and other contradictions in the accounts of

this miracle, see Ch. XIII. All these stories come from Paul, and their contradictions naturally throw a suspicion on his honesty. He does not tell the names of the men who were with him, nor the place or the date of the occurrence. There is no appeal to living witnesses—no attempt to prevent the possibility of doubt or denial in the minds of sensible and honest men. And what does Paul do after this wonderful conversion? Does he go to the apostles in Jerusalem to be cheered and instructed by them? Does he ask them to relate to him the words of their master? Does he lament his blindness for not believing while the Savior was alive? Does he sorrow over his misfortune in not having enjoyed the pleasure of the society, and the benefit of the teaching of that divine man? Does he express his repentance for his persecutions? Does he ask them to confirm him? Does he beg them to lay their hands upon him, and breathe upon him, as Christ had breathed the Holy Ghost upon them? Not at all! He boasted that he was not taught by man, he had “conferred not with flesh and blood:” “neither went I up to Jerusalem, [says he] to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia and returned again to Damascus” (*Gal. I. 16. 17.*). The only confirmation, received by Paul, was that a certain Ananias, a Christian of Damascus of unknown character and ecclesiastical pedigree, laid hands upon him: and with that, and the stock of sanctity and light acquired in his conversion, he sets out at once to preach the Gospel, without asking any advice of the legitimate heads of the church as to the how, where and when: and he presumes to teach doctrines which Jesus and the apostles never taught. Paul even goes so far as to call himself “an apostle” (*Rom. I. 1.*), though Jesus had restricted that title to twelve, and had never intimated the remotest possibility of there being a thirteenth. Paul said, that he did not go to Jerusalem after his conversion, but this was a falsehood, to which he might have been incited by mortification at the manner in which he was received. He did go to Jerusalem within a few days after his conversion, and “assayed to join himself to the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple” (*Acts IX. 26.*). The apostles were told of the wonderful conversion of this per-

secutor of the church, of this accomplice in the murder of Stephen (*Acts VIII. 1. XXII. 20*): but he did not tell them that he was apostle; they did not recognise him as an apostle; they did not counsel with him as to what he should do; but "they sent him forth to Tarsus" (*Acts IX. 30*) after "which had the churches rest throughout all Judea." Three years afterwards, as he himself says, he was "unknown by face unto the churches in Judea, which were in Christ" (*Gal. I. 12*): and yet on another occasion he said that he preached first at "Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles" (*Acts XVI. 20*). After considering these plain facts, who can believe that Paul was a sincere convert to the teachings of Jesus?

When this miracle-begotten apostle had been preaching to the Gentiles for three years, he went to Jerusalem, and staid two weeks with Peter. He saw no apostles save Peter and James, and so far as the record says, did not consult with them about religious doctrines, nor preach to the people (*Gal. I. 18-22*). Fourteen years later he went up to Jerusalem again. During all this time he had been preaching among the Gentiles, and preaching doctrines acceptable to them. He found that they would not become Christians, if it were necessary for them to observe the ceremonial law of Moses. The Greeks and other heathen would not submit to circumcision, nor observe the Sabbaths or the feast days, nor abstain from pork, nor refuse to eat with pagans. Converted these heathen must be; converted they would not be, if they were required to adopt the mummeries of Moses; converted they might possibly be, if they were permitted to disregard those mummeries; and Paul gave them that permission. His gospel was different from that preached in Judea.

When he went to Jerusalem the second time, he says, "I went by revelation and communicated unto them *that* gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run or had run, in vain" (*Gal. II. 2*). He evidently gives us to understand that his gospel was different from that of every body else, and so far different, that it was even necessary for him to teach it in private. What

was "*that gospel*" which he preached among the Gentiles? Let his own words answer.

"By the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified" (*Rom. III. 20*). He meant of course the Mosaic law, as that was known to Jews and Christians as "*the law*," and that was the only law, the observance of which was said among Jews and Christians to serve as justification. He thus spoke very disparagingly of the whole law on which all the Mosaic ceremonies were founded.

"There is nothing unclean of itself" (*Rom. XIV. 14*); "One believeth he may eat all things; another, *who is weak*, eateth herbs" (*Rom. XIV. 2*.) Thus he sets aside the Mosaic law of unclean meats.

"One man esteemeth one day above another. Another esteemeth every day alike" (*Rom. XIV. 5*). "In the Gentile churches [all the churches established by Paul]" says Neander\* "all days of the week were considered alike suitable for the service of the church; and all preference of one day to another was regarded as quite foreign to the genius of the gospel;" but in after times, Sunday was found to be an excellent institution for aiding the priests to put money in their purse, and accordingly they reestablished it, as of divine ordinance.

"Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing" (*Cor. VII. 18*). Thus he declared that the surgical operation, which Jehovah had ordered the Israelites to perform on all their children was of no use whatever; and the man who practiced it was making a fool of himself, by taking useless trouble.

"There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek" (*Rom. X. 12*). Jehovah might have had a peculiar friendship for the seed of Abraham once, but he had learned better, since he had counselled with Paul.

As a consequence of these doctrines, Paul established churches entirely independent of the Synagogues, since the faithful Jews would have nothing to do with such a renegade. He also taught that Jesus came to establish a *new* religion, that Jesus was divine, that all men had been condemned to eternal hell for Adam's sin, that the blood of Jesus had atoned for this sin, that God was not one but three, &c.

\* Planting of the Church, Book III. Ch. V.



Such was *that* gospel, preached by the thirteenth apostle, which he communicated in private to them that were of reputation in Jerusalem. This communication in private, however, did not suffice to keep him out of trouble. All the leaders in the church were against him. He complains (*Gal. II. 4*) of false brethren "who came in privily to spy out our liberty, which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage." This complaint was made to the church at Galatia, converts from the Gentiles. The "liberty" referred to, was freedom from the Mosaic ceremonies; the bondage was subjection to those ceremonies. Paul would not yield to these false brethren: "to whom we gave place by subjection, no not for one hour." And then they snubbed him; "but of those who seemed to be somewhat, whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me; God accepteth no man's person; for they, who seemed to be somewhat in conference, added nothing to me". (*Gal. II. 6.*). He would not yield an inch to them; he was just as good as they were; and when they wanted to perform a slight amputation on his friend, convert and companion, Titus, he answered indignantly to the purport that he would see them damned first. At last, these church leaders at Jerusalem gave way, according to Paul's account. "When James, Cephas [Peter], and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision." The fact is, James, Cephas and John found they could not help themselves, and they told Paul, he might go away and preach as he pleased. That at least is a reasonable presumption.

Another account of this visit of Paul to Jerusalem, or rather of the council there on the occasion of the visit, is given in chapter XV. of the *Acts*. The author of that book says a council was called for the express purpose of considering what should be done about the observance of the Mosaic ceremonies among the Gentile converts made by Paul; and the decision of the council was that Paul was right. In this council, both James and Peter spoke in favor of Paul's view.

Soon after this council was held, Peter went down to

Antioch, and there he and Paul got into a great quarrel. Paul tells the story, thus: "When Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles; but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But, when I saw that they walked *not uprightly* according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter, before them all,—'If thou'" &c. There was a beautiful state of affairs! If that be true, Peter must have been an abominable hypocrite. He, the prince of the apostles, who in the council held only a few days before had been the first one to justify Paul; he, that on coming to Antioch, had eaten with the Gentiles, to turn about so soon as others came who held a different doctrine! And this same Peter, if the writer of *Acts* lie not, had preached to the Gentiles years before, and had eaten with them, and being called to account in Jerusalem had publicly defended himself before the church, (*Acts XI. 1—18*) and had been openly justified by the church. How mean then was this dissimulation in him—the head of the Church! And when there was no occasion for it whatever; for this James—the coming of whose friends frightened Peter—did not he zealously stand by him in the council to support Paul in disregarding the Mosaic ceremonies? I say, if all this as written by Paul be true? But, perhaps Paul lied. One thing is certain, either Peter is guilty of vile hypocrisy, or Paul of still viler falsehood. I am inclined to the belief that Paul is the sinner; he said once that he was "the chief of sinners" (*1 Tim. I. 15*). We have only his version of all these affairs. In all probability, Peter never approved of the neglect of the Mosaic ceremonies. It is not likely that he would desert the teachings of Jesus to follow those of such an interloper as Paul. And how could Barnabas, Saul's companion for many years in teaching the neglect of the Mosaic law, have joined Peter in refusing to eat with Gentiles, if he, Barnabas, had been present at a solemn council, where it had been decided—Peter voting "ay"—that it was proper to eat with the Gentiles?

We shall find, before we get done with Mr. Paul, that he could lie considerably, and if such be the fact, we may as well find him guilty of lying on this occasion, and hold Peter innocent.

The last time that Paul went to Jerusalem, he got into a difficulty which led to a lawsuit, and ended in his being sent to Rome as a prisoner, to be tried there on appeal from a court in Judea. This difficulty, occurred in the year 58 A.D., and six years after the alleged date of the alleged council. When Paul told his friends and fellow-believers in Tyre and Cesarea of his purpose to visit Jerusalem, they opposed it strenuously, and begged him to abandon the idea. At Cesarea, one Agabus, "a prophet", took Paul's girdle and said, "Thus saith the Holy Ghost, 'So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.'" Other persons present besought Paul so urgently to stay away from Jerusalem that he replied, "What mean ye to weep and break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem" (*Acts XXI. 11. 13*). All his friends seemed to anticipate some great danger for him in the Holy City. What was that danger? It does not appear that Peter and James and their Christian disciples were in any peculiar danger at this time? None of the Christians had been killed there of late. Besides Paul was not out of danger in any place. The Damascenes had sought to kill him, and he had been arrested, beaten, and threatened with death in several cities. Why this peculiar danger for Paul? We shall see hereafter that it was because he was an enemy of the Mosaic law; because he taught his followers to disregard that law. But, if the record in the *Acts* be true, Paul was not the only one who taught this doctrine. Peter had taught it ten or twelve years before; and six years previous to this visit, a solemn council of the Church at Jerusalem, had under the leadership of Peter and James, openly and deliberately approved of Paul's course in teaching neglect of the Jewish law. Why then was the latter peculiarly obnoxious to the friends of the Jewish laws, "the Jews" spoken of by Agabus? The reason was that Paul was the only prominent man, known as an enemy of the law; the story of the

council is a lie. Now, to the evidence which supports that assertion, that fact.

Paul went to Jerusalem in accordance with his purpose, as announced. While in that city he did not stop at the house of Peter or James, or of any great teacher or rich member of the church, but with "one Mnason of Cyprus" who went in his own company. The day after his arrival he went to see James, and "all the elders were present," but no apostle save James. Peter probably had had enough of the thirteenth apostle at Antioch. Paul opened the conference by telling "What things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry, and when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, [making their glorification apparently very short] and said unto him, 'Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law; and they are informed of thee that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. What is it therefore? [Something must be done]. The multitude must needs come together, for they will hear that thou art come. [Look out Paul, or these Jews which believe, will lynch you]. Do therefore this that we say to thee; we have four men which have a vow on them. Them take and *purify thyself* with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads; and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou, thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. [Lie and swear to it, Paul, or the mob of Jews, which believe, will stone you]. Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them, entered the Temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until an offering should be offered for every one of them" (*Acts XXI. 15—32*). Paul concluded to accept the advice of James and the elders, and he entered the Temple to purify himself from a charge which we know to be true; but "the Jews" did not wait for the "accomplishment of the days of purification", but raised a mob, siezed the purifier and were about to practice "eternal vigilance" by putting an end to his mortal career, when the Roman soldiers came and rescued

him. The Roman judge tried Paul, but finding his alleged crimes to be no offenses against the Roman law, was about to discharge him, when Paul, perhaps fearing to be left in Jerusalem without military protection, appealed to the Emperor at Rome ; and the judge accordingly sent him a prisoner to Rome, and freed the East from a turbulent fellow.

In considering the story of this mob, it is important to keep in view that the first thought of James and the elders in speaking to Paul was to let him know his danger—his great danger ; and the only dangerous persons referred to were “ Jews which believe ”, who were very “ zealous of the law ”. There were two kinds of “ Jews ”—Jews by birth and Jews by faith. The Christians of Greece and Rome generally spoke of the Jewish Christians as “ Jews ”. The record of the occurrences on the occasion of this visit of Paul to the Holy City shows some interesting facts. *First* : All the Jewish Christians at Jerusalem were zealous observers of the Mosaic ceremonial law. *Secondly* : Christianity in Jerusalem was something very different from Christianity in Antioch. *Thirdly* : The Church at Jerusalem had never justified Paul in disregarding the Mosaic ceremonies. *Fourthly* : The stories, told of the approval of Paul’s conduct by the apostles and Church in a general council, are false—straight-up-and-down lies. *Fifthly* : The Jewish Christians at Jerusalem had such a bitter hatred for Paul, that the first thought of James and the elders was to advise him to do something to save himself from their vengeance. *Sixthly* : James and the elders do not hesitate to advise Paul to lie. The ceremony of purification which they recommended, was that of taking the vow of a Nazirite, as described in Chapter VI. of *Numbers*, and as Milman \* says, was an “ acknowledgment not merely of respect for, but of zeal beyond, the law ”. The ceremony required repeated sacrifices and offerings, and implied an oath of zeal for the law beyond the respect and observance necessary from all faithful followers of Moses. Could Paul honestly take such an oath ? *Seventhly* : Paul does not hesitate to lie, to take a solemn oath with four compurgators, that the charges against him were “ nothing ”, that

\* History of Christianity.

he walked "orderly", and kept "the law". *Eighthly* : Paul was never recognized as an orthodox Christian, much less as an apostle by the Christians in Jerusalem.

Paul himself confessed that they would have nothing to do with him. He said that, while he was in the Temple, taking that false and solemn oath, he fell into a trance, "and saw him [Christ] saying unto me, 'Make haste and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem, for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me'" [Christ] (*Acts XXII. 18*). "They" were of course Jewish Christians, for Paul could not hope for any body else to believe his testimony of Christ. He could not expect to convert at once the unbelievers who had turned a deaf ear to the legitimate apostles for year after year. In fact, he avowed that his mission was only to the Gentiles. Those Jewish Christians considered Paul an impostor; they would not receive his testimony about his miraculous conversion, the appearance of Christ to him, and the revelation to him of truths beyond those which Jesus taught.

Paul probably thought it would be of no use to deny the manner in which he lied in Jerusalem; he even came out, and avowed his policy of being "all things to all men". "For, though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews, I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak, became I as weak, that I might gain the weak; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the Gospel's sake; that I might be partaker thereof with you" (*1. Cor. IX. 19-23*).

As remarked already, we have only Paul's version of all these different events. The other side we have not; but we know that the writings which have come down to us under the name of Barnabas, do not take sides with the thirteenth apostle. We know also that there is good reason to believe that instead of the Christians at Jerusalem having approved of the course of Paul in teaching the Gen-

tiles, they sent out missionaries to oppose him. A very able and learned German commentator on the New Testament\* says, "Embittered at the spread of the Pauline Christians, the Judaizing Christians (probably of Palestine) sent missionaries to those places where Paul had made converts for the purpose of drawing them away from him and his doctrine. At least, without supposing such to have been the fact, we cannot explain several events which occurred in the congregations of Paul, and several passages in his epistles. But on the supposition of such missions, we can explain the sudden abandonment of Paul by congregations which had held to his teaching for years, such as the Galatians and the Corinthians. How could such a change of opinion occur among Gentile Christians so rapidly—a change so contrary to their interests, implying a submission of the males to the painful operation of circumcision—if not by the influence of men high in the Church who taught them that obedience to the Mosaic law was necessary to salvation? The enemies of Paul's teaching sought to increase their importance by representing themselves as the immediate pupils of the apostles in Jerusalem, particularly of Peter, James and John (2. *Cor.* XII. 11. 12. *Gal.* I. II. 1—10). Does not this show that they were Jewish Christians? They travelled with letters of recommendation (2. *Cor.* III. 1. II. 4), and asserted that Paul was no longer as they were, that he broke loose from the Mosaic law only to gain the applause of the Heathen, and that by so doing he corrupted the doctrines of Jesus (*Gal.* I. 10). Does not this show that they were special missionaries? And does not the title of 'apostles', which they claimed for themselves (2. *Cor.* XI. 5, 13—15), remove every doubt?"

"The Epistle" [to the Galatians] says Paley, † "supposes that certain [Christians] designing adherents of the Jewish law had crept into the churches of Galatia; and had been endeavoring but too successfully to persuade the Galatic converts that they had been taught the new religion imperfectly and at second hand; that the founder of their Church himself possessed only an inferior and deputed commission, the seat of truth and authority being in the apos-

\* J. G. EICHHORN. Einleitung in das Neue Testament.

† *Hebræ Paulinæ.* Chap. V. Sec. 1.

tles and elders of Jerusalem ; moreover that, whatever he might profess amongst them, he had himself in other times, and in other places, given way to the doctrine of circumcision. Referring therefore to this, as to what had actually passed, we find Saint Paul treating so unjust an attempt to undermine his credit, and to introduce amongst his converts a doctrine which he had uniformly reprobated, in terms of great asperity and indignation”.

In writing to the Corinthian Church about the persons who had been endeavoring to lead that congregation away from him, he declared them to be “ false *apostles*, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into *apostles* of Christ”, and he said “ I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest *apostles*”. “ Are they Hebrews ? So am I. Are they Israelites ? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham ? So am I. Are they ministers of Christ ? I am more”. He claims to be as good as any of these false *apostles*”, and enumerates his labors and the sufferings which he had undergone for the sake of his faith, among which were “ perils among false brethren” (2 *Cor.* XI. 5. 13. 22. 23. 26). It does not appear that he kept up any correspondence with the apostles in Jerusalem, or sent, or received any friendly messages to or from them. He makes no reference to the state of affairs there, and if not hostile to the twelve, he appears at least indifferent to their proceedings and their welfare. He never appeals to any Church record, or Gospel of the Jerusalem Church, but orders his converts to read his own Epistles as the only guide to salvation.

And this fellow was St. Paul whose writings are sacred, divinely inspired—St. Paul, who contributed more inspiration to the New Testament than any other man—St. Paul, who set aside the teachings of Jesus—St. Paul, who made Christianity what it is, and laid the foundation of all the Christian Churches now in existence ! This is the mighty man who overthrew the Paganism of Greece and Rome ! This is the inventor of the creed before which Milton, Locke, Newton, and Burke bowed in adoration. This is the man who, if he did not first originate the Christian doctrines of the eternal damnation of all mankind for Adam’s sin, salvation by Jesus, the incarnation and the trinity, was at least the person who firmly engrafted them upon the rising



Church, and thus established them as portions of the creed of Christendom for several thousand years ! Alas, for the follies, vanities, and deceptions of earth !

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## CHAPTER VI.

### DAVID A SCOUNDREL.

“The Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart.”—  
1 S. XIII. 14.

§ 29. If an all-wise, all-good, and all-powerful personal Governor of the Universe should see fit to teach mankind, and should select men to be his amanuenses, we must suppose that he would select, for that purpose, good men—at least not scoundrels. That is a proposition which Christians will scarcely venture to deny. Now I say that David, the most important character in the Bible, after Moses, Jesus and Paul, and one of its chief authors—was what we should now-a-days call a scoundrel. He was guilty of murder, robbery, and adultery ; he betrayed his friends, inflicted most barbarous punishments on his enemies, gave up his brothers-in-law and sons-in-law to be hanged, when they had committed no offense, and divorced his wife without good cause. These and similar offenses were committed not once, but often ; not in the heat of passion, but in the coolness of considerate forethought ; not under palliating, but under the most inexcusable circumstances ; besides the doer never repented for them ; never confessed his sins to himself or to his God ; never asked pardon of the injured, of humanity, or of the Deity. On the contrary, he assumed that he was a person of the most exalted merit, boasted that Jehovah had promised the throne of Israel to his descendants forever, and frequently reminded said Jehovah of the promise. I do not know whether such conduct suffices to justify me in calling him a “scoundrel,” but I rather think it does. Whether he was guilty of such conduct, we shall see presently.

David is properly the hero of the Old Testament. Moses is the great prophet and writer, but David is the great King, the founder of the glory of the nation. Besides he is a prophet of high position—second to none after Moses. Bishop Horne, a writer much respected among orthodox Protestants, speaks as follows of the son of Jesse :—“ His invaluable Psalms convey to others those comforts which they offered to himself. Composed upon particular occasions, yet designed for general use ; delivered out as services for Israelites under the Law, yet no less adapted to the circumstances of Christians under the Gospel ; they present religion to us in the most engaging dress, communicating truths which Philosophy can never investigate, in a style which poetry can never equal. Calculated alike to profit and to please, they inform the understanding, elevate the affections, and entertain the imagination. Indited under the influence of Him to whom all hearts are open, and all events foreknown, they suit mankind in all situations, grateful as the manna which descended from above and conformed itself to every palate. The fairest productions of human wit after a few perusals, like gathered flowers, wither in our hands, and lose their fragraney ; but these unfading plants of Paradise become, as we are more accustomed to them, still more and more beautiful ; their bloom appears to be daily heightened, fresh odors are emitted and new sweets are extracted from them. He, who has once tasted their excellences, will desire to taste them again ; and he who tastes them oftenest, will relish them best.” “The inspiration and canonical authority of the Psalms,” says Bishop Kitto,\* “are established by the most abundant and convincing evidence. They never can be rejected except by impious impugners of all divine revelation. Not to mention other ancient testimonies, we find complete evidence in the New Testament, where the book is quoted and referred to as divine, by Christ and his apostles at least seventy times. No other writing is so frequently cited.\* \* In every age the Psalms have been extolled for their excellence and their use for godly edifying. Indeed, if Paul’s estimate of the ancient inspired scripture (2. *Tim.* III. 15–17) can be justly applied to

\* *Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature.*—Article *Psalms*.

any book, that book must be the Psalms." The Rev. Matthew Henry, in his exposition of the Bible, says, the book of *Psalms* is "one of the choicest and most excellent parts of all the Old Testament"—and even "the abstract and summary of both Testaments." Dr. Adam Clarke says even "God himself had created none greater [as a poet than David] either before or since. In this science and gift, he is therefore the *chef d'œuvre* [master-piece] of the Almighty." David was the type of Christ (*Jer. XXX. 9. Ezek. XXXIV. 23. Hosea III. 5, etc.*) and a man of God (*Neh. XII. 36*). Jehovah himself declared that David had done that which was right in his eyes, keeping his "statutes" and his "judgments" (*1 K. XI. 33*). He promised to Solomon that he would make his dynasty eternal, "provided," says Jehovah "thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee" (*1 K. IX. 4*). Jehovah, though he changed his mind occasionally, continued to have a high opinion of David's piety and virtue, and he declared that David "did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not aside from anything that He commanded him, all the days of life, save only in the matter of Uriah" (*1 K. XV. 5*). All the other transactions of David were perfectly proper; and even that one exception appears to have been forgotten in later years, and Paul declared by inspiration that David was "a man after God's own heart" who fulfilled all his will (*Acts XIII. 22*). This was the man whose blood was necessary for the redemption of mankind, and whose piety was so pure, that Jesus died quoting his words. *Ps. XXII. 1. XXXI. 5*.

§ 30. The history of David, as an adult man, may be said to begin, when he fled from the court of Saul, and took refuge with Achish, the heathen King of Gath, who kindly offered him a place of refuge from the murderous designs of the Hebrew monarch. Having\* staid some-time in the capital of King Achish, with his little band of 600 bold adventurers, he was afraid of being burthensome to that prince, and begged he would assign him another

\* Most of the following remarks upon David's history and character are taken from the famous article on *David* in Bayle's Dictionary.

habitation. Achish appointed him the city of Ziklag. David removed thither with his followers, and did not suffer their swords to rest in their scabbards. He often led them out on parties, and killed man and woman without mercy ; he left only the cattle alive which was all the booty he returned with ; he was afraid lest prisoners should discover the whole mystery to Achish, for which reason he carried none with him but put both sexes to the sword. The mystery which he would not have discovered was that these ravages were committed not on the lands of the Israelites, as he made the King of Gath believe, but in the lands of the ancient inhabitants of Palestine, (1 S. XXVII. 8-12), the subjects, allies and kin of his protector. To say the truth, this conduct was very unjustifiable ; to cover one fault, he committed a greater. He deceived a King to whom he had obligations ; and to conceal this deception, he exercised extreme cruelty. If David has been asked *By what authority dost thou these things ?* What could he have answered ? Has a private man, as he was, a fugitive who finds shelter in the territories of a neighboring prince, a right to commit hostilities, for his own account, and without a commission from the sovereign of the country ? Had David any such commission ? On the contrary did he not act contrary to the intention and interests of the King of Gath ? It is certain, that if a private person, let his birth be ever so great, should behave at this day as David did on this occasion, he would unavoidably have no very honorable names given to him. I know very well that the most illustrious heroes, and the most famous prophets of the Old Testament, have sometimes approved the destroying all things which had life, with the edge of the sword ; and therefore I should be far from calling what David did inhumanity, if he had been authorized by the orders of any prophet, or if God had himself by inspiration commanded him to act as he did ; but it plainly appears from the silence of the Scripture that he did all this of his own head.

David purchased his first wife Micah with a singular kind of coin, which however, current in those times, would be rejected by the banks in our days, or would be subjected at least to a heavy discount. Saul proposed to sell his

daughter for the foreskins of a hundred Philistines, but David thought she was worth more than that, so he slew two hundred of the heathen, and having circumcised them, presented the amputated parts to the monarch, who was delighted with the gift and gave his daughter willingly for such a valuable contribution to his treasury. David never practised the barbarous custom of "scalping" the enemies whom he killed or took prisoners in war—that was left for the North American savages to practice.

§ 31. I shall say a word concerning what he had determined to do with Nabal. While that man, who was very rich, was shearing his sheep, David sent to ask him very civilly for some gratification ; his messengers failed not to represent that Nabal's shepherds had never received any damage from David's people. As Nabal was very churlish, he asked in a rude manner who David was, and reproached him with having thrown off his master's yoke ; in a word, he declared that he was not such a fool as to give what he had provided for his domestics to strangers and vagabonds. David, enraged at this answer, armed four hundred of his soldiers, and put himself at their head ; fully resolved not to suffer one soul to escape the edge of the sword. He even bound himself to it by an oath ; and if he did not execute this bloody purpose, it was because Abigail came to appease him by fair speeches and presents (1 S. XXV. 18). Abigail was Nabal's wife, and a woman of great merit, beautiful and witty, and she pleased David so well that he married her so soon as she became a widow (1 S. XXV. 43). Let us speak sincerely ; is it not incontestable that David was going to commit a very criminal action ? He had no right to Nabal's goods, nor any authority to punish him for his incivility. He ranged up and down with a band of trusty friends ; he might indeed be allowed to ask some gratification of people who were at their ease ; but if they refused, he ought to have taken it patiently, nor could he compel them to it by military execution, without plunging the world again into the terrible confusion which is called the state of nature, wherein no other law is acknowledged but that of the strongest. What should we say at this day of a Prince of the royal blood of France, who, being disgraced at court, should take refuge where he could, with

such friends, as should be willing to follow his fortune? What judgment I say should we make of him, if he should take it into his head to raise contributions in the countries where he should canton himself, and to put all to the sword in the villages which should refuse to pay the taxes? What should we say, if this Prince should fit out vessels and cruize at sea to take all the merchant ships he could light on? Sincerely speaking, had David a better authority to exact contributions from Nabal, and to massacre all the men and women in the country of the Amalekites, &c., and to take all the cattle he found there? I agree it may be answered me that we are at this day better acquainted with the Law of Nations, and the rights of war and peace, of which such fine systems have been written; and therefore such behavior was more excusable in those times than it would be now. But the profound respect which we ought to entertain for this great king, this great prophet, ought not to hinder us from disapproving the blemishes which are to be found in his life; otherwise we should give occasion to the profane to reproach us, and to say, it is sufficient to make an action just that it be done by certain persons whom we reverence; than which nothing could be more fatal to Christian morality. It is of great concern to true religion that the lives of the orthodox be judged by the general ideas of right and order.

§ 32. While David with his little flying camp was exterminating the inhabitants of all the infidel countries wherever he could penetrate, the Philistines were making preparations in their dominions for war against the Israelites. They assembled all their forces; and David with his bold adventurers joined the army of Achish, and they would have fought like lions against their brethren, if the distrustful Philistines had not constrained Achish to dismiss them. It was feared lest in the heat of the battle they should fall on the Philistines in order to make their peace with Saul. When David was informed that by reason of these suspicions he would have to quit the army, he was concerned at it, and said unto Achish "What have I done? And what hast thou found in thy servant, so long as I have been with thee unto this day, that I may not go to fight against the enemies of my Lord, the King?" (1 S. XXIX.

8) He had resolved therefore to contribute with all his might to the victory of the uncircumcised Philistines, over his own brethren, the people of God, and the professors of the true religion. I leave nice casuists to judge whether these were sentiments worthy of a true Israelite.

§ 33. So soon as he heard of Saul's death, he set himself without loss of time to secure the succession. He went to Hebron, and immediately on his arrival there, the whole tribe of Judah, of which he had gained the principal men by bribes, acknowledged him for king. If Abner had not preserved the rest of the succession for Saul's son, there is no doubt but by the same method, I mean by gaining the principal men with presents, David would have become King of all Israel. But what happened, after Abner had preserved eleven whole tribes for Ishbosheth? The same which would have happened between two infidel and most ambitious princes! David and Ishbosheth made incessant war on one another (2 S. III. 1) to try which of the two could get the other's share, in order to enjoy the whole kingdom without division. What I am going to say is a great deal worse. Abner being discontented with the king, his master, resolves to dispossess him of his dominions, and to deliver them up to David; he acquaints David with his intentions, and goes to him to concert measures for putting them in execution. David gives ear to the traitor and is willing to gain a kingdom by intrigues of this nature (2 S. III. 12). Can it be said that these are the actions of a saint? I own that there is nothing in all this but what is agreeable to the precepts of policy, and the methods of human prudence; but I shall never be persuaded that the strict laws of equity, the severe morals of a good servant of God can approve such conduct. Take notice that David did not pretend that Saul's son reigned by usurpation; he confessed that Ishbosheth was a righteous man (2 S. IV. 11), and consequently a lawful king.

§ 34. David's long reign was disturbed only by the criminal attempts of his own children. The most considerable of these disturbances was the revolt of Absalom, who forced this great Prince to fly from Jerusalem in a mournful condition, with his head covered, his feet bare, melting into tears, and his ears saluted by nothing but the groans

of his faithful subjects (2 S. XV. 23). Absalom entered Jerusalem, as it were, in triumph ; and that the zeal of his adherents might not grow cool on an imagination that this quarrel between the father and the son might be made up, he did a thing very proper to persuade them that he would never be reconciled to David. He lay with the ten concubines of that Prince in the sight of all the world (2 S. XVI. 22). It is very probable that this crime would have been forgiven him ; the extreme affliction into which his death threw David is a proof of it. He was the best father that ever was ; his indulgence to his children was excessive, and he himself was the first who suffered by it. For if he had punished the infamous action of his son Ammon, who ravished his sister Tamar, and was slain for the crime by Absalom's order (2 S. XIII. 28) as the thing deserved, he would not have had the shame and displeasure to see another avenge the injury to Tamar ; and if he had chastised him who took that revenge, he would not have run the risk of being absolutely dethroned. David's destiny was the same with that of most great Princes—he was unhappy in his family. His eldest son violated his own sister, and was killed by one of his own brothers for that incest ; and the author of that fratricide lay with his father's concubines in the most public manner. What a scandal must it be to pious souls to see so many infamous actions committed in the family of this king ?

§ 35. David made use of means to defeat the rebellion of Absalom, similar to those by which he had gained the throne. He would not permit Hushai, one of his best friends, to follow him, but ordered him to go over to Absalom's party that he might give ill counsel to that rebellious son, and be able to inform David of all the designs of the new king (2 S. XV. 34). This stratagem, without doubt, is very commendable, if we judge of things according to human prudence, and the policy of sovereigns. It saved David, and from that age to our own inclusively, has produced an infinite number of adventures, useful to some and pernicious to others ; but a rigid moralist will never take this for an action worthy of a prophet, a saint, or an honest man. An honest man, as such, would rather lose a crown, than be the cause of his friend's damnation ; and it is to



damn our friend as much as in us lies, to push him on to commit a crime ; and it is a crime to feign to embrace a man's part with zeal ; to feign it, I say, in order to ruin that man by giving him evil counsel, and revealing all the secrets of his cabinet. Can there be a more treacherous piece of villainy than this of Hushai ? So soon as he perceives Absalom, he cries out " God save the king ! God save the king ! " and when he is asked the reason of his ingratitude in not following his intimate friend, he gives himself airs of devotion, and alleges reasons of conscience—" I will be his whom the Lord hath chosen ".

§ 36. David has long been blamed for having committed a crying injustice against Mephibosheth, the son of his intimate friend, Jonathan. The fact is, David, standing no more in fear of Saul's faction, was well pleased to show himself liberal to all those who might yet remain of that family. He was informed that there was left a poor cripple, named Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan. He sent for him, and gave him all the lands which had belonged to King Saul, and ordered Ziba, an old servant of that family, to improve those lands for his benefit, and for the maintenance of Mephibosheth's son ; for as to Mephibosheth, he was to eat at King David's table as long as he lived (2 S. IX. 7). When that Prince fled from Jerusalem, for fear of falling into the hands of Absalom, he met Ziba, who brought him some refreshments, and told him in a few words that Mephibosheth staid at Jerusalem, in hopes that among those revolutions he might recover the kingdom. Whereupon David gave him all that belonged to Mephibosheth (2 S. XVI. 4). After the death of Absalom, he found that Ziba had been a false accuser, and yet he only took from him the half of what he had given him ; and restored to Mephibosheth but one half of his estate. This sin was the greater in David, because he was under great obligations to Jonathan.

§ 37. The most notable of all David's offenses against the dictates of morality was his affair with Bathsheba. After he had conquered all his enemies within the bounds of his own nation, and while his armies were engaged in conquering the Heathen round about Judea, the monarch had opportunity to relax his soul in pleasure after the severe

toils and trials which he had undergone while in exile abroad, or in civil war at home. It happened one eventide that, as he was walking upon the roof of his house, he saw a woman washing herself, and he was decidedly pleased with her appearance, for she was very beautiful to look upon, and beauty lost none of its charms in his eyes by being unadorned. He forthwith sent to inquire who she was, and reply came that she was Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, a general in his army of much reputation as a "mighty man of war" (1 *Ch.* XI. 41), against whose valor, faithfulness, and uprightness not a word had ever been breathed. David, however, appears to have cared as little for Uriah's faithfulness as for the sacredness of the marriage-rite, and he sent and took Bathsheba—she making no resistance. At this time David was about forty years of age, so that the Christians cannot plead the hot blood of youth as an excuse for him. Besides, he had half a dozen wives at the time: and for twenty years he had been in the habit of consulting Jehovah on all important occasions—Jehovah answering his petitions invariably. David found so much pleasure in Bathsheba's company that he determined to have Uriah put out of the way; and therefore he sent him with a letter to Joab, the commander-in-chief of the Hebrew army, who was besieging the city of Rabbah, in the land of the Ammonites. This letter is a model for epistolary correspondence, and may be inserted here entire, as follows:

"Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him that he may be smitten and die". 2 *S.* XI. 15.

Joab, like a faithful servant, observed the city well, and assigned a place to Uriah, where he knew the valiant men were. The consequence was that some of the servants of David were slain, and Uriah also. After this affair, the general sent an express to Jerusalem, with news of the progress of events, instructing the messenger that, if the king should be angry at the death of his servants, he should add that Uriah was dead also. The messenger, however, told the whole story at once, so that David had no time to get angry, before hearing of the death of the troublesome husband. The king put on a long face, and told the messenger to comfort Joab for the loss: "Let not this thing displease thee for the sword devoureth one as well as an-

other. "Make thy battle more strong" etc. (2 S. XI. 25.) Having the field now entirely to himself, the monarch took the widow to wife, and she became the mother of Solomon, and the ancestress of Jesus, that is if the latter was descended from David. A child was begotten in adultery previous to the death of Uriah.

§ 38. His polygamy cannot well be excused, for though God tolerated the practice in those days, we must not think it might be carried very far, without loosing the reins too much to sensuality. Michal, Saul's second daughter, was David's first wife; she was taken from him during his disgrace (1 S. XXV. 44;) he successively married several others (2 S. III. 5), and yet demanded the first again. To restore her to him they were obliged to force her from a husband who loved her greatly; and who followed her as far as he could, weeping like a child (2 S. III. 16). "The possession\* of such a wife was valuable to one who was aspiring to the kingdom. Accordingly, the unhappy Michal was torn away from a most affectionate husband, and passed over into the increasing harem of a man, to whom in his earliest youth, she had been a virgin bride; but who now cared not for *her*, but for her *name* and its political uses. It is not wonderful that she could not adapt herself to her new lord, and that as soon as he was firm in the kingdom, he disgraced her". David made no scruple to ally himself with the daughter of the uncircumcised king of Geshur (2 Sam. III. 3); and though he had children by several wives, he took concubines at Jerusalem. He chose, without doubt the handsomest he could meet with; so that it cannot be said that he took much pains to mortify nature with respect to the pleasures of love.

§ 39. Michal reproached David on account of the garb he put himself into when he danced in public. If he had discovered his nakedness, his action might be deemed ill, morally speaking; but if he did no more than make himself contemptible by his postures, and by not keeping up the majesty of his character, it was but an imprudence at most, and not a serious moral offense. It ought to be well considered on what occasion it was that he danced; it was when the Ark was carried to Jerusalem

\* BISHOP KITTO'S Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature.

(2 S. VI. 14) ; and consequently the excess of his joy and of his leaping testified his attachment and his sensibility for holy things. Michal, from a window, saw her husband transported with a holy fervor, dancing and capering before the Ark of the Lord ; and despising him, in her heart, she said to him when they met “How glorious was the king of Israel to-day, who uncovered himself in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself”. From these words it seems that David had stripped himself stark naked, yet at the same text (*v.* 14), speaking of David’s dancing before the Ark, it says he was girded with a linen ephod, which as Calmet says was a kind of sash. But he stripped so as to appear as it were, naked, and to make his behavior judged unworthy the gravity and majesty of a king ; and the more so, since the thing was done publicly and before a great multitude. It would be thought very strange in any part of Europe, if on a day of national rejoicing, the kings should dance in the streets with nothing but a small girdle on their bodies.

§ 40. And for this deserved reproach he not only repudiated his wife, to whom he was bound by many ties of obligation, she having loved him while she was the daughter of the reigning king, and while he was a poor adventurer—he not only repudiated her, but he gave up two of her brothers and five of her sons to be hung—to be hung without cause, (see Sect. 11.) and they were his brothers-in-law and step-sons. It is true that he had a motive for consenting that they should be murdered, “since\* it was desirable for the peace of his successors that the house of Saul should be exterminated”.

§ 41. The conquests of David deserve a few observations. There are some rigid moralists who do not think that a Christian prince can lawfully engage in war, merely out of a desire to aggrandize himself. These moralists approve of none but of defensive wars, or, in general, those which only tend to get every man restored to the possessions which belong to him. If this maxim be correct, many of David’s wars were unjust ; for besides that the Scripture often represents him as the aggressor, we find

\* BISHOP KITTO’S Cyclopædia. Article *David*.

that he extended the bounds of his empire from Egypt to the Euphrates. That we may not condemn David therefore, we had better say that conquests may sometimes be permitted ; and that consequently care should be taken lest in declaring against modern Princes, our censures fall unawares on that great prophet.

But, if generally speaking, the conquests of that holy Monarch have raised his glory without prejudice to his justice, it will be difficult to maintain this proposition when we enter into particulars. Let us not by our conjectures try to pry into secrets which history has not revealed to us ; let us not conclude that since David was willing to take advantage of the treason of Abner and Hushai, he therefore stuck not to make use of stratagems of almost every kind against the Pagan kings whom he subdued. Let us confine ourselves to what the sacred history has told us of the manner wherein he treated the vanquished. " He also brought the people that were in Rabbah [chief city of the Ammonites], and put them under saws, and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them pass through the brick-kiln ; and thus he did unto the cities of the children of Ammon" (2 S. XIII. 31). The Geneva Bible observes in the margin of this verse, that " these were different ways of putting people to death which were anciently practised". Let us see how he treated the Moabites ; " he measured them with a line, casting them down to the ground ; even with two lines measured he put to death, and with one full line to keep alive" (2 S. VIII. 2). That is to say, he determined to put to death precisely two-thirds of them, neither more nor less. Edom received a yet harsher treatment ; he there slew all the males ; " six months did Joab remain there with all Israel, until he had cut off every male in Edom" (1 K. XI. 16). Can this method of making war be denied to be blameworthy ? Have not the Turks and Tartars a little more humanity ? And if a vast number of books daily complain of the military executions of our own time, which are really cruel and highly to be blamed, though mild in comparison with David's, what would not the authors of those books say, had they such usage to censure as the saws, the harrows, and the brick-kilns of David, and the general slaughter of all the males, old and young ?

§ 42. When David, by reason of his great age, could not get heat under all the clothes, with which they covered him, it came into their heads to seek for a young girl to nurse him. He suffered them to bring to him, for that purpose the most beautiful maiden that could be found (1. K. I. 4.). Can this be said to be the action of a very chaste man? Will a man who is filled with the ideas of purity and perfectly resolved to do what decency and strict morality require of him, ever consent to these remedies? Can a man consent to them, unless he prefers the instincts of nature, and the interests of the flesh before those of God's spirit?

§ 43. The same passions which appear to have ruled David during his life, were strong when he was on the bed of death. He died in bed and in peace, with full knowledge of his approaching dissolution, and abundant time to prepare for it. When he could retain the sceptre no longer he called Solomon, the heir of the throne, and gave him the crown with such advice, as he supposed was fitting, in an experienced monarch, and an inspired prophet, to a young and inexperienced man, about to take charge of a great kingdom. I shall quote his words here, in full, as it may perhaps be considered a proper piece of advice for all young monarchs, and perhaps for all young men about to commence life for themselves, and a good example for all old sinners about to die:—

“I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man. And keep the charge of the Lord, thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayst prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself: *that* the Lord may continue his word which he spake concerning me, saying ‘If thy children take heed to their way to walk before me in truth, with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel’. *Moreover* thou knowest what Joab, the son of Zeruiah did to me, and what he did to the two captains of the host of Israel, unto Abner the son of Ner, and unto Amasa, the son of Jether, whom he slew and shed the blood of war in peace, and put the blood of war upon his girdle that was about his loins, and in his shoes that were on his feet. Do therefore according to thy wisdom, and *let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace.* But shew kindness unto the sons of Barzilai the Gilcadite, and let them be

of those that eat at thy table ; for so they came to me when I fled because of Absalom thy brother. And behold thou hast with thee Shimei, the son of Gera, a Benjamite of Bahurim, which cursed me with a grievous curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim ; but he came down to meet me at Jordan, and I sware to him by the Lord, saying ‘ I will not put thee to death with the sword.’ Now therefore hold him not guiltless ; for thou art a wise man and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him ; *but his hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood*”. 1. K. II. 2-9.

Is this the manner in which “ a man of God ” should die ? Not a word of his sins ! Not a word of a future life ! Not a word of Jehovah, except as the giver of sordid wealth and power and honor ! Not a word of his people ! Not a word of prayer for his own soul ! No, he dies cursing his fellowmen ! False to his oath, he orders his son to do, what he had promised not to do ! He orders the murder of those whom he had promised not to kill ! Let Christians consider fully the deeds of this “ man after God’s own heart”, admire his character, and go and name their children after him.

§ 44. From all that has been said in the preceding remarks, it may easily be inferred that if the people of Syria had been as great writers of libels as the American editors of political newspapers in the present day, they would have strangely disfigured David’s glory. With what infamous names and titles would they not have loaded that troop of adventurers, who went to join him after he left Saul’s court ? The Scriptures inform us that all who were persecuted by their creditors, all the discontented and all who were in bad circumstances, repaired to him, and that he became their captain (1. S. XXII. 2). Nothing is capable of being more maliciously misrepresented than a thing of this kind. Those who have written of Cataline, and of Walker, would furnish a satirical painter with a great many colors. History has preserved a small specimen of the abuses to which David was exposed among the friends of Saul. This specimen shows that they accused him of being a man of blood, and looked on the rebellion of Absalom as a just punishment for the mischiefs which they said David had done to Saul and his whole family. Shimei cursed him as follows :

“ Come out, come out ! thou bloody man, and thou man of Be-

lial : the Lord hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned, and the Lord hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom, thy son ; and behold, thou art taken in thy mischief, because thou art a bloody man".  
2. *S. XVI.* 7. 8.

They who may think it strange that I should speak my opinion of certain actions of David, as compared with the standard of natural morality, are desired to consider two things. *First*, that they are themselves obliged to confess that this Prince's behavior towards Uriah was one of the greatest crimes that can be committed. There is therefore no other difference between us than with regard to the number of his faults : for I acknowledge, as well as they, that the failings of this prophet are no argument, against his having been a man full of piety and extraordinary zeal for the glory of the Lord. He was subject to the alternatives of passions and grace : a fatality adhering to our nature ever since the sin of Adam. The grace of God guided him often, but in several instances his passions got the upper hand. *Secondly*, that great injury would be done to the eternal laws, and consequently to true religion also, if a handle were given to Infidels to object to us that so soon as a man has a share in the inspirations of God, we look on his conduct as the rule of manners ; so that we dare not condemn those actions which are diametrically opposite to human notions of equity, when it is he who has committed them. There is no possibility of compromise : either these are unworthy actions, or actions like these are not wicked. Now as we must necessarily choose one or the other of these two propositions, is it not better to consult the interest of morality, rather than the glory of a particular person ? Otherwise should we not declare that we would rather prejudice the honor of God than that of a mortal man ?

Such is the character of the man who is held up to us as a man proper to be gifted with royal powers, with divine inspiration—a man "after God's own heart"—the only man to whom such high praise was ever given—the man who was the dearest to Jehovah of all the descendants of Adam. If such men be saved, who will be damned ?



## CHAPTER VII.

### REBELLIOUSNESS OF GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE.

“Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation”.—JEHOVAH.

“It profited the Jews little to be God's people ; if they had been the devil's, they could not have been more wicked or miserable”.—VOLTAIRE.

§ 45. The Bible informs us that Jehovah selected the Jews to be his peculiar people, to whom he was a God, whom he took under his especial charge to the entire neglect of all other nations, whom he provided with spiritual guides and temporal rulers, to whom he gave written rules for their religious, political, social and moral government, among whom he made his home, in whose sight he frequently manifested himself in the most wonderful miracles, and who nevertheless were almost continually in rebellion against him. \* Subjoined is a list of the chief miracles done before Israel, and the chief rebellions of that people against Jehovah from the time of Moses, 1500 B. C. to 600 B. C., when they were conquered and carried into captivity by the King of Babylon. The reader will please to remember, while reading, that he has before him an abstract, not made from a story in Baron Munchausen, or the Arabian Nights, but from the “Word of God”, as Jesus called it.

The Jews believed the miracles and first claims to divine authority made by Moses and Aaron, who sought to rid their tribe from the yoke of the Egyptians. *Ex. IV. 30, 31.*

Jehovah renewed his promise of favor to Israel. *Ex. VI. 4.*

He turned the waters of Egypt to blood. *Ex. VII. 19.*

\* I trust that no one will understand my language, in this chapter or elsewhere, as countenancing the vulgar prejudices against the blood or faith of the modern Jews. If I can strike Christianity through ancient Judaism I feel bound to do so: but I wish that all Christendom may soon feel toward the race, the sentiments expressed by Lessing in *Nathan der Weise*. I know many of them to be enlightened, liberal-minded, good men, and feel honored by their friendship.

He covered the land with frogs. *Ex. VIII. 6.*

He turned the dust into lice. *Ex. VIII. 16.*

He filled the land with flies. *Ex. VIII. 24.*

He slew all the cattle of Egypt. *Ex. IX. 6.*

He covered the Egyptians with boils. *Ex. IX. 10.*

He sent a fiery hail upon Egypt. *Ex. XI. 24.*

He filled Egypt with locusts. *Ex. X. 13.*

He covered Egypt with a deep darkness. *Ex. X. 22.*

He slew the first-born of every Egyptian family. *Ex. XII. 30.*

The Israelites murmured. *Ex. XIV. 10.*

Jehovah sent clouds by day, and pillars of fire by night, to guide the Jews through the wilderness. *Ex. XIV. 20.*

Passage of the Red Sea with a great miracle. *Ex. XIV. 21.*

The Israelites murmured. *Ex. XV. 24.*

Waters of Marah miraculously sweetened. *Ex. XV. 25.*

"The whole congregation of the children of Israel" expressed their regret that they had not died in Egypt by God's hand. *Ex. XVI. 3.*

Quails and Mauna foretold and sent by miracle. *Ex. XVI. 4-14.*

The Israelites disobeyed Moses. *Ex. XVI. 20, 27.*

The Israelites murmured. (*Ex. XVII. 1*). This was the fifth rebellion of the Jews against Moses within the short space of three months (*Ex. XIX. 1*), after leaving Egypt, and after having witnessed during that time the great miracles recorded above. And all these rebellions were without any reasonable pretext, so far as we can learn from the Scripture.

Water furnished to the Jews by miracle. *Ex. XVII. 6.*

The Jews conquered the Amalekites by the aid of a great miracle. *Ex. XVII. 11, 12.*

Jehovah sent a message to the Jews, and they promised to obey. *Ex. XIX. 8.*

Jehovah descended upon Sinai in fire and smoke. *Ex. XIX. 16-18.*

The Jews saw, feared, stood afar off and begged Moses "let not God speak to us lest we die". *Ex. XX. 18, 19.*

All the Jews promised obedience to all the ordinances of God. *Ex. XXIV. 3.*

The Glory of the Lord dwelt six days on Mount Sinai, and the sight of it was like a devouring fire in the eyes of the Hebrews. *Ex. XXIV. 16.*

Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abisha, seventy elders, and the nobles of Israel "saw" God. *Ex. XXIV. 10, 11.*

While Moses was upon the Mount, the Israelites induced Aaron, (previously consecrated as high priest of Jehovah), to make the Golden Calf, which they worshipped. *Ex. XXXII. 1-4.*

"The Lord plagued the people because they made the calf which Aaron made". *Ex. XXXII. 35.*

Jehovah appeared in a cloud at the Tabernacle door, and the Hebrews "every man at his tent door", worshipped. *Ex. XXXIII. 10.*

The Israelites willingly brought offerings to the Lord. *Ex. XXXV. 20 ; XXXVI. 5.*

They did all that the Lord commanded to Moses. *Ex. XXXIX. 32, 42, 43.*

The cloud of the Lord by day, and his fire by night rested upon the Tabernacle in the sight of all the house of Israel. *Ex. XL. 38.*

The Glory of the Lord appeared to all the people ; and a fire came from before the Lord and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat ; and all the people saw and shouted and fell on their faces. *Lev. IX. 23, 24.*

The Israelites murmured. *Num. XI. 1-6.*

They lamented that they had not died in Egypt, and they proposed to return. *Num. XIV. 2-4.*

Jehovah was exceedingly provoked, and his Glory appeared on the Tabernacle before all the children of Israel. *Num. XIV. 10, 11.*

Jehovah slew all who spake evil of the promised land. *Num. XIV. 36.*

Two hundred and fifty princes of Israel, and the tribe of Korah rebelled against Moses and Aaron. *Num. XVI. 1-3.*

The next day, in the sight of all Israel, Moses and Aaron had a conference with the rebels, and Moses prayed that the rebels might be swallowed up by the earth. And forthwith "the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained

unto Korah": and the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense, were consumed by fire from heaven. *Num. XVI. 30-35.*

The next day the Jews murmured against Moses and Aaron for slaying the people of the Lord. [!] *Num. XVI. 41.*

A cloud covered the Tabernacle, and the Glory of the Lord appeared. *Num. XVI. 42.*

Jehovah slew 14,700 of the murmuring Jews. *Num. XVI. 49.*

Every Israelite prepared a rod with his name upon it, and Aaron's rod was miraculously exalted above all; and the people thereupon appealed to Moses and Aaron to be protected from death. *Num. XVII. 1-13.*

The Israelites murmured and lamented that they had not died in Egypt. *Num. XX. 2-5.*

The Glory of the Lord appeared to them. *Num. XX. 6.*

Moses brought water from the rock at Meribah by miracle. *Num. XX. 7.*

The Jews became discouraged and murmured against Jehovah and Moses, and exclaimed, "Wherefore have ye brought us up out of the land of Egypt to die in the wilderness." *Num. XXI. 4, 5.*

Jehovah plagued them with fiery serpents, and many died. *Num. XXI. 6.*

Moses made a brazen serpent and hoisted it upon a pole, and all the wounded who looked upon it were healed. *Num. XXI. 9.*

Israel committed idolatry and whoredom. *Num. XXV. 1, 2.*

Jehovah slew 24,000 Jews in a plague for their sins. *Num. XXV. 9.*

"From the day", said Jehovah, when the Jews had arrived near the Jordan "that thou didst depart out of the land of Egypt until ye came unto this place, ye have been rebellious against the Lord." *Deut. IX. 7.*

The Jews offered no sacrifices, but worshipped Chiuu and Moloch all the time they were in the wilderness. *Amos V. 25.*

"Israel served the Lord all the days [40 years] of

Joshua" (*Josh. XXIV. 31*). This is singular if considered in connection with the fact that they were in almost constant rebellion against Jehovah before, and very soon after the reign of Joshua. What special influence was there in Joshua to command the obedience which Moses failed to secure? The miracles done by the latter were much more numerous and quite as great as those of the latter; and he was evidently much more in the confidence of Jehovah.

After the death of Joshua, Israel asked Jehovah who should lead them against the Canaanites. *Jud. I. 1.*

The next generation "knew not the Lord nor yet the works which he had done for Israel." And they served Baal and other gods. *Jud. II. 10—12.*

Jehovah "delivered them into the hands of the spoiler." *Jud. II. 14.*

"The children of Israel cried unto the Lord. *Jud. III. 9.*

Then the Lord raised up a deliverer to them, Othniel. *Jud. III. 9.*

"The children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord." *Jud. III. 12.*

"Jehovah gathered unto him the children of Ammon and Amalek, and went and smote Israel." *Jud. III. 13.*

"The children of Israel cried unto the Lord." *Jud. III. 15.*

"The Lord raised them up a deliverer, Ehud, the son of Gera," an assassin. *Jud. III. 15.*

"And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord, when Ehud was dead." *Jud. IV. 1.*

"And the Lord sold them into the hand of Jabin, King of Canaan." *Jud. IV. 2.*

"And the children of Israel cried unto the Lord." *Jud. IV. 3.*

"God subdued Jabin," by inducing Jael to assassinate Sisera, the general of Jabin's army. *Jud. IV. 23.*

"The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord." *Jud. VI. 1.*

"The Lord delivered them into the hands of Midian for seven years." *Jud. VI. 1.*

"The children of Israel cried unto the Lord." *Jud. VI. 6.*

Jehovah raised up Gideon to liberate them. *Jud. VI. 11, VIII. 28.*

“And it came to pass, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel turned again and went a-whoring after Baalim.” *Jud. VIII. 33.*

“And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim and Ashtaroth, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the Lord and served him not.” *Jud. X. 6.*

“And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel and he sold them into the hands of the Philistines.” *Jud. X. 7.*

“And the children of Israel cried unto the Lord.” *Jud. X. 10.*

Jehovah said, “I will deliver you no more; go and cry unto the gods whom ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation.” *Jud. X. 10.*

The children of Israel cried again unto Jehovah, and put away the strange gods and served the Lord. *Jud. X. 15, 16.*

Jehovah raised up Jephthah to deliver them. *Jud. XI. 29, 32.*

“And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord.” *Jud. XIII. 1.*

“And the Lord delivered them into the hands of the Philistines forty years.” *Jud. XIII. 1.*

When Samuel arose as a prophet he found the people given over completely to idolatry. The Philistines had possession of Jehovah's ark, in which the Mosaic law was kept (1 S. VII. 2). By Samuel's advice the Jews were led to worship Jehovah once more. “Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth and served the Lord only.” 1 S. VII. 4.

During the administrations of Samuel, Saul and David, so far as can be learned from the Scripture, the Jews were unusually true to Jehovah.

Solomon was idolatrous in his old age, and he led the Jews to worship Ashtaroth, the Goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh, the God of the Moabites, and Milcom, the God of the children of Ammon. 1 K. XI. 4-9. 33.

After the death of Solomon, ten of the twelve Jewish tribes, (five-sixths of the whole nation) revolted from the legitimate King Rehoboam, established the kingdom of "Israel" or Samaria, and finally deserted the Mosaic law entirely and forever: while the two tribes of Judah and Levi, remained true to Rehoboam, held Jerusalem as their capital and did not entirely desert Jehovah. These two tribes were known as "Judah" in contradistinction to the revolted "Israel." It is only with Judah that we have hereafter to do.

Rehoboam reigned seventeen years, and in his reign Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord, and they provoked him to jealousy with their sins which they had committed, above all that their fathers had done. "For they also built them high places [where idolatrous and obscene rites were practised] and images, and groves, on every high hill, and under every green tree. And there were also Sodomites in the land; and they did according to all the abominations of the nations, which the Lord cast out before the children of Israel" (1 *K.* XIV. 22-24). The whole nation "forsook the law of the Lord". 2 *Ch.* XII. 1.

Abijam, the son of Rehoboam reigned three years and "walked in all the sins of his father" 1 *K.* XV. 2. 3.

Asa, his son, reigned forty-one years and "did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord" "but the high places were not removed". 1 *K.* XV. 10. 11. 14.

Jehosaphat, son of Asa, reigned twenty five years "and he turned not aside from doing that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, nevertheless the high places were not taken away; for the people offered and burned incense yet in the high places". 1 *K.* XXII. 42. 43.

Jehoram, the son of Jehosaphat, reigned eight years and "did evil in the sight of the Lord". 2 *K.* VIII. 17. 18.

Ahaziah, son of Jehoram, reigned one year and "did evil in the sight of the Lord". 2 *K.* VIII. 27.

Athaliah, Ahaziah's mother, reigned six years and did evil, and there were temples and priests of Baal in Jerusalem. 2. *K.* XI. 3. 18.

Jehoash, son of Ahaziah, reigned forty years, and "did that which was right in the sight of the Lord", "but the

high places were not taken away : the people still sacrificed and burned incense in the high places". 2 *K.* XII. 2. 3.

Amaziah, son of Joash, reigned twenty nine years ; and "he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord", "howbeit the high places were not taken away : as yet the people did sacrifice and burned incense on the high places" (2 *K.* XIV. 2. 3. 4). The writer of *Chronicles*, however, asserts that Amaziah, in the latter part of his reign, chose "the gods of the children of Seir" to be his gods, and worshipped them, and offered incense before them. 2 *Ch.* XXV. 14.

Azariah, son of Amaziah, reigned fifty two years, "and he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord", "save that the high places were not removed ; the people sacrificed and burned incense still on the high places". 2 *K.* XV. 2. 3. 4.

Jotham, son of Azariah, reigned sixteen years, and "he did that which was right, in the sight of the Lord", "howbeit the high places were not removed ; the people sacrificed and burned incense still in the high places". 2 *K.* XV. 33-35.

Ahaz, the son of Jotham, reigned sixteen years, and was wicked, "and sacrificed and burned his son, and burned incense in the high places, and on the hills and under every green tree". 2 *K.* XVI. 2-4.

"Judah kept not the commandments of the Lord their God, but walked according to the abominable and idolatrous statutes of the ten tribes, who worshipped images of calves, and all the host of heaven, and served Baal". 2 *K.* XVII. 14-19.

Hezekiah, son of Ahaz, reigned twenty-nine years, and was pious. "He removed the high places, and broke the images, and cut down the groves, and broke in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made ; for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it". 2 *K.* XVIII. 2-4.

Manasseh, son of Hezekiah, reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem, and he was very wicked. He built up again the high places, reared altars for Baal, worshipped all the host of Heaven, built altars for the host of Heaven in the two courts of the house of the Lord, made his son pass



through the fire, used enchantments, dealt with familiar spirits and with wizards, wrought much wickedness in the sight of the Lord to provoke him to anger, and seduced the Jews to do more evil than did the nations whom the Lord destroyed before the children of Israel (2 *K. XXI.* 1—9.) It is a very singular matter that Jehovah should have submitted without resistance to such insults offered to him in his own house, after having been so prompt to vindicate his honor by overthrowing the Idol of Dagon, when the Philistines had put his ark in their temple (1. *S. V.* 3). But the ways of Jehovah are inscrutable!

Jehovah declares that the Jews “have done that which was evil in my sight, and have provoked me to anger, since the day their fathers came forth out of Egypt, even unto this day. And I will forsake the remnant of mine inheritance, and deliver them into the hands of their enemies; and they shall become a prey and a spoil to their enemies”. 2 *K. XXI.* 15. 14.

Amon, son of Manasseh, reigned two years, and was very wicked and idolatrous. 2 *K. XXII.* 20. 22.

Josiah, son of Amon, reigned thirty-one years, and was very pious. At his order the priests brought forth “out of the Temple of the Lord, all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for the Grove, and for all the host of Heaven”, and “he put down the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah”, and he defiled Topheth, that no man might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Moloch (2 *K. XXII.* 1. 2. *XXIII.* 4—24). It was a custom then with the Jews of Jerusalem, to offer their sons and daughters as burned sacrifices, and if it was the custom in the capital, it is but reasonable to presume that the same custom prevailed throughout Judea.

Jehoahaz, son of Josiah, reigned three months and did evil. 2 *K. XXIII.* 31. 32.

Jehoiakim, son of Josiah, reigned eleven years and was very wicked. 2 *K. XXIII.* 36. 37.

Jehovah said to Ezekiel, that the priests had violated the law, and profaned his holy things, and the princes and the people were full of wickedness, and that he, Jehovah, had sought for a man among them, that should make a

ledge and stand in the gap before him in the land, that he should not destroy it, but he found none (*Ezek. XXII. 26. 30*). There was not one good man in the whole country—not one after Jehovah's scanty notion of goodness.

Jehoiachin, son of Jehoiakim, reigned three months and was idolatrous. *2 K. XXIV. 9*.

Zedekiah, son of Josiah, reigned eleven years and was idolatrous. *2 K. XXIV. 19*.

“Moreover [during the reign of Zedekiah] all the chief of the priests and the people transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen, and polluted the house of the Lord, which he had hallowed in Jerusalem”. *2 Ch. XXXVI. 14*.

“They caused to pass through the fire all that opened the womb”. (*Ezek. XX. 26*.) That is, they offered all their first-born children as sacrifices to the heathen gods.

The Sabbath had not been observed by the Jews for five hundred years. *2 Ch. XXXVI. 21*.

“As I live, saith the Lord, Sodom, thy sister had not done, she nor her daughter [Gomorrhah] as thou [Jerusalem] has done, thou and thy daughters” [the towns of Judea] (*Ezek. XVI. 48*). To understand the force of this description of the wickedness of Jerusalem, the reader should turn to Chapter XIX of *Genesis* and see how wicked Sodom was. The latter city had not ten “righteous” persons in it. There were four persons in it, however, who were saved by Jehovah, and the righteousness of these four may be judged of from the facts that he slew one of them in his indignation within a few hours, after the party left the city, and the other three committed incest. If these were righteous, what must the wicked have been. Wanted—somebody with a lively imagination to describe the wickedness of Jerusalem.

“There is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land”. *Hos. IV. 1*.

We have thus traced the general relation of the “Jewish people” to their protecting divinity under every administration from the time of Moses, down to that of the Babylonian captivity—a period of nearly nine hundred years, if the commonly received chronology be correct. We have seen that during nearly the whole of this period, the

people adored the gods of the heathens, worshipped idols, practised their religious rites in groves, with the obscenities which accompanied the grove-rites of the Phœnicians and Syrians, and sought to obtain the favor of the Gods by offering children as burnt-sacrifices. Very soon after the nation had been established by David, and the religious worship by Solomon, in a temple dedicated to the Lord, five-sixths of the people revolted, and became idolaters, deserting Jehovah forever. The other one-sixth continued nominally to be God's people, but in the long list of monarchs from Rehoboam down to Zedekiah, there were only three reigns unstained by idolatry. During the whole of this period, so far, as we can see, the people were in no respect morally superior to the heathens about them. It is sad, indeed, to think that so many inspired prophets, filled with the wisdom of Jehovah, and supported by all his omnipotent power, as well as by all the political influence of some of the monarchs, had no more influence to render God's favorite nation moral, pure, and enlightened. If the philosopher at this day does not succeed immediately in all his schemes of elevating the people and delivering them from the yoke of religious, political, and social tyranny, let him take courage by the comparison of his own progress as compared with that made by David, Solomon, Jeremiah, and others of ancient times, who were backed in their labors by the almighty gods, and yet did not succeed in their purposes.

We have seen that the Jews under the first Temple (from 1000 B. C. till 600 B. C.) paid little regard to the Mosaic decrees concerning the worship of Jehovah. In fact, there is some doubt whether they knew what those decrees were. Moses had commanded that the book of the Law should be kept in the Ark (*Deut. XXXI. 24-26*), but it is not easily to be understood how the Ark and the Law were preserved, while the whole nation was repeatedly enslaved by the Philistines. At one time the heathen had the Ark of the Lord in their possession for seven months, having taken it in fair fight (*1 S. VI. 1*). During all these troubles, we have no information about the Law, of which the writers appear to have known or cared nothing. When Solomon placed the Ark in the Temple, there was

nothing in it save the two tables of stone—the Law being nobody knows where (1. *K. VIII.* 9). At last, however, a copy of the Law was found in the reign of king Josiah, four hundred years after the time of Solomon (2 *K. XXII.* 8.—*XXIII.* 24). When the Law was read to the monarch, he was wonderfully astonished at its contents, for during the eighteen years (2 *K. XXII.* 3) that he had been reigning, he had never heard of this book, nor had he any idea of the Jehovah whose worship was prescribed by Moses ; but, under the influence of Hilkipah, the priest, he determined to make amends, if possible, for sins of the past by the piety of the future. Accordingly, he removed from the Temple the vessels used in the worship of Baal, he put down the idolatrous priests, he removed the idols (translated “grove” in the English Bible) from the Temple, he broke down the houses of the Sodomites which adjoined that holy building, he defiled the place where the people had been in the habit of sacrificing their children, and slew all the priests of the high places upon the altars. Previous to Josiah, Amon had reigned for two years, and before him Manasseh was king for fifty-five years, and both were very wicked, ignorant, or neglectful of Jehovah, giving themselves up to all the idolatries of the heathens, and leading “the Jews to do more evil than the nations whom the Lord destroyed” before them. Adding the fifty-seven years of these two monarchs to the eighteen idolatrous years of Josiah, we have seventy-five years during which the people knew nothing of the Law, and even the High Priest discovered its existence by mere accident. Soon after the death of Josiah, the Jews were conquered, their temple was destroyed, their worship was prohibited, all the principal men were carried to Babylon as slaves, and the remainder were left in Judea under Babylonian rulers. After seventy years the captivity ended ; some of the Babylonian captives returned, and a sort of Jewish nationality was established, but it was a sickly affair, and was soon destroyed, never to be reestablished. The Mosaic religion, however, now began to bloom ; the priests asserted that the Mosaic law had been the guide of their forefathers for a thousand years, and that the prosperity of the nation depended upon their faithfulness to it : and since that time they have been

faithful to it as no other people ever were or can be faithful to a creed. We remark, however, that their fidelity to Jehovah did not begin until he had ceased to give them prophets, miracles, inspired writings and temporal prosperity. "The devout\* and even scrupulous attachment to the Mosaić religion, so conspicuous among the Jews who lived under the second Temple, [from 535 B. C. to 60 A. D.] becomes still more surprising if it is compared with the stubborn incredulity of their forefathers. When the law was given on Mount Sinai, when the tides of the ocean and the courses of the planets were suspended for the convenience of the Israelites, and when temporal rewards and punishments were the immediate consequences of their piety and disobedience, they perpetually relapsed into rebellion against the visible majesty of their divine king, placed the idols of the nations in the sanctuary of Jehovah, and imitated every fantastic ceremony that was practised in the tents of the Arabs or in the cities of Phœnicia. The contemporaries of Moses and Joshua had beheld with careless indifference the most amazing miracles. Under the pressure of every calamity, the belief of those miracles has preserved the Jews of a later period from the universal contagion of idolatry ; and in contradiction to every known principle of the human mind, that singular people seems to have yielded a stronger and more ready assent to the traditions of their remote ancestors than to the evidence of their own senses".

\* GIBBON. Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### BIBLICAL SUPERSTITIONS.

“Ghosts prudently withdraw at peep of day.”—*English Proverb.*

§ 46. The Bible, as I maintain, adopts and sanctions various superstitious notions, which were common among the ancient Jews, and which are rejected by the enlightenment of this age. For their rejection we owe no thanks to “The Word of God”, but much to science and skeptical philosophy. What is superstition? I have selected some of the definitions from our latest and best English dictionaries as follows:—

“Belief without evidence.” *Webster.*

“Belief in the direct agency of superior powers in certain extraordinary or singular events, or in omens and prognostications.” *Webster.*

“The habit or act of ascribing to the direct or special agency of supernatural power, results which can be proved to proceed from secondary causes.” *Worcester.*

“The word [superstition] is also extended to those who believe in witchcraft, magic, and apparitions, or that the divine will is declared by omens or augury, that the fortune of individuals can be affected by things indifferent, by things deemed lucky or unlucky, or that diseases can be cured by words, charms, or incantations.” *Ogilvie.*

“When a man,” says Parker, “fears God more than he loves him; when he will forsake reason, conscience, love,—the still small voice of God in the heart, for any of the legion voices of authority, tradition, expediency, which come of ignorance, selfishness and sin; whenever he hopes by a poor prayer, or a listless attendance at church, or an austere observance of Sabbath and Fast-days: when he hopes by professing with his tongue the doctrine he cannot believe in his heart, to atone for wicked actions, wrong thoughts, unholy feelings, a six-days’ life of meanness, de-

ception, rottenness and sin,—then he is superstitious." I do not mean to say that in this chapter I have mentioned all the superstitious ideas, adopted as true by the authors of the Bible, but only a small proportion of the more important ones. In the subject of this chapter, as in that of every other of this book, the Biblical doctrines might furnish matter for much more extensive comment.

§ 47. *The Bible teaches the existence of a personal Devil.* Job says (*I. 6. 7.*) "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them. And the Lord said unto Satan, 'Whence comest thou?' Then Satan answered the Lord and said, 'From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.'" This divinely inspired book proceeds to relate in all apparent seriousness, how the two agreed that the Prince of Darkness should smite Job, a good man, with misfortune, and try whether he could not be induced to curse his maker. The two had several consultations on the subject, and appeared to separate in a very friendly manner, all things considered. The Gospel nowhere intimates that there is anything except the literal truth in this book; and any figurative interpretation, placed upon the language, would be entirely without excuse. The only reason for disbelief of the plain meaning is its absurdity; but that absurdity would not justify the adoption of a different meaning.

Matthew (*IV. 1—11*), Mark (*I. 12*) and Luke (*IV. 1—13*) relate that Jesus, before beginning to preach, was "led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil." Matthew and Luke report the literal conversation between the two august parties. Satan showed to Jesus "all the kingdoms of the world", (it was from the top of an *exceeding* high mountain), and offered them in consideration of his worship. If Satan had been sensible he might have known that he could not induce such a nice young man as Jesus to do anything so naughty. Jesus like a well-bred youth quoted Scripture at him; and Satan quoted Scripture back again, to show that he had had a religious education. Satan also took Jesus, the latter apparently making no objection, to a pinnacle of the Temple in the "holy city" (for Jerusalem was very holy in that

age, even to the Evangelists, little as the degenerate Christians of this age care about it), and from that pinnacle his Satanic Majesty politely invited his companion to cast himself down ; and Jesus as politely begged to be excused, with another quotation from the Scripture. Finally "the Devil leaveth him" up on the pinnacle, the curtain fell on that scene, and Jesus clambered down from his elevated position, the best way he could. There was no possibility of mistake about the person in this case ; it was the Devil, and no mistake. Jesus, after having made his acquaintance, and knowing him to be a gentlemanly fellow usually spoke of him as "the prince of *this* world." *John XII. 31.*

Jude, in his Epistle teaches Christians to be very kind in their manners toward all the world, and never to speak harshly to others. He calls their attention to a very high example, and says "Michael the archangel, when contending with the Devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, 'The Lord rebuke thee.'" Of course, Jude would not lie ; and yet his account of Michael and Satan, must be either literal truth or a lie. Christians can take their choice.

It requires no argument to show that the belief in a personal Devil (in addition to belief in a good divinity) is inconsistent with monotheism. The Devil can be nothing more or less than an evil god ; and thus there are two gods, instead of one. For this reason it is that the enlightened Christians refuse to believe in a personal Satan, and assert that faith in him is not taught in their Bible. According to them "Satan" of the Scriptures is nothing more, than a personification of evil ; but they might as well assert that Jesus was only a personification of good. The Christians must presume that, when Jehovah was dictating the Bible, he knew what effect the language would have upon its readers, and intended to produce that effect. Now the passages where Satan is mentioned, led all Christendom to believe in a personal devil for eighteen centuries ; either Jehovah did not intend that the language should have any peculiar effect, or it has not had the effect which he intended, or there is a personal Devil.



I shall endeavor to fortify my position that the dogma of a personal devil is a part of Christianity, with some passages from Robert Hall, one of the ablest of Christian orators.

“The attentive reader of Scripture will not fail to remark that the statement of the existence, the moral propensities, and the agency of Satan is extended nearly through the whole of the sacred volume, from *Genesis* to the *Revelations*; that its writers in their portraiture of our great adversary, employ the same images, adhere to the same appellations throughout; that a complete identity of character is exhibited, marked with the same features of force, cruelty, malignity, and fraud. He is everywhere depicted as alike the enemy of God and man; who having appeared as a serpent in the history of the fall, is recognized by St. Paul under the same character, in express allusion to that event (2 *Cor. XI. 3.*), and afterwards by St. John in the *Apocalypse*, as that old Serpent, the Devil, and Satan which deceiveth the world. *Rev. XII. 9.*

“We have therefore just the same evidence of the real personality of Satan, as of the Holy Spirit, and exactly of the same kind. Both are described by inspired persons; to both volitions, purposes, and personal characteristics are ascribed. A uniformity of representation, an identity of character, distinguished respectively by the most opposite moral qualities, equally pervade the statements of Scripture as to each, to such a degree, that supposing the sacred writers to have designed to teach us the proper personality of Satan, it is not easy to conceive what other language they could have adopted. \* \* \* \* \*

“We are taught to conceive of Satan as the head of a spiritual empire of great extent, and comprehending within itself innumerable subordinate agents. The term Satan, in application to this subject, is invariably found in the singular number, implying that there is one designated by that appellation. His associates in the primeval rebellion are spoken of in the plural number, and are denominated his angels. Thus, the punishment reserved for them at the close of time, is said to be “prepared for the devil and his angels.” What their number may be it is vain to conjecture; but when we reflect on the magnitude of the

universe, and the extensive and contemplated agency in which they are affirmed to be engaged, we shall probably be inclined to conjecture that it by far exceeds that of the human race. \* \* \* \* \*

“In asserting the personality and agency of Satan, we are not, it should be remembered, proposing to our reader a speculation in philosophy; we are asserting a fact beyond the limits of its jurisdiction; a fact for which we profess to produce no other evidence, besides the declaration of Scripture. If its testimony is not sufficient to decide the question, we are out at sea, nor is it possible to specify what doctrines we are warranted to receive on its authority, especially when we consider that to enlarge our knowledge of the invisible world, would appear to be the proper business of a revelation, whose exclusive glory it is to ‘bring life and immortality to light’.\* \* \* \* \*

“The attempt to set aside the doctrine on this subject, derived from Scripture, under the notion of its being *unphilosophical*, is puerile and unmeaning. The truth is, that it is in no other sense unphilosophical, except that philosophy has nothing to do with it; that it implies supernatural economy, to which its principles are totally inapplicable, and which it can neither affirm nor deny. Here, if anywhere, we must have recourse to ‘the Law and the Testimony’; if they [the interpreters] speak not according to them ‘there is no light.’” \* \* \* If there be no personal Devil, the temptation of Jesus must have been a mere vision—a temptation by such a tendency to evil, as exists in every human mind. But this would represent Jesus to us as corrupt and fallible, weak and sinful, whereas the Scripture says that he was “holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners” (*Heb. VII. 26*). “To ascribe to Satan such an interference in the moral concerns of the world, as is implied in his incessantly tempting men to sin, is to suppose him omnipresent, [and almost omniscient] a supposition repugnant to [inconsistent with] the nature of a finite being. It must be confessed that the Scriptures of the New Testament teach us to conceive of satanic agency as concurring in almost every act of deliberate sin; he is said to have filled the heart of Ananias, to have entered in Judas, ‘after he had taken the sop’, and to be ‘the god of this world

who worketh mightily with the children of disobedience”.

Polytheistic, and in many respects unreasonable, as this belief in a personal devil is, it yet appears to me to be an essential and indispensable part of Christianity. Evil exists—that must be admitted ; but an omnipotent Creator and Governor of the Universe, who is the embodiment of love, could not create it nor permit its existence. He can make men to enjoy eternal and exquisite pleasure without any alloy of affliction, if we are to believe the story of Paradise, and the promise of Heaven. Since there is then no impossibility of pure pleasure, and since a good God could not create evil, we must believe that it was created and “brought into the world” by Satan, an evil spirit, who exists in despite of the good Spirit, and is engaged in a constant war with him.

§ 48. *The Bible asserts the existence of a material Hell.* It is necessary that a personal Devil, a Prince of Darkness, should have a home, a dominion ; and such the Christian Devil has. His realm is the material Hell where the enemies of Jehovah are broiled with infinite and endless agonies over eternal flames. The New Testament writers make frequent references to this home of the damned.

“Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels”. *Mat. XXV. 31.*

“The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he had reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire”. *Jude. 6, 7.*

“He [Christ] will thoroughly purge his [threshing] floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner ; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable”. *Luke. III. 17.*

“The children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness ; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. *Mat. VIII. 12.*

“The son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity ; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire ; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth”. *Mat. XIII. 42.*

“If thy hand offend thee, cut it off ; it is better for thee to go into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire

that never shall be quenched ; where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched. *Mark. IX. 43.*

“These both were cast alive into a lake of fire, burning with brimstone”. *Rev. XIX. 20.*

“And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophets are, and shall be tormented day and night, forever and ever. *Rev. XX. 10.*

“The fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone” *Rev. XXI. 8.*

“If a man worship the beast or his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation ; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb ; and the smoke of their torment ascendeth ever and ever ; and they have no rest day nor night”. *Rev. X. 9-11.*

After Jesus was crucified, he went down to the place of the damned, and delivered a course of lectures for their edification, addressing himself, as it seems, more particularly to those who lived before Noah, when men were so wicked on the earth that Jehovah repented that he had created the species. Peter (*2 Pet. III. 19, 20*), says that Christ, under the direction of the Spirit, “went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing”. Of late, the Christian priests have said very little about this visit of Jesus to a hell, the very existence of which as a material place has lost credit even among the most ignorant ; but a hundred years ago it was the universal doctrine of the Protestant as it still is of the Catholic Church. The Episcopalian prayer-book makes special mention that “Christ descended into hell”.

Such is hell ! And it may not be improper to ask who are going thither ? Jesus tells us that “many be called, but few chosen” (*Mat. XX. 16*). Paul informs us that salvation is by faith, “by the works of the law shall no man be justified” (*Gal. II. 16*), and he assures us that “no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost” (*1 Cor. XII. 3*). But even if men might hope, by being

as upright as possible, to merit salvation, they would get little encouragement from the Bible which declares "there is no man that sinneth not" (1 K. VIII. 46). Let no one imagine that there is any injustice in the condemnation of nine out of ten to hell. "Is it not lawful for me?" says Christ, "to do what I like with mine own"? Nothing which I might say, would be appropriate here, and carry so much weight as the following extracts from Massillon's great sermon *On the Small Number of the Chosen*:

"To the question, how many will be saved, Jesus Christ replies to you to-day that there were many widows afflicted by the famine in Israel, but only the widow of Sarepta deserved to be succored by the prophet Elias, that the number of lepers in Israel was great in the time of Elisha, but that Naaman was the only one healed by the man of God. \* \* Only the family of Noah was saved from the flood; Abraham alone was selected to be the father of the chosen people. Of the six hundred thousand Hebrews none save Cabeb, and Joshua entered the land of promise; Job was the only just man in the land of Uz, Lot in Sodom, and the three Jewish children in Babylon. Figures so frightful are confirmed by the expressions of the prophets; you will have seen in *Isaiah* that the 'elect' are as rare as the grapes in the vineyard, which have escaped the search of the harvesters—as scarce as the wheat stalks in the fields which have been reaped.

"The Gospel adds yet more features to the terrors of these figures. I might speak to you of the two ways—one of which is narrow, rugged, and trodden but by few—the other wide, smooth, strewn with flowers, and covered with the multitude of mankind. In the sacred books the people generally are always spoken of as deserving of reproof, and the righteous as forming an insignificant number, when compared with the great mass of the sinners. \* \* \* \*

"I figure to myself that our last hour is come; the heavens are opening over our heads; time is no more, and eternity has begun. Jesus Christ is about to appear to judge us according to our deserts, and we are here awaiting at his hands the sentence of everlasting life or death. I ask you now—stricken with terror like yourselves—in no wise separating my lot from yours, but placing myself in the

situation in which we all must one day stand before God, our judge—if Christ, I ask, were at this moment to come to make the awful partition of the just and the unjust—think you that the greater number would be even equal? If the lives of the multitude here were sifted, would he find among us ten righteous? Would he find a single one?”

And every one who is not righteous, is doomed to broil forever on a slow fire, in infinite and everlasting agony, which will be heightened by the constant view of heaven with the saints in the full enjoyment of infinite bliss as Dives, whose only sin was his wealth, while in hell; and he “tormented in this flame”, looked up to heaven, and saw Lazarus, the beggar, whose only virtue was his poverty, lolling and sunning himself in Abraham’s bosom. Such a sight was enough to have capped the climax of his agony, but something more was wanting, and he got it when Abraham, in reply to his request for a drop of water to cool his tongue, thus spoke to him: “Son, remember that thou in thy life-time, receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things, but now he is comforted and thou art tormented” (*Luke XVI. 19–26*). Poor Dives! What business had he to be a rich man? Did he not know that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven? Let him roast! Don’t you hear his fat sputtering in the fire?

The prospect of seeing this grand barbecue of sinners is exceedingly agreeable to some of the strong-nerved Christians: and, indeed, why should they not delight in all God’s works, and particularly those whereby he vindicates the sacred principles of his justice and mercy? It is true that his ideas of justice and mercy may not precisely agree with theirs; but the Church tells them that they must not trust that carnal reason of theirs; it “is the bride of the devil”, to use Luther’s expression, and is always watching for an opportunity to lead them into revolt against their maker. They must submit their judgment to the plain meaning of the Gospel, for, as Chalmers says, “There is perhaps nothing more thoroughly beyond the cognizance of the human faculties than the truths of religion, and the ways of that mighty and invisible being, who is the object of it”. Tertullian, “the doctor and guide” of the Christian Churches

throughout Western Europe several centuries after Jesus, was decidedly in favor of the everlasting fireworks. "You are fond of spectacles", exclaimed he, "expect the greatest of all spectacles, the last and eternal judgment of the universe. How shall I admire, how laugh, how rejoice, how exult, when I behold so many proud monarchs, so many fancied gods groaning in the lowest abyss of darkness: so many magistrates who persecuted the name of the Lord, liquefying in fiercer fires than they ever kindled against the Christians; so many sage philosophers blushing in red hot flames with their deluded scholars; so many celebrated poets trembling before the tribunal, not of Minos, but of Christ; so many tragedians, more tuneful in the expression of their own sufferings: so many dancers".\*

As a large proportion of my readers are likely, if the Christians are to be believed, to go to hell, it is but proper that they should learn something about the place before going. The following is from the pen of a celebrated divine† who was apparently full of the spirit of that kingdom, and who like many other good Christians delighted to warm himself at "the cheerful blazes of damnation". "Almost every natural man that hears of hell flatters himself that he shall escape it; he depends upon himself for his own security: he flatters himself in what he has done, in what he is now doing, or what he intends to do. Every one lays out matters in his own mind, how he shall avoid damnation and flatters himself that he contrives well for himself, and that his schemes will not fail. They hear indeed, that there are but few saved and that the greater part of men that have died heretofore, are gone to hell: but each imagines that he lays out matters better for his own escape than others have done. He does not intend to come to that place of torment: he says within himself that he intends to take effectual care and order matters so for himself as not to fail.

"But the foolish children of men miserably delude themselves in their own schemes and in confidence in their own

\* Quoted in Gibbon's Rome.

† JONATHAN EDWARDS. D. D. Sermon entitled Sinners in the hand of an angry God.

strength and wisdom : they trust to nothing but a shadow. The greater part of those who heretofore have lived under the same means of grace, are now dead and undoubtedly gone to hell : and it was not because they were not as wise as those who are now alive : it was not because they did not lay out matters as well for themselves to secure their own escape. \* \* \* \* \*

\* \* “ Whatever pains a natural man takes in religion, whatever prayers he makes, till he believes in Christ, God is under no manner of obligation to keep him a moment from eternal destruction. So that thus it is that natural men are held in the hand of God over the pit of hell ; they have deserved the fiery pit and are already sentenced to it : and God is dreadfully provoked, his anger is as great towards them as to them that are actually suffering the executions of the fierceness of his wrath in hell : and they have done nothing in the least to appease or abate that anger, neither is God in the least bound by any promise to hold them up one moment : the Devil is waiting for them, hell is gaping for them, the flames gather and flash about them, and would fain lay hold on them, and swallow them up. \* \* All that preserves them every moment is the mere arbitrary will, and uncovenanted, unobliged forbearance of an incensed God”.

Hell “ is everlasting wrath.\* It would be dreadful to suffer this fierceness and wrath of Almighty God one moment : but you must suffer it to all eternity. There will be no end to this exquisite, horrible misery. When you look forward, you shall see a long forever, a boundless duration before you, which will swallow up your thoughts and amaze your soul : and you will absolutely despair of ever having any deliverance, any end, any mitigation, and rest at all. You will know certainly that you must wear out long ages, in wrestling and conflicting with this almighty and merciless vengeance : and then when you have so done, when so many ages have actually been spent by you in this manner, you will know that all is but a point of what remains. \* \* \* \* \*

“ When the Saints in glory, therefore, shall see the

\* EDWARDS. Sermon entitled, The torments of the wicked in Hell no occasion of grief to the Saints in Heaven.



doleful state of the damned, how will this heighten their sense of the blessedness of their own state, so exceedingly different from it! When they shall see, how miserable others of their fellow-creatures are, who were naturally in the same circumstances with themselves: when they shall see the smoke of their torments and the raging of the flames of their burning, and hear their dolorous shrieks and cries, and consider in the meantime, that they are in the most blissful state, and shall surely be in it to all eternity, how will they rejoice! \* \* How will they admire that dying love of Christ, which has redeemed them from so great a misery and purchased for them so great happiness, and has so distinguished them from others of their fellow-creatures."

"How \* much soever you dread damnation, and are affrighted and concerned at like thoughts of it, yet if God should indeed eternally damn you, you would be met but in your own way: you would be dealt with exactly according to your own dealing". "Assuredly † we cannot but recoil from the idea of countless myriads of our fellow-creatures [including the great mass of our nearest relatives and dearest friends, and the truest and most efficient laborers for the general good of humanity] being the victims of almighty wrath while eternity rolls on. To our human sympathies the idea is terrible. Yet, if such be God's ascertained purpose [if such be the plain meaning of the New Testament] then let us adore in prostrate veneration, never doubting that wisdom and justice, aye, and love too, enter into this mysterious decree".

§ 49. *The Bible teaches immediate divine government.* When barbarians rise to the conception of a personal, living God, they imagine that every occurrence of nature is the direct act of their divinity. They have no idea of natural laws, the perception of which does not become clear until man has attained to a very considerable degree of civilization. Every event for them must be the act of God, — his immediate act. As he is omnipotent, he needs no machines, no means to assist him in his labors, and as he is all-know-

\* EDWARDS. Sermon entitled, *The Justice of God in the damnation of Sinners.*

† *Christian Observer.* July 1854.

ing and all-wise, he is competent to conduct all the complicated affairs of the universe. To assert that any event is not the immediate effect of his will, is to deny that he governs the world; and to deny his government, is to deny the first attribute of his Godship. "The perpetual junction of Gods and men, in the same picture, and familiar appeal to ever present divine agency" says Grote "was in harmony with the interpretation of nature universal" in ancient times. The good or evil fortune of a man was supposed to be the expression of divine favor or disfavor. There was no such thing as chance. Even the turn of a die was governed by God; and to cast lots was considered as a proper and trustworthy method of learning the will of the Omnipotent Anthropomorphism. Thus Jesus said that a sparrow could not fall to the ground except by the act of Jehovah, and even the hairs of a man's head are numbered (*Mat. X. 29. 30*). According to the Pentateuch every event of good or evil fortune which happened to the Jews, was either a reward or a punishment. Moses represents God as making the rainbow by a direct exercise of his will, without any intervening influence of the qualities of the pre-existing light and water, to which the formation of the rainbow is ascribed in our scientific books. So Saul is represented as going to see Samuel under the influence of divine impulse, whereas he had a sufficient motive in the loss of his asses. Pharaoh refuses to permit the Israelites to depart, not on account of the natural pride and blindness which are supposed to govern the actions of some modern monarchs, but because Jehovah hardened his heart. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, appeared frequently in person to his favorites, talked with them, instructed them, made contracts with them, and was to all intents and purposes their God. He repeatedly led the armies of Israel to the battle-field. He slew the Amalekites with stones from heaven, and stopped the sun in its course, so that Joshua might destroy the defeated Amorites. When Job was smitten, it was not without a previous consultation on the subject between Satan and the Lord of Heaven; and when Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus were victorious over their enemies it was because Jehovah had chosen them as his agents, to inflict punishment on those who had incurred his displeasure. God

taught David to fight, commanded Gideon to select his soldiers, to arise in the night and attack the foe. The Lord set his enemies to fight amongst themselves. He taught Bezaleel and Aholiah. They and all the ingenious mechanics were filled with 'the spirit of God'. The same spirit of the Lord enabled Samson to kill a lion and many men". Even the pregnancy of women was included in the matters to which he gave his special superintendence : and in *Genesis* alone, six cases are expressly mentioned where children owed their conception to his interposition.

The story of Jonah and the whale furnishes so forcible an illustration of Biblical superstition, and is withal so amusing in itself, as a part of what has been received as the "Word of God" by all Europe for hundreds of years, that I shall give it entire. Once upon a time, as the Scripture says Jehovah saw fit to direct Jonah (probably a Levite and professional prophet) to go to Nineveh and tell the people there that their city was doomed to destruction. Jonah however did not like the task, and therefore took a ship at Joppa, bound for Tarshish, to escape "from the presence of the Lord." But Jehovah, to escape from whom was not so easy as Jonah supposed, raised a storm, and the sailors knowing the storm implied that a sinner was on board *their* ship, cast lots to see who was the offender. The lot fell on Jonah, and the sailors threw him overboard to appease the offended Deity. Foreseeing this result, and apparently approving of the sailors method of allaying storms, he had "prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah". This fish must have been manufactured specially for the occasion, there being no animals in the sea now, which have a throat to admit, and a stomach to hold a whole man. Jonah's fish probably had a room fitted up inside "with all the modern conveniences" so that the prophet could pass the time agreeably. He lived there for three days and three nights, and occupied portion of his time in prayer, saying that he remembered the Lord, and would perform his sacrifices and keep his vows. And the Lord "*spake* unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon *dry* land." Jehovah then told Jonah again to prophesy against Nineveh ; and he went and foretold that within forty days the city should be destroyed. At these tidings the Ninevites covered them-

selves with sackcloth and sat in ashes. The Lord was so much pleased with this method of seeking his favor, that he changed his purpose and spared the city. With this change of purpose Jonah was "displeased exceedingly", and he asked Jehovah to kill him. The Lord refused to grant this request and to conciliate the prophet, planted a gourd seed, where Jonah was, and during the night, it grew so rapidly that the next day it furnished him with shade overhead, and he was exceeding glad. But Jehovah put a worm in the gourd vine, and it withered; and Jonah lamented for it. Then the Lord asked whether it was not proper for him to spare Nineveh which had 120,000 infants not knowing their right hands from their left, (implying an entire population of 2,000,000) when the prophet thought the destruction of a gourd vine a proper matter for grief. There the story ends, and we are not informed, whether Jehovah succeeded in convincing Jonah that He was right. A pious author\* says "His attempt, to flee from the presence of the Lord must have sprung from a partial insanity, produced by the excitement of distracting motives in an irascible and melancholy heart [!]. The temerity and folly of the fugitive could scarcely be credited, if they had not been equalled by future outbreaks of a similar peevish and morbid infatuation". Jehovah selected a crazy man for his prophet and stuck to his selection! Will not somebody advance the theory that the believers in this age are as crazy as the prophets were in that? Must not people be crazy who believe in crazy prophets? The same pious author continues—"The history of Jonah, is certainly striking and extraordinary. Its characteristic prodigy does not resemble the other miraculous phenomena recorded in Scripture; yet we must believe in its literal occurrence, as the Bible affords no indication of its being a myth, allegory, or parable. On the other hand, our Savior's pointed and peculiar allusion to it, is a presumption of its reality (*Mat. XII. 40*). The opinion of the earlier Jews (*Tobit. XIV. 4, Josephus Ant. IX. 10, 2*), is also in favor of the literality of the narrative."

A natural consequence of belief in the dogmas that every natural event is caused by the immediate volition of

\* BISHOP KITTO'S *Cyclopedia*. Article *Jonah*.

Jehovah, and that he was very much concerned about the doings of his chosen people, was the belief in the efficacy of prayer to induce him to change his purposes. The Pentateuch states that the Lord changed his intentions in regard to Sodom half a dozen times, during a short conversation with Abraham, and Moses frequently succeeded in reasoning the Deity out of his rash wrath against Israel. After Hezekiah's death had been decreed in Heaven, the monarch obtained a reprieve for fifteen years; and though "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are", yet when "he prayed earnestly that it might not rain" it "rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months" (*James V. 17*). Jesus desired that his followers should pray that "daily bread" might be furnished them, and that they might not be "led into temptation", thus insinuating that Jehovah would lead man into temptation, if left to himself. And he had so much confidence in the efficacy of prayers offered according to his directions that he instructed his followers to take "no thought for the morrow", but to rely on their Heavenly Father who "feedeth the fowls of the air" and would not neglect his worshippers, who are "better than they" (*Mat. VI. 25-34*). And he even tells them that "all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (*Luke XI. 9*). St. James appears to be not less confident of the virtue of prayers. He says "Is any one sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up" (*James V. 14*). The author of the book of *Chronicles* had a similar notion; for he mentions it as a matter of reproach, that when Asa's disease was "exceeding great" "he sought not to the Lord but to the physicians" (*2 Ch. XVI. 12*). How is it that modern Christians have lost all faith in the healing powers of the Lord, and trust themselves entirely to the physicians? The more enlightened Christians are, the less faith they have in the Lord. It is only among a very benighted populace that a Christian minister could find any faith, if he were to advise a sick man to follow the advice of St. James, neglect the doctors and trust in Jehovah.

It is absurd to suppose that an omnipotent and all-wise God would change his modes of action ; and consequently we should believe either that the world is now governed without the intervention of general laws by the immediate divine will, the purposes of which may be changed according to human entreaties, or we should believe that the authors of the Bible in writing of these matters were blind believers in barbarous superstitions. That the world is not governed as Moses supposed it to be, is now pretty well established. If a man should attribute his pecuniary prosperity or misfortunes to the approval or disapproval of his religious doctrines by Jehovah, he would be laughed at on all sides, by Christians as well as by Freethinkers. If the sailors of a ship during a very severe storm, were to think there was some Jonah, hateful to God, on board, whose destruction would allay the storm, and should accordingly draw lots and cast into the water him, who drew the shortest straw, the whole civilized world would be horrified at the deed, and would demand the punishment of the sailors as murderers : and the annals of the country would mention the affair, not in tones of approval, as is done in the Bible, but with unmeasured condemnation, and lamentation over the prevalence of so base a superstition. God's will is not now shown in storms, or lot-casting. "The\* winds and waves are always on the side of the ablest navigators"—not of the most pious captains. "If † two men travel on the same road, the one to rob, the other to relieve a fellow-creature who is starving, will any but the most fanatic contend that they do not both run the same chance of falling over a stone and breaking their legs? and is it not often matter of fact that the robber returns safe, and the just man sustains the injury?" As the belief in the manifestations of the divine pleasure or displeasure in all the trifling events of nature is untrue and superstitious now, so it must have been untrue and superstitious in the times of Moses and Jesus. Or if it was true that Jehovah manifested himself to the Jews, why shall we not believe that Jupiter manifested himself to the Greeks and Romans? We have precisely the same kind of testimony for divine interpositions in Greece as in Judea.

\* GIBBON.

† THE REV. SYDNEY SMITH. Article on Methodism.

If this doctrine of the Immediate Divine Government of the Universe be rejected, the whole scheme of Christianity must also be rejected, for all its "dispensations" claim to have been given, in violation of the ordinary course of nature, by the Immediate Providence of God. The whole Old Testament is one long record of Jehovah's toils, trials and tribulations in endeavoring, by the constant exercise of his omnipotence, to keep his "holy nation" from becoming very unholy. If we conclude that all the accounts of his conversations and covenants with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Samuel, and David are mere tales, we cannot well believe that the assertions of Jesus, Paul, and Peter, of similar conversations and covenants between them and Jehovah are worthy of much more credit.

§ 50. *The Bible teaches the existence of Angels.* Angels are God's servants and messengers, who go to make up his heavenly court. They are a necessity to a personal God, who has his throne in some corner of the blue overhead, and who cannot go in person to deliver all his messages.

"The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all which they chose" (*Gen. VI. 2*). Those sons of God are supposed to have been angels, though, for all we know, they may have been little gods.

When John, the Baptist, was conceived, an angel announced the fact to the prophet's father, who wanted to have some security for the truth of the announcement; "and the angel answering said unto him, 'I am Gabriel that stand in the presence of God, and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings'". (*Luke, I. 19*). The old man was satisfied.

When Jesus was arrested, Peter so far forgot the doctrines of his master as to draw his sword to resist, and in the heat of his indignation he went so far as to cut off an ear of the High Priest's servant. For this bloody deed, Jesus reproved him, saying, "Thinkest thou that I cannot pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" *Mat. XXVI. 5*.

The manna which Jehovah sent to the Jews was "angel's food". *Ps. LXXVIII. 25*.

The two angels, sent by Jehovah to examine into the

moral condition of Sodom, may have been mere phantasms, but yet their appearance excited very impure desires. In fact, the angels appeared to be so substantial to the Sodomites, that the latter would not listen to the generous offer of the pious patriarch, placing his virgin daughters at their disposal. Virgins were probably a drug in that market ; but the supply of angels was small, and the demand great. *Gen. XIX.* 1-13.

The Biblical angels are divine in their nature, and belief in them is polytheistic. But to reject them, is to reject the plain meaning of many important passages in the Scriptures. To deny the existence of angels breaks the support of the divinity of Jesus, which we learn only through the angels which communicated the fact of the incarnation to Joseph and Mary. "We have the testimony of the Jews themselves", says Strauss, "that they brought the names of the angels with them from Babylon after the captivity. Hence arises a series of questions extremely perplexing to the Christians. Were the doctrines of the angelic existence and nomenclature false, so long as they continued to be the exclusive possession of the heathens, but true so soon as they came to be received among the Jews? Or was it at all times equally true, and was an important truth discovered by an idolatrous nation sooner than by the people of God? If nations shut out from a particular and divine revelation, arrived at truth by the light of reason alone, sooner than the Jews who were guided by that revelation, then either the revelation was superfluous, or its influence was merely negative : that is, it operated as a check to the premature acquisition of knowledge".

§ 51. *The Bible teaches that some diseases among men are caused by the possession of the body by devils.* Epilepsy was supposed by the populace of Judea, in the time of Jesus, to be always caused by the possession of the person by devils. "And when he had called unto his twelve disciples [to send them out for the first time to make proselytes], he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease". He said to them "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils". *Mat. X.* 1. 8.

On one occasion Jesus met two men possessed with



devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce. "And behold they [the devils] cried out 'what have we to do with thee Jesus, thou son of God'?" And they besought him, that, if he should cast him out, he would permit them to enter a herd of swine near by. He did so, "and behold the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters" (*Mat. VIII. 28-32*). If Jesus were to commit such an action in the United States, he would be liable to prosecution and punishment for "malicious mischief", as the crime of unlawfully destroying or injuring private property is technically styled; but it is possible that these swine were owned by some renegade Jew, who was properly made to suffer for his contempt of the Mosaic law. The devils have ceased to enter the human body now except among savages, Mormons, and Spiritualists. Those sects are still subject to demoniac influence, and with the evil, they have the remedy of possessing many persons able to exorcise the wicked spirits.

§ 52. *The Bible teaches that wicked men may be miracle-workers, or prophets.* Saul induced a witch to call the dead Samuel from his grave; and the living king, and the dead prophet held a long conversation together. Their words are reported literally by the conscientious chronicler (*1 S. XXVIII. 10-19*). Moses had ordered, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" (*Ex. XXII. 18*), and before the witch would gratify Saul's request, he had to promise that he would not betray her to punishment.

"Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerer; now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents". *Ex. VII. 10-12*.

The Egyptian magicians also imitated Aaron in creating frogs. *Ex. VIII. 6. 7*.

"There shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders" *Mat. XXIV. 24*.

And John answered him, saying "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, but he followed not us; and we forbade him because he followeth us not" *Mark. IX. 38*.

"There was a certain man called Simon, which before

time in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria". *Acts, VIII. 9.*

"A man, or a woman, who has a familiar spirit, or is a diviner, shall surely be put to death" (*Lev. XX. 27*). "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" (*Ex. XXII. 18. Deut. XVIII. 9-12*). "It has been contended by some", says Norton, "in modern times that these laws do not sanction the belief in witchcraft, but were directed only against impostors, falsely pretending to magical powers. But if such individuals had been meant, they would have been designated according to their true character as impostors, not in language which conveyed the idea, as plainly as any language could do, that their pretenses were well founded. The belief in magic appears to have been universal in the ancient world. Such laws, as we find in the *Pentateuch*, had their origin in this belief, and could not be understood but as confirming it".

When the Israelites approached the land of the Moabites, King Balak was fearful lest his people should be overpowered by the worshippers of Jehovah, as the Amorites had previously been. In his fear, he sent to solicit the aid of a heathen priest, named Balaam, who dwelt in a neighboring land, and was reputed to have great influence over future events, by his blessings and curses. Balaam, though not one of Jehovah's chosen people, of whom, indeed, as it appears, he had never before heard, was yet in the habit of communicating, by direct conversation, with that divinity. The priest told Balak's messengers that he must speak to the Lord of Heaven, before cursing the approaching strangers. Jehovah had kept one eye on Balaam all this time, and before long he went down and asked what those messengers were after. Balaam told him that Balak had sent, begging him to curse "a people come out of Egypt", who threatened to cover "the face of the earth". Thereupon Jehovah "said unto Balaam, 'Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people'". The priest, in accordance with that direction sent word to Balak, begging to be excused, because the Lord had forbidden him to curse the invaders. Balak thought that Balaam was holding back for more pay, and accordingly he sent messengers higher in rank than the first

party, and commissioned them to offer much more pay. Balaam loved filthy lucre, and knowing that Jehovah changed his intentions frequently, he determined to ask Him again about this speculation. Jehovah, seeing that another party of messengers had visited his priest, went down, and told Balaam, “rise up, and go with them; but yet, the word which I shall say unto thee that thou shalt do”; and Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab. And God’s anger was kindled, because he went! The folly of Jehovah is here represented in a strong light. In the *first* place, he told Balaam to stay at home; in the *second* place, he told him to go; and in the *third* place, he got angry, because he went. In his anger, Jehovah sent an angel, who stopped the covetous priest. There was quite a scene between the angel, Balaam, and the latter’s ass (a four-footed beast), which spoke almost as sensibly as the fox and the crow in *Æsop’s* fables. The conclusion was that the angel said to Balaam “Go with the men but only the word which I shall speak unto thee, that thou shalt speak”. Thus, after all, Balaam received no other order than he had received before he started. When the priest came to the king of Moab, he told the monarch that his cursing and blessing would depend upon the inspiration of Jehovah. Balak trusted that that inspiration, under the influence of liberal presents, would be hostile to the strangers, and accordingly he made preparations for a great public cursing, wherein the Jews were to be damned, according to the most orthodox fashion. When all the sacrifices were ready, Balaam raised his voice to do the cursing, but a blessing of the strangers came out. Thus, the honor of Jehovah, the profit of his prophet, and the safety of his people were alike secured (*Num. XVII. XXIII. XXIV*). The most singular thing about the affair is, that Jehovah should have inspired such a scoundrel, and have been so much concerned about his blessings and curses. Notwithstanding the facts that Balaam led the people “to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication” (*Rev. II. 14*), and “loved the ways of unrighteousness” (*2 Pet. II. 15*), yet he “heard the words of God and knew the knowledge of the Most High”, and by that knowledge he foretold truly the for-

tune of Israel and of Amalek, of Moab and of the Kenites, and he even foresaw that "a star shall come out of Jacob" (*Num. XXIV. 16-21*), interpreted by many commentators on the Bible, to mean Jesus.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### SCIENCE VS. THE MOSAIC COSMOGONY.

There is "a philosophical infamy" in resorting to a supernatural cause to explain any natural phenomena.

"The dogmatic opinions of former centuries [in regard to the origin of natural occurrences] live only in the prejudices of the uneducated, and in certain creeds, which are conscious of their weakness and gladly hide themselves in obscurity." HUMBOLDT. *Kosmos*.

§ 53. The Bible contains a history of the creation of the universe, of the formation of the world, of the placing of plants and animals upon it, of a deluge which covered the whole earth sixteen hundred years subsequent to the creation, and of many wonderful events which occurred in the meantime. A great portion of this ante-diluvian history is declared by science to be false.

*The Bible asks us to believe that the universe is only six thousand years old.* The falsehood of this assertion is universally admitted among learned men. Sir Wm. Herschel published a paper in the *Philosophical Transactions* for the year 1800 in which he gave it as his opinion that some of the nebulae perceptible to the astronomer are more than 10,000,000,000,000,000,000 miles distant from the earth, and if that be the case their light (travelling at the rate of nearly 200,000 miles in a second) could not have reached the earth in less than 1,900,000 years. The later discoveries by the larger telescope of Lord Rosse show that this estimate of Herschel, of the distance of some of the stars, is very moderate. Such is the voice of astronomy. Professor Phillips, a Geologist, whose opinion is quoted as approximately correct by Brewster in his work, entitled

*More Worlds than One*, says that the various strata of terraqueous rocks beginning at the Primitive, and rising through the Old Red Sandstone, Carboniferous, New Red Sandstone, Oolite and Lias, Cretaceous, and Tertiary are respectively 20,000, 9,000, 10,000, 2,000, 2,500, 1,100, and 2,000 feet thick ; and the sum total, of 46,000 feet or 9 miles of rock, at the present rate of formation, would have required millions of years. Lyell states that the bed of the Niagara and the delta of the Mississippi bear witness that those streams have been running in their present courses fifty thousand years. It is the unanimous opinion of Geologists that there are many animal remains on the earth which can not be less than 100,000 years old. So much for Geology. Pritchard, the greatest ethnological authority says "Biblical writers had no revelation on Chronology," and asserts that man has existed on the earth for hundreds of thousands of years.

The falsehood of this statement having been proved, so that Christians were compelled to abandon it, they resorted to their usual policy of asserting that the Bible does not mean what it says. Some of them say that the word "day" in the account of creation does not mean day, but a period of many, perhaps millions of years. Others say that the "days" were only of twenty-four hours each, but that there was a very great period of time between the creation of matter and the creation of light which took place on the first day of the six. Both these interpretations are fair samples of the miserable subterfuges to which the Christians are compelled to resort to protect their would-be revelation from the assaults of mightier science. Some of them at first tried the experiment of asserting that there was stronger evidence for the truth of the Bible than for the truth of Geology : but they soon found that would not do. Geology was plainly the stronger, and the Christians saw that they must either confess their gospel the weaker of the two, and interpret it according to the new science, or be crushed utterly. Therefore, we have the interpretations above referred to—miserable shifts, but the best which the wisdom of the Scripture-geologists could discover. The *first* assumption—that "day" dont mean "day"—implies that Moses and Jehovah did not understand the meaning of words or

did not desire to tell the truth. If they meant periods of millions of years, why did they not say so? These Scripture-geologists might as well say that when Moses wrote "day" he meant "second". He said these days of creation had "morning" and "evening". Do not those words imply days of twenty-four hours each? The other interpretation is still worse. Neither has a particle of ground to stand upon: both owe their existence entirely and only to the irresistible proof that the plain meaning of the words is false. The creation of the heaven and the earth in the beginning was evidently part of the work of the first day. Thus Moses says "the heaven and the earth were finished" "and he rested on the seventh day from *all* the work which he had made" (*Gen. II. 1.*). Does not that language imply very clearly that the making of the heaven and the earth was part of the six day's work? In giving the ten commandments, Jehovah, while ordering the Jews to observe the sabbath, says "For in six days the Lord made *heaven and earth*, the sea and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh *day*: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it" (*Ex. XX. 11*). Those words show that the whole creation was comprised within six days, and that those days were of only twenty-four hours each. If the six "days" were severally periods of thousands of years, the seventh day on which Jehovah rested, ought to have been a similar period, so that he could obtain "refreshment" corresponding to his toils. But the seventh day could not have been a very long one, for Adam lived through it, and long afterwards, at the birth of Seth, was only 130 years old. Besides, the growth of the earth according to the statements of Geology is a very different affair from the Mosaic creation. Genesis represents the business of making the world as finished at once, as a wood-turner would gouge a wooden ball from a piece of timber; whereas the Geologic creation never had an end; and it is still in progress. Rocks are being deposited now at the bottom of the sea, full of the remains of animalculæ, in a manner precisely similar to that in progress a hundred million years ago. Jehovah rested from *his* work: nature does not rest from hers.

It has been said that the words in the beginning of *Gene-*

sis were not written to be interpreted literally. To this I shall reply in the words of Dr. J. Pye Smith, one of the most famous of the Scripture-geologists—"The fact of a clear and certain understanding of the Hebrew Scriptures is above all reasonable doubt. The construction of the language is the most clear and luminous that can well be imagined. \* \* His [Professor Powell's] notion that we have here 'the language of figure and poetry' is palpably erroneous. The whole is in the style of plain narrative, evidently to be understood as a plain, simple, straight-forward, unadorned history."

What dodge will the Christians try next? Will they say that Jehovah made the universe in six days, with the wrinkles of millions of years on its brow?—said wrinkles being placed there for some inscrutable purpose, which men should revere in ignorance, since the Almighty has not seen fit to reveal it? If a judge should venture to interpret a law with the same violence to the plain language as is done, to the letter of *Genesis* by the Christians, he would be hooted off the bench: and if a private individual were to twist the meaning of his written contracts as much to favor his pecuniary interests, he would lose all character for honesty, and get into jail besides. Fortunately for the priests of all ages and nations, there are no such penalties for false and fraudulent interpretations of their super-annuated Gospels.

§ 54. The authors of *Genesis* would have us believe that Jehovah created from nothing the earth with the animal and vegetable kingdoms complete, substantially as they now are, within five days, by successive decrees of his will, and that after the creation of the earth, he made all the rest of the universe as it now is, in one day—the planets and stars being made for no purpose, save to give light and measure time for the earth. This cosmogony is directly contradicted by the sciences of Geology and Astronomy. There is good reason to believe that the universe was not created from nothing in its present shape, but that it grew to be what it is, from an inferior condition, by a development as gradual and natural as that of a tree from a seed. There is also good reason to believe that the animal and vegetable kingdoms were not created at once complete as

they now are, but that they too grew from inferior conditions.

We see that all natural phenomena are caused now-a-days by natural forces, acting according to natural laws ; and we have no reason for presuming that a different state of affairs ever existed ; more particularly when we find that the influence of the natural forces, already known to science, may suffice to explain the formation of the universe as it is. "There\* are not, and never can be any probabilities in nature, that are not suggested by experience." Many of the ablest geologists and astronomers of the day believe, that before the universe took its present shape, all space was filled with a fire-mist—that is, with matter like that of the earth, at a most intense heat, whereby it was expanded so that one grain of it would fill more than a cubic mile of room. The influence of gravity caused motion toward the centre, and currents meeting caused the mass to commence revolving upon an axis. The great ball began to give out the heat which was in it ; and the contraction caused by the loss of heat produced an increase of speed, as the motions of a pendulum are quicker in proportion as it is made shorter. With the increase of speed, some of the soft matter flew off, and under the laws which govern similar bodies under like circumstances now-a-days, formed a ring revolving about the mother-ball. Soon the ring broke ; and its elements collected into one or a number of balls, each of which revolved about the mother-ball, at the place where thrown off, and rotated on its axis, to which rotation it was driven by the excess of speed which the outer edge of the ring had over the inner.

The mother ball kept on, giving out heat, contracting, becoming more dense, and presently another piece flew off, and this second offspring followed the example of the first—the latter being now at a considerable distance from the mother-ball, and continuing its revolutions at the speed which the mother had when the offspring flew off. By this process of gradual cooling, condensation, increase of speed, and repeated disruption of particles flying off from the surface, we should at last have a number of little balls rotating and revolving about a great one, the revolutions and

\* PROFESSOR SEDGWICK.



rotations of all being in the same direction. All the balls too would have a globular form, wider at the equator than at the poles. Some might imitate the mother-ball, and throw off particles, which would revolve about themselves. The mother-ball is the sun ; the offspring are the planets ; and the second offspring are the satellites such as those of the Earth, Jupiter, Saturn and Uranus. Such is a slight sketch of Laplace's theory to explain the formation of the universe as it now is, from a prior state ; and this theory receives the countenance of a vast number of natural facts, and is directly contradicted by none. I shall mention some of the corroborative facts—

*First* : All the planets move in the same plane—and not the planets only, but all the stars, as though even not our sun, but some distant star were the great mother-ball.

*Secondly* : Our solar system is in motion towards a distant point in the stellar system.

*Thirdly* : This motion is from west to east ;—the same kind of motion which prevails in the rotation and revolution of every member of our solar system, which has been well studied.

*Fourthly* : The respective densities of the planets correspond in general to the theory of the increasing density of the central body. In decimals, the Earth's density being taken as unity, they stand thus ;—

Mercury.	Venus.	Earth.	Mars.	Jupiter.	Saturn.	Uranus.	Neptune.
2.95.	.99.	1.	.79	.23	.11	.26	.11

Here Uranus is the only exception to the rule, and not an important one.

*Fifthly* : The distances of the planets from the sun show such a regularity as might naturally be expected, if the universe were formed on Laplace's theory. It has been found that, if we place the following line of numbers,—

0.	3.	6.	13.	24.	48.	96.	192.
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and add four to each, we shall have a series denoting the respective distances of the planets from the sun. It will stand thus—

4.	7.	10.	16.	28.	52.	100.	196.	388.
Mercury.	Venus.	Earth.	Mars.	Asteroids.	Jupiter.	Saturn.	Uranus.	Neptune.

It will be observed that the first row of figures goes

on from the second on the left hand in a series of duplications, or multiplications by 2. There is here a signification of unity in the solar system. It was remarked, when this relation was first detected that there was wanting a planet corresponding to 28 : the difficulty was afterwards considered as overcome, by the discovery of small planets revolving nearly at the place of 28, between Mars and Jupiter. A similar relation prevails in the distances of the four satellites of Jupiter and the eight of Saturn from their respective planets.

*Sixthly* : The distances bear an equally interesting mathematical relation to the times of the revolutions round the sun. With respect to any two planets, *the squares of the times of revolutions are to each other in the same proportion as the cubes of their mean distances.* The general relations of the diameter, density, and times of rotation of the different planets, all go to confirm the theory of Laplace.

*Seventhly* : The earth having the shape, which it would have taken in a soft condition, and which it could not take naturally, if its surface had been as hard as it is now, must have been soft when it took its present shape. If it was soft, it must have been under the influence of either fire or water. No scientific man will assert that it was under the influence of water : while there are many reasons for believing that it was under the influence of heat. The primitive rocks—that is, the rocks which underlie the surface of the whole earth, and which as Geologists inform us, furnished, by their decomposition, the material for all the stratified rocks—were evidently formed under the influence of fire. The crystallization of granite is similar to that of rocks which are melted now-a-days in great heat and left to cool. If we admit that the earth was once in a melted condition, we can scarcely hesitate longer to receive Laplace's theory. It is probable, too, that the formation of mountains can be more easily and reasonably explained on this theory than on any other.

*Eighthly* : There are various reasons for believing that the interior of the earth is now at a high heat. The temperature is known to increase as we leave the surface ; the volcanoes are evidences that there is fire beneath them ; and earthquakes show that only the surface of the globe is hard.

*Ninthly*: It would be reasonable to expect that if the interior of the earth were cold and composed of such matter as we find near the surface, the specific gravity of the whole body would be at least ten times that of water; but we know that it is only five and a half times heavier than that element; and this fact may be explained by supposing the interior to be expanded by intense heat.

In the *tenth* place, the remains of tropical plants and animals, found in what are now the temperate and frigid zones, show that the earth was once much warmer in those latitudes than it now is; and the most reasonable explanation for this fact is that the whole earth was once much warmer than at present; and the best explanation for a heat, greater than that of to-day, is to be found in Laplace's theory.

Justice to this theory would require a large book, and an astronomer—a great astronomer—to write it neither of which are at my disposal. But most of the probabilities, for and against, are matters of common knowledge; and every one can venture to pass an opinion upon facts which are admitted by all parties to be correct, and to contain all the material information possessed even by the most learned, upon the question under consideration. Our knowledge cannot be said to be sufficient to establish the theory, but we know enough to make its truth appear extremely probable; more particularly, when we remember that it has nothing to contend against, except the letter of a book compiled from Jewish fables, written by unknown authors in a barbarous age. I say it has nothing else to contend against—for the want of perfect regularity in the increase of the size, distance, weight, and speed of revolution and rotation of the planets, and the apparent reverse motion of the Satellites of Uranus, are “nothings” compared with the grander corroborative facts.

§ 55. Many naturalists declare that the animal creation was not made by supernatural power exercised in successive *fiats*, calling forth fishes and birds one day, reptiles and terrestrial brutes on the next day, and man on another day, but that the whole kingdom was produced under the unassisted influence of the forces and laws which exist in the mineral kingdom. It is asserted that insects have been

produced from inanimate matter under the action of electricity, but the assertion is rejected by many scientific men of reputation, and I shall not insist upon it. No man then, I may say, has ever witnessed the generation of an animal, except by its like, by parents of its own kind. Christians demand where is our experience for the generation of animals from minerals under mere natural laws ! Without any corroborative experience shall we believe it to be probable that mud produced a worm, as it would a crystal, and that the worm developed itself, until it became a fish ; that the fish grew toward a higher form, until it became a reptile ; that the reptile in time got warm blood, and limbs, and feathers, and became a bird ; that the bird changed its wings into arms, its feathers into hair, its eggs into live offspring, and became a quadruped ; and that the quadruped grew at last into the highest form of animal development—a man ? For, such is substantially the naturalistic theory.

The naturalist replies to the supernaturalist : There was a time, as all philosophers admit, when there were no plants nor animals on the earth ; the animals, consequently, had a beginning. Then the question is whether their beginning was owing to a natural, or a supernatural cause ? The influence of a supernatural cause, known to be such, is not within any man's experience, while it is within every man's experience, that all natural phenomena occur under natural laws, and therefore, the probabilities are in favor of a natural origin of the animal kingdom. Miracles are not to be believed on mere presumptions.

*Secondly :* The elements of the animal kingdom are the same as in the mineral kingdom, and no force is found in the former radically different from those found in the latter, and the modes in which these forces act, are substantially the same.

*Thirdly :* The animal kingdom is not composed of individuals all alike, but of classes showing an ascending scale of development. The lowest are mere bags of jelly, without brain, heart, lungs, bones, or organs of generation. They are all stomach, have no sex, and propagate by buds, breaking in two, or by some similar process. Then come animals which live in houses, like oysters ; next are animals which have bones on their backs like crabs ; then

animals with backbones, like fish—the scales being sometimes similar to the crab's shell. The fish has a small brain, half a heart, cold blood, and organs of generation; but he does not copulate. The female drops her eggs, and the male drops his fluid into the sea, and if the two meet, fish are produced; but not, if not. The reptile has more brain, more sex, and lungs, whereas the fish had mere gills. The bird has more brain, more lungs, more heart, warm blood, and in every way is a much more complicated animal than the serpent. The quadruped is still higher; and last comes the man, with double heart, warm blood, immense brain, great lungs, erect stature, and grasping hands. In these various grades of being, the higher seem as much placed on the lower, as in a brick wall one course appears to rest upon another. Among the animals, however, the different courses cannot be distinguished from each other. Zoologists cannot agree as to what a "species" is. Black parents sometimes have white children; the woolly dog of the arctic becomes a very different animal at the equator, in the course of a few generations. Besides, even the great classes are not to be clearly distinguished; there are the flying fish, the bat, the eel, the ostrich, the whale, the ornithorychus, and many others which partake of the nature of two classes. The frog is a fish at first, and the butterfly is a worm before it becomes an insect.

*Fourthly:* Every plant and animal is formed, by the gradual collection about a centre, of "cells"—very minute eggs, or balls of animal fluid, enclosed in a skin. At first, the cell gives no indication to the microscope, to what kind of animal it is to belong—whether to a worm, or a quadruped. In fact, the most skilful naturalist cannot distinguish whether it belongs to a plant, or an animal—to a mushroom, or a man. "By degrees", says Draper, "as the development goes on, that point is determined, and so one after another, the unfolding mass gradually reveals the class, order, family, genus, species, and finally its sex and individual peculiarities."

*Fifthly:* The knowledge of man in regard to the animal creation, is not confined to the events which have occurred since men existed on the earth. The history of the animal kingdom is written in the great book of geology, whereof

the leaves are great strata of rocks, laid down millions of years ago. These leaves, when now brought to the light, show the pictures of monsters, which reigned over the earth in the early ages—differing in many important particulars from any animal now in existence. In these rocks we find that the lowest classes of animals existed first, gradually ascending, step by step, to man. The animal kingdom may be divided into six main classes—*first*: backboneless animals (*invertebrata*); *secondly*: fish; *thirdly*: reptiles; *fourthly*: birds; *fifthly*: mammalian quadrupeds; and *sixthly*: mankind. Now, geology asserts that these classes were not introduced upon the earth at one time, or the highest first, but one by one, beginning at the lowest. The backboneless had the world to themselves for thousands of years; then the fish came in addition, and so on. “There is geologic evidence”, said Hugh Miller, and he would not have said it, if he could have helped himself, for it does not agree with his theory, “that in the course of creation [as he called it] the higher orders succeeded the lower. The fish seems most certainly to have preceded the reptile; the reptile and the bird to have preceded the mammiferous quadruped, and the mammiferous quadruped to have preceded man.”

*Sixthly*: Animals in their growth appear to go through the conditions of the lower classes. Those “which \* occupy the highest stations in each series, possess at the commencement of their existence, forms exhibiting a marked resemblance to those presented in the permanent conditions of the lowest animals of the same series; and that during the progress of their development, they assume in succession the character of each tribe, corresponding to their consecutive order in the ascending chain.” This fact is strangely illustrated in the history of the human brain. “It first † becomes a brain, resembling that of a fish; then it grows into the form of that of a reptile; then into that of a bird; then into that of a mammiferous quadruped; and finally it assumes that of a man, thus comprising in its fetal progress an epitome of geological history, as if man were in himself a compendium of all animated nature, and of *kin to every creature of lives.*”

\* DR. ROGET. Bridgewater Treatise.

† AGASSIZ.

The Human race is divided into five varieties—the Negro, Malay, American, Mongolian and Caucasian ; varieties which are not all on the same level, but on a regularly ascending grade. The Caucasian child has to pass through all these varieties, as he had to pass through all the lower orders, before he sees the light. “One\* of the earliest points, in which ossification commences, is the lower jaw. This bone is consequently sooner completed than the other bones of the head, and acquires a preëminence, which, as is well known, it never loses in the Negro. During the soft, pliant state of the bones of the skull, the oblong form which they naturally assume, approaches nearly the permanent shape of the Americans. At birth, the flattened face, and broad, smooth forehead of the infant, the position of the eyes rather towards the side of the head, and the widened space between, represent the Mongolian form, while it is only as the child advances to maturity that the oval face, the arched forehead, and the marked features of the true Caucasian become perfectly developed.” “The † leading characters, in short, of the various races of mankind, are simply representations of particular stages in the development of the highest or Caucasian type. The Negro exhibits permanently the imperfect brain, projecting lower jaw, and slender, bent limbs, of a Caucasian child, some considerable time before the period of its birth. The aboriginal American presents the same child nearer birth. The Mongolian is an arrested infant newly born. The beard, that peculiar attribute of maturity, is scanty in the Mongolian, and scarcely exists in the Americans and Negroes.”

When we consider these facts, and remember that there is no discoverable matter or force in the animal kingdom, different from those of the mineral domain, we are tempted to ask, did not the animal kingdom grow by the same gradual development, according to mere natural laws, as marks the growth of every natural object, whose history is known to us ? We have no cause to believe that the same or similar forces which govern the formation of crystals, might not suffice to produce animal life. “No reasonable

\* LORD'S Popular Physiology.

† Vestiges of Creation.

ground\* has yet been adduced for supposing that if he [the Chemist] had the power of bringing together the elements of any organic compound, in their requisite states and proportions, the result would be any other than that which is found in the living body. Every fresh discovery is tending to break down the barrier between the two classes of organic and inorganic bodies, as far as regards their chemical combination." "The † transition from an inanimate crystal to a globule [an animal cell] capable of such endless organic and intellectual development, is as great a step—as unexplained a one—as unintelligible to us—and, in any sense of the word, as miraculous as the immediate creation and introduction upon earth of every species and every individual [of the animal kingdom] would be"; and we are led by all analogy to suppose that, as Sir John Herschel says, "the origination of fresh species [of animals] could it ever come under our cognizance, would be found to be a natural, in contradistinction to a miraculous process." How animal life began, and how it progressed from the worm to the fish, from the fish to the snake, from the snake to the bird, from the bird to the quadruped, and from the quadruped to the man, is not clear, but that it did so progress, is certain; and there is much cause to suppose that it progressed by some kind of parental relation.

I shall venture to be guilty of a little repetition in attempting to support and elucidate (though in a very brief manner) the theory of the development of all organic bodies by natural generation from inorganic matter. This theory indeed, appears to me to be one of those grand discoveries which deserve to be classed with the law of gravitation. This latter principle really contains no grander conception than Laplace's teaching of the formation of the universe, or the theory now under consideration. The author of the latest work on Physiology, a writer of reputation as a man of literary abilities and scientific attainments on both sides of the Atlantic, has the honor to be the first person of authority—at least among the Anglo-Saxons—who has declared publicly in favor of the law of development. He says ‡ :—

\* CARPENTER.

† SIR JOHN HERSCHEL. Address to the British Association. 1845.

‡ J. W. DRAPER. Physiology, pp. 466, 489, 506, 507.



“The organic series, an expression which is full of significance and full of truth, for it implies the interconnection of all organic forms,—the organic series is not the result of numberless creative blunders, abortive attempts or freaks of nature. It presents a far nobler aspect. Every member of it, even the humblest plant, is perfect in itself. From a common origin, a simple cell, all have risen ; there is no perceptible microscopic difference between the primordial vesicle which is to produce the lowest plant, and that which is to produce the highest ; but the one under the favoring circumstances to which it has been exposed, has continued on the march of development ; the career of the other has been stopped at an earlier point. The organic aspect at last assumed is the strict representation of the physical agencies which have been at work. Had these for any reason varied, that variation would at once have been expressed in the resulting form, which is therefore, actually, a geometrical embodiment of the antecedent physical conditions.\* \* \* \* All animals, no matter what position they occupy in the scale of nature, unquestionably arise in the first instance from a cell, which possessing the power of giving birth to other cells, a congeries at last arise, the size and form of which is determined wholly by external circumstances. In all cases the material, from which these cells are formed, is obtained from without ; and whatever the essential shape of the structure may be, the first cell is in all cases alike. There is no perceptible difference between the primordial cell which is to produce the lowest plant, and that which is to evolve itself into the most elaborate animal.\* \* The germ which is to produce a lichen, obtains from the materials around it, the substance it wants, as best it may ; but the germ which is to end in the development of man is brought in succession, under the influence of many distinct states. As a consequence of this, it gives rise in succession to a series of animated forms, which, assuming by degrees a higher complexity, end at last in the perfect human being.\* \* \* \* Starting from a solitary cell, development takes place, and according as extraneous forces may be brought into action, variable in their nature, and differing in their intensity, the resulting organism will differ. If such language may be used, the

aim of nature is to reach a certain ideal model, or archetype. As the passage toward this ideal model is more or less perfectly accomplished, form after form, in varied succession, arises. The original substratum or material, is in every instance alike ; for it matters not what may be the class of animals or plants, the primordial germ, as far as investigation has gone, is, in every instance, the same. The microscope shows no difference but, on the contrary, demonstrates the identity of the first cell, which if it passes but a little ways on its forward course, ends in presenting the obscure cryptogamic plant, or if it runs forward towards reaching the archetype, ends in the production of man.\* \* \* \* Thus, man himself passes through a great variety of forms, from the condition of a simple cell ; these forms merging by degrees into one another, the form of a serpent, of a fish, of the bird, and this not only as regards the entire system in the aggregate, but also as regards each one of its constituent mechanisms—the nervous system, the circulatory, the digestive. Now, in the passage onward these forms are to be regarded, as has been well expressed, each one as the scaffolding by which the next is built ; and just as man in his embryonic transit presents these successive aspects on the small scale, so does the entire animal series present them, in the world, on a great scale.\* \* The manifestations of this plan are not limited to the forms now existing, but also include those presented by the ancient geological times. These views cast a flood of light not only on the relation of the various races of life to one another, but also of the human family to them, illustrating the course through which man has hitherto passed, and indicating that, through which in future ages he is to go?.

It seems to me quite as absurd to suppose that the facts of the development of man from a cell similar to that of a mushroom, and his passage through the conditions of worm, fish, snake, bird, dog, and even apparently of ape, for the bones of a tail are found at the extremity of his back bone—and the gradual progress of the animal kingdom to higher forms as shown in the rock-record—it seems to me quite as absurd to suppose these facts to be without meaning, as to suppose the remains of animals, found by Geologists, to signify nothing more than mere gambols of nature—the

sportive creations of an anthropomorphic Omnipotence who turned out the universe complete from his lathe in six days, and threw in the fossils by way of ornamental carving.

It deserves to be considered as a strong confirmatory evidence of the development theory that the animal and vegetable kingdoms appear to be composed of a multitude of provinces, the inhabitants of which are indigenous—which were born and bred on *that* soil. One miraculous creation at a given point, whence all kinds of animals and vegetables were distributed, will not suffice to account for the phenomena of nature—even twenty such miraculous creations will not suffice; and, of course, the improbabilities of a miraculous influence increase with the number of distinct miracles necessary to explain the known facts. “When the naturalists\* of modern times began to inquire into the geographical distribution of plants and animals, they quickly found that the prevalent notion of their dispersion from one common centre was untenable. From facts observed by them they have latterly concluded that, so far from this being the case, there are many provinces of the earth’s surface occupied by plants and animals almost wholly peculiar, and which must accordingly have had a separate origin. Professor Henslow of Cambridge [England] speaks of no fewer than forty-five such provinces for the vegetable kingdom alone.

“A botanical or zoölogical province is generally isolated in some manner,—either as an island in the midst of a wide ocean,—as for example, St. Helena or the Isle de Bourbon,—or as a portion of a continent, separated from the rest, either by a range of high mountains or by the boundaries of a climate. It is also found that elevation of position comes to the same effect with regard to vegetation as advance in latitude; so that as we ascend a lofty mountain in a tropical country, we gradually pass through zones, exhibiting the plants of kinds appropriate to temperate and arctic regions. Even the neighborhood of a salt-marsh, no matter how remotely placed amongst grounds of a different kind, exhibits plants appropriate to such a soil.

“Fewer distinct zoölogical regions are enumerated, but perhaps only in consequence of imperfect observation. Here,

\* Vestiges of Creation.

however, the evidence against communication of organisms from one region to another are even more decided. If, however, it were surmised that the organisms of isolated regions had been communicated from other countries, and merely modified in their new abodes, the disproof of the conjecture would be more positive with regard to the zoölogy of the question than the botany. For while it might appear possible that seeds have been floated even five hundred miles to a new soil like that of the Isle de Bourbon, how can we account, by such a supposition for the existence there of bats, reptiles and other animals, the progenitors of which could never have swum so far for the sake of a change of residence? This island be it remarked is of volcanic origin, and known to have become dry land at a comparatively recent period.

“The two great continents of the earth are the first zoölogical divisions of its surface. The animals as well as the plants of the Old and New world are specifically different, with very few exceptions; that is, they are different in the degree which naturalists agree to consider as sufficient to establish distinct species. But even North and South America present different animals. We also find that the animals in the north and south of Asia are different, and that most of the African species are distinct from those of Asia.

“The differences are in some instances so great as to be held by naturalists to be generic. Beyond this point, however, there are parities or identities. We see, for instance, in all these various regions, feline animals, ruminants, pachiderms [thick-skins], rodents [gnawers], &c. Thus, for the lion and tiger of Asia, we have a different lion and panther of Africa, the jaguar in South America, and the puma ranging from Brazil to Canada. Instead of the elk of Northern Europe and the argali of Siberia, we have in North America the moose deer and the mountain sheep. Asia and Africa have elephants, to which the extinct mammoth and mastodon of Northern Europe and North America are parallels: and it now appears that even the horse, of which there are several varieties in the Old world, was abundant in the New, at a period long antecedent to the introduction of the present breed by the colonists. Aus-

tralia has its emeu, Africa its ostrich, and America her rhea, all similar animals, though specifically different.

“We find simiæ (monkey-kind) planted in three great regions,—Southern Asia, Western Africa, and Equinoctial America, but all of different character; those of America being peculiarly distinct in the want of the opposable thumb, and of callosities in the seat, as also in the use of the tail as a prehensile instrument. Australia has only a few very unimportant mammalian animals of her own, beside the marsupials, [pouched], which are represented by a few species in America; but to the southern part of the latter continent are confined the whole family of the sloths. Africa, in like manner, has exclusive possession of the giraffe. To Northern America belongs a great number of genera of birds quite peculiar to it, and also a great number and variety of the rodents than are to be found in any other parts of the earth”. Some distinguished naturalists hold that different races of men are indigenous in different continents, but the point is disputed with some show of reason on account of man’s being a great traveller by nature, and I pass it over. The generally received scientific theory, as above-stated in regard to the plants and lower animals, is irreconcilable with the plain meaning of *Genesis* which implies a dispersion from a centre, or a similar or simultaneous creation throughout the earth.

But whether men grew to be men from worms, developed through fishes, snakes, birds, quadrupeds, and apes, or whether a miraculous personal creator makes the human fetus to pass through those stages merely to “harden the hearts” of materialist physiologists—this much is certain; the Mosaic cosmogony is wrong in asserting that the fish and fowl were made in the same day or period (*Gen. I.* 20–23), and that the quadruped, snake, and man were made in another subsequent day or period (*Gen. I.* 24–31). Here are five classes, mixed together in two periods, in utter defiance of geology and zoology. That the earth was made before any of the other great bodies of the universe, that it required five days for its construction, while all the stars and planets were rough-hewn in one day—that the sun, moon, and stars were made only for the purpose of marking time and giving light to the earth (*Gen. I.* 14), and that light

was made two days before sun, moon, and stars (*Gen. I. 4. 5. 14-19*), are assertions so notoriously false and absurd, that my only task here in endeavouring to throw discredit on the Bible, is to draw attention to the fact that they are contained in it.

§ 56. According to *Genesis*, Heaven is a blue arch, in which the sun, moon, and stars are placed, and, beyond all these, there is a stock of water, used as a reservoir when rain is necessary. Jehovah made "a firmament in the midst of the waters," and it "divided the waters which were *under* the firmament, from the waters which were *above* the firmament," and he "called the firmament 'Heaven'" and he placed the planets as lights "*in* the firmament" (*Gen. I. 6. 7. 8. 14. 17*). David has similar notions of astronomy. He asserts by divine inspiration that the Jehovah founded the earth "upon the seas, and established it upon the floods" (*Ps. XXIV. 2*), so that "it should not be removed forever" (*Ps. CIV. 5*) while the sun is a great traveller—for "his going forth is from the end of the heaven and his circuit unto the ends of it" (*Ps. XIX. 6*). The same David says that the said Jehovah "stretched out the earth above the waters" (*Ps. CXXXVI. 6*), and calls upon the "waters that be *above* the heavens" to praise him (*Ps. CXLVIII. 4*). When Joshua wanted more daylight to assist him in the pious work of massacring the God-forsaken Amorites, he did not stop the earth, but stopped the sun "upon Gibeon" and the moon "in the valley of Ajalon" and they stopped without any hesitation, until he saw fit to tell them to "go a-head" again.

There was no rain, as *Genesis* says, on the earth for sixteen hundred years, after it was inhabited by men; for the rainbow was not seen before the flood, and the qualities of light and water being the same in all ages, it follows that there must have been no rain, since there was no rainbow. What became of all the moisture drawn from the earth by evaporation during this long period, and what became of the plants and animals, which now could not exist twelve months without rain, is not explained. Probably, the moisture collected "above the firmament" to increase the grand stock there which was poured out at the flood.

Man ate no meat for sixteen hundred years, if we are

to believe Moses. In Paradise Jehovah said to Adam "Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in it which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat" (*Gen. I. 29*). After the flood, Jehovah said to Noah "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herbs have I given you all things" (*Gen. IX. 3*).

Carnivorous animals, the same which we now have, ate no meat until after the flood. On the sixth day of Creation Jehovah said "To every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat" (*Gen. I. 30*). Jehovah ordered Noah to take only two of each kind of animals into the Ark, and since they remained in the Ark ten months, the animals could not have preyed upon each other without destroying many races (*Gen. VI. 19. 20*). Noah was specially ordered to lay in a supply of food, which, it is evident from the terms used, was composed entirely of vegetables (*Gen. VI. 21*). It is not stated by Moses, at what time animals began to prey upon each other, but we may presume that, according to his theory, it was immediately after the flood, when man became a carnivorous animal. How the lions, tigers, eagles, cranes, and all those animals which now live on animal food only, managed to get along in eating grass, is not very clear to us. Their teeth and stomachs are unfitted for masticating or digesting vegetable food, and if Moses had understood this, he would either not have asserted that they fed only on herbs, or he would have explained, how their natures have since then changed. And yet we know that there were carnivorous animals, which really did *eat* other animals, thousands of years before the flood, for we find their stomachs and excrements in the rocks.

The Mosaic myth goes on to state that the first human pair were sinners, but were seduced by the snake, which "was more subtle than any other beast of the field." Woman was the first to be seduced, and in punishment she was condemned to give birth to children in pain. She-brutes are subject to similar pains, but we are not told what their sin was. The naughty serpent was punished by

a curse that it and all its kind should forever go upon their bellies, and eat dust and be hated by man. Did the snakes in Paradise go upon feet or walk upright upon their tails? If they went on their bellies before the temptation, what was the punishment? If they did not go on their bellies, were they snakes? Snakes do not eat dust now, neither are they universally hated. The Egyptians worshipped the asp for many ages.

Men before the deluge lived sometimes to be nine hundred and fifty years old, and generally to the age of about seven hundred. The cause of this longevity is to be found in the fact that the Ante-diluvians were all "Grahamites."

After men had increased for seventeen hundred years, Jehovah became so angry at their sins, that he sent a great deluge to cover the whole earth (*Gen. VI. VII. 19, 22*), and kill all men and animals, except a few of each species, which were preserved in an Ark. How the Ark floated or the animals lived above the tops of the highest mountains, where the most intense and fatal cold now prevails constantly, is not explained. If the animals which inhabit the arctic and the torrid zones were now to be carried to Mount Ararat, many races would expire in a very short time on account of the change of climate. It is not explained how it was possible for a pair of every species of animal to live for months in an Ark, scarcely large enough to hold them, if packed as tightly as pickled pork; and that Ark provided with only one window. Neither is it explained what became of the water, for there is not enough now to cover the mountains. Though the water stood upon the earth for ten months, above the tops of the highest mountains, the trees apparently were still flourishing several miles down below. The dove found a fresh olive leaf. Trees now-a-days are not so tough in their vitality.

A flood occurred 2300 B. C. which destroyed the whole human race save one family, and since the waters covered the whole earth for a year, they must have destroyed all the previous works of men. The geologists deny that there ever was a universal deluge. The ethnologists say that the various races of men, with the same general peculiarities of form, color, hair, and mental capacity existed thousands of



years before the alleged date of the flood, as they have now. The Egyptologists assert that they have found monuments in the valley of the Nile, which were undoubtedly erected, at least as early as, 3500 B. C. Lepsius, who is recognized as the best authority on the chronology of the Egyptians, carries his record back to 3800 B. C., at which time there was already an extensive and powerful empire in the land of "Khem" as the natives called it. Among those who assert the great antiquity of the Egyptian empire, are Champollion, Bunsen, Bœckh, Barrucchi, Kenrick, Lepsius, and Gliddon, and no one who has investigated the subject, has dared to defend the chronology of the common version of the Jewish Scriptures. Milman regrets "that the chronology of the earlier Scriptures should ever have been made a religious question". What? Would he have Christians admit at once that Jehovah inspired Moses to write what was not true? And that he afterwards inspired Luke to confirm the account of Moses by copying the lineal forefathers of Jesus up to Adam, so that there is no possibility of dodging the plain meaning of the words? Brother Milman is an admirable man, but a poor Christian after the orthodox model. If his Gospel says that lions ate grass in Paradise, it is his place to swear to it, without making a wry face.

The varieties of human languages were caused by a miraculous decree of Jehovah, on the occasion of an attempt of mankind, soon after the flood, to erect a great tower reaching to heaven, in which they should find protection against any future deluge. Jehovah was enraged at the impiety, and smote the laborers with a confusion of tongues, so that they could not understand each other. Philologists have proved beyond a doubt, that nearly all the different tongues have been changed or corrupted by natural processes from a few stocks. Thus the Sanscrit, Arabic, Greek, Latin, and German are all akin, and are the offspring of a language spoken in Central Asia four or five thousand years ago, as English, French, Spanish and Italian have been produced from a mixture and corruption of the Latin and Teutonic tongues.

Adelung, whose *Mithridates* is styled in the London *Encyclopedia* "the most extensive and profound work on

the subject of languages that has ever yet been issued from the European press", says : "The idea must be given up that language was communicated to the first men by their Creator, or that they were taught the use of articulate words by angels, or superior intelligences. There was a time, when mankind was but little superior to the brutes, when they crept upon the earth—a dumb and debased race. This is a proposition which, on a little reflection, offers itself to the mind as a first principle, and requires no proof. It is true that, when we consider the artificial and complicated structure of a European language, which is capable of expressing all the shades of thought and sentiment that arise in civilized society, and of representing all the metaphysical reasonings of a Plato, or a Voltaire, the production of so wonderful a contrivance seems beyond the reach of human faculties. But so also, a European war-ship, which, with a burden of 2500 tons, and bearing 1000 men and 100 cannon, rides triumphantly through the ocean, and defies the rage of conflicting elements, would appear to the wondering eyes of a naked savage as a phenomenon altogether supernatural, and it would be impossible for him to conceive that such a work was produced by the hands of his fellow-creatures. But if he were to trace the art of a modern ship-builder backwards, through all its stages, to the fragile raft, or the primitive log which had been felled by fire, and on which the first trembling barbarian committed himself to the unstable element, his astonishment would gradually subside, and the supernatural being created by his imagination, would gradually dwindle into a simple man. The case is similar, when we inquire into the history and progress of language. It only requires a little observation to discover the stage of its advancement, and to trace it backwards to the first articulate sounds uttered by the uncouth child of nature. Even when we examine attentively the whole fabric in its complete form, we discover clear vestiges of its homely beginning. The language, which flows from the mouth of a Cicero, or a Newton, still bears the traces of those infant ages of the world, when men referred all the movements of external nature to the same voluntary power of which they were conscious within themselves, when they fancied that the wind blows, that the sun goes down, and

that the ocean roars, and when, with similar ignorance, they feigned mountains and rivers to be males and females."

The *Pentateuch* gives us to understand that Adam and Eve spoke Hebrew, and that it was taught to them by Jehovah himself, who always used it in conversing with his favorites. But we know that the Hebrew was not an original language: it bears the same marks as many other languages of having been formed from old and rude dialects. The Hebrew language had its origin, not among the Hebrews, but among the Phœnicians, from whom the Jews learned it after entering Canaan. It is an incontestable historical fact that the Phœnicians had already a well-established nationality and language long before the alleged date of Abraham, and that their language was substantially the same with that of the Jews, is proved by an abundance of evidence. It is absurd to suppose that sixty-six persons and their descendants, enslaved for four hundred years in Egypt, could have preserved their original tongue, or avoided, adopting that of their masters; and it is equally absurd to suppose that, if they had preserved it, the Phœnicians would have learned it from them, and abandoned their own. Although it is nowhere distinctly stated in the *Bible* that the Hebrew was the original language in Paradise, yet it is implied; and therefore, the *Bible* is guilty of an implied falsehood.

If the ante-diluvian history of mankind, and the account of the deluge be correct, it is singular that the names of Adam, Eve, and Noah were known only to the Jews. How is it that the older and more civilized nations knew nothing of such matters, which, by their very nature, must have been among the most interesting facts which men could know—regarding a subject on which many ancient nations had a great many speculations and traditions?

## CHAPTER X.

### FABULOUS HISTORY.

“*Gulliver* is the most entertaining book of travels I ever read, but there are some things in it which I can *not* believe.” IRISH CURATE.

§ 57. A great many fables are inserted in the Bible as historically true. I shall have room to notice only a few of them.

According to *Genesis*, there was between Adam and Shem a period of 1658 years, and in this time there were eleven generations averaging 150 years each. From Arphaxad to Isaac was 490 years, with ten generations of 49 years each. Between Jacob and David, a period of 956 years, there were eleven generations of 86 years each on an average, showing a wonderful increase in the length of the generations subsequent to Isaac. During this latter period, we have not the years of each generation, as we have during all the rest of the time from Adam down to 600 B. C. Moses says (*Ps. XC.*) that in his day, the utmost limit of human life was 80 years.

From Solomon to Christ was a period of 1000 years; and of thirty-nine generations of 26 years each on an average, according to Matthew, and of fifty-three generations, with 19 years each, on an average, according to Luke. Moses says (*Gen. XLVII. 9*) that Jacob was 130 years old, when he entered Egypt, and that the Israelites were 430 years in Egypt, (*Ex. XII. 40, 41*), but Paul asserts (*Gal. III. 17*) that the time between the call of Abraham and the departure from Egypt was 430 years. Paul is evidently wrong.

According to the book of *Kings* (1 *K. VI. 1*), it was 480 years after the exodus that the Temple was commenced. The martyr Stephen, whose words are quoted in the *Acts* (*XIII. 21*) as of inspired authority said that Saul reigned 40 years. David reigned 40 years (1 *K. II. 11*); and

Solomon reigned 4 years before beginning the temple; and thus we have 966 years from the birth of Jacob to the building of the Temple, in the year 1011 B. C. In Acts (*XIII.* 20,) it is said, there were judges over Israel for 450 years, and yet there were only six generations among the forefathers of David, during that time.

Although the period, during which the Jews remained in Egypt is given as about four hundred years, yet so far as we can learn by the inspection of the different genealogies of the royal and priestly families of Israel, contained in their Scriptures, there were not more than three or four generations during that time. Moses was the grand-son of Kohath, who went with Jacob to Egypt (*1 Ch. VI.* 1, 2. *Gen. XLVI.* 11); and among his contemporaries were Korah another grand-son of Kohath, (*Num. XVII.* 1), and Nashon, the great-grand-son of Pharez, who also went down with Jacob. We learn even that Achan, who lived in the time of Joshua, and was still young enough to serve as a soldier, was a grand-son of this same Pharez (*Josh. VII.* 13 *1 Ch. II.* 7. *IV.* 1). A multitude of other instances might be adduced of persons, living in or after the time of Moses, who were the grand-sons or great-grand-sons of members of Jacob's family when he went down to the land of the Pharaohs. The language of *Exodus* gives us plainly to understand that there were only three kings upon the throne, during the time the Israelites were in the land. After Joseph's death, a new king arose who had not known him and who enslaved the Jews (*Ex. I.* 6-11). "And in process of time, it came to pass that the King of Egypt died" (*Ex. II.* 23): and under his successor, Moses appeared and led his people away. And yet we are seriously told that, in the course of these three or four generations, the seventy Israelites, who had entered Egypt, had increased to more than 3,000,000, having 603,550 fighting men (*Num. I.* 46. 47.), exclusive of the tribe of Levi, one twelfth of the nation. Jehovah must have given them a most miraculous fertility, in comparison with which all the wonders of propagation, that have happened in modern times, are mere trifles. If my arithmetic does not deceive me, such an increase would require that every Jewish woman should have given birth to 70 daughters, each one of whom lived,

and gave birth to as many again. The thirty-five women, who went to Egypt, must have had in all 2450 children, who begot 84,750 of the same generation with Moses, and the next generation numbered 2,966,250. The women were kept busy in those times ! But it is rather inconsistent with this theory of every woman, having 140 children, that in the first chapter of *Chronicles*, where the genealogies of Israel with the names of the male children are given for eight or ten generations after Jacob, the women appear to have borne not more than six or eight children each on an average, and the names of the men who were contemporary with Moses or Joshua, instead of numbering 600,000, do not amount to 1,000.

It would have been indeed a singular thing, if seventy immigrants who were soon reduced to a bitter slavery, should in the course of three or four generations, have increased so as to outnumber the native inhabitants of a great empire, who were in possession of the most fertile and healthy portion of the kingdom : and who are known to us to have been an industrious, orderly, and prosperous people. The entire population of Egypt now is not 2,000,000, but in ancient times, it was greater, probably 5,000,000. If the Jews had 650,000 men, capable of bearing arms, they must have outnumbered the Egyptians, two to one : and we shall be as much perplexed to explain the decrease of the Egyptians as the increase of the Jews. Such a decrease of the natives or increase of foreign slaves is contradicted by the writings and monuments in the valley of the Nile, which throw much light on the condition of Egypt at the time of which Moses writes.

We read that after the Israelites were "more and mightier" than the Egyptians (*Ex. I. 9*) the King "Spake to the Hebrew midwives (of which the name of one was Shiphrah, and the name of the other Puah :) and he said 'When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women and see them upon the stools : if it be a son, then ye shall kill him : but if it be a daughter, then she shall live'" (*Ex. I. 15. 16*). In the times when Jehovah managed the world, every thing was different from the present state of affairs. Two midwives now-a-days could not wait upon half a million of married women : nor would a king think

seriously of trusting to slave-women to murder children of their own tribe ; nor would the task of killing all the male children in a population of several millions be entrusted to a couple of persons, unsupported by any military force. The two midwives, as it seems, did not obey the command of the monarch, and Jehovah was so well pleased with their pious conduct "that he made them houses" (*Ex. I. 21.*) ; and for all we know may have given sticks of sugar candy to their children, and sung the Egyptian "Bobbing Around" and "Villikins and his Dinah," dancing and making faces meanwhile to amuse the darlings of those women who "feared God."

The chronology of the Bible requires us to believe that the Jews emigrated from Egypt about the year 1,500. B. C. The inscriptions and pictures on ancient Egyptian monuments make it probable that such a people as the Jews were enslaved in Egypt. This is admitted by nearly all those who have investigated the antiquities of that country. But the time of the emigration is not correctly given in the Bible. The *Pentateuch* does not contain the precise names of any of the Egyptian monarchs—Pharaoh being a general name for king, not the special name for a person : Such an omission—equivalent to that of writing a history of the American Revolution, without stating that the event occurred during the reign of George the Third—deprives us of confidence at once in the exactness of the story.

Besides this chronology depends upon the general statement that the period between the exodus and the building of the Temple was 480 years (*1 K. VI. 1*), and upon the confused tales in the book of *Judges*. But when we count the generations between Moses and Solomon, we find only about ten, which at the natural rate of 30 years for a generation, would place the exodus about 1320. B. C. And this estimate is confirmed by the Egyptian monuments and several probabilities, drawn from the Jewish books themselves.

Moses says that the Jews built the Egyptian cities of Ramses and Pythom. Now, these two cities were built at the ends of a canal, connecting the Nile with the Red Sea. This canal was commenced about 1400 B. C. and the cities were the natural consequence of the enterprise. At

this time Ramses the Great was King, and it was natural that a city, founded and built in his reign, should be named after him : while it would have been singular, if such a name had been given before a Ramses came to the throne. There had been no Ramses previous to 1500 B. C. The fact that Ramses was the local-god of this city—which is considered to be established by the sculptures, found at Abu Kesheb—would indicate, according to Egyptian customs, that the city was built, during the reign of the great monarch of that name. Many other minor facts corroborate that indication. “The conclusion” says Lepsius who discusses the question very thoroughly—“The conclusion, that consequently the Jews, if they built these cities [of Ramses and Pythom] must have been in Egypt in the reign of Ramses, who commanded their construction, and could not have emigrated several centuries before, rests no longer on the identity of the name of a single city, which might be explained by the accidental inaccuracy of a historian, or by a confusion of dates, but on the connection of a number of facts which mutually support and explain each other.”

Besides “it is known and the monuments—yea even the almost-contemporary papyrus-rolls—confirm it in the completest manner, that Ramses-Miamun invaded and conquered a large part of Asia, and that he held under his dominion, for a long time—probably during his whole reign—particularly the neighboring lands, the Arabian peninsula and all Palestine. We see also his father, Sethos the First, engaged in victorious battles against the Syrians, among whom the Canaanites are expressly named, and who are pictured on the monuments. That was the most glorious period of Egyptian history. The silence of the books of *Joshua* and *Judges* of any such conquest, when compared with the particular mention of many shorter captivities which Israel suffered at the hands of the neighboring nations, appears to furnish additional evidence that those events occurred before the exodus.”

A study of the chronology of the Bible previous to the time of Solomon shows that little confidence is to be placed in it. The writers had no era from which they reckoned ; there is no evidence that the events were written down at the dates of the occurrences ; and the historical books are



marked by the characteristics which are found in the untrustworthy traditions of many other rude tribes. The dates are not inserted at the proper times and places : and when periods are mentioned, they are given in round numbers in a manner to show that little importance was attached to them. From Moses to Solomon a large proportion of the important periods are composed of forty years, or a multiple of forty, showing clearly the unhistoric notions of the writers. Moses was 80 years old at the exodus, and 120 when he died ; Saul, David, and Solomon reigned 40 years each : and the period from the exodus to the erection of the Temple was 480 years. Such a regularity might be credited, if recorded by persons cognizant of the facts and familiar with the importance of historical accuracy and the principles of historical criticism ; but the writers of the Bible certainly did not possess those qualifications.

From Isaac to Solomon, there were twelve generations : from Isaac to Azariah, Solomon's High Priest, there were eighteen generations : and from Isaac to Heman, Solomon's Levitical singer, there were twenty-two generations (1. *Ch.* VI) ; whence it appears that the holy Levites were better propagators before the Lord, than those who ate not of the fat of the sacrifices. We are told that Ezra (*Ezra* VII. 1-5) was only fourteen generations from Phineas, who was a priest in the time of Moses (1450 B. C.). This would give seventy years for a generation : and yet during less than one-half that period, there were twenty kings on the throne of Judah.

§ 58. "When, \* according to the account, the two or three millions of Israelites left Egypt, they were accompanied by 'a mixed multitude who went along with them, and flocks, and herds, even an abundance of cattle' (*Ex.* XII. 38). Yet this immense body is represented as having been collected, arranged and put in motion in a single day, in consequence of a hasty command of Pharaoh given the preceding night. The passover was slain on the fourteenth day of the month, which, according to the Jewish computation, ended at sunset. At midnight, that is on the fifteenth day, the first-born of the Egyptians were destroyed. The same night Pharaoh issued his order for the departure

\* NORTON. Notes to Genuineness of the Gospels.

of the Israelites, and during the fifteenth day, they were on their march (*Ex. XII. Num. XXXIII. 3*). In what time could this nation of men, women, and children, with all their sick and aged, with their domestic animals, and their necessary baggage, have defiled, in the face of an enemy, through the Red Sea? According to the history, it was done in a single night. How long must it have taken such a multitude of men and cattle to quench the thirst of which they were perishing at the waters of Marah, or by those which gushed from the rock of Horeb? What extent of territory must have been covered by two or three millions of men encamped in tents among the rocky defiles, the mountainous and broken country around Sinai, or along the eastern shore of the Red Sea? From the history we should receive the impression that they were a body capable of being readily assembled, and orally addressed by Moses or Aaron; a body which could all be put in motion in the morning, accomplish a day's journey, and at night encamp in a particular place: as at 'Elim where there were twelve wells of water, and they encamped there by the waters' (*Ex. XV. 27*).

"The number of the Israelites, we are told, had alarmed one of the kings of Egypt. Before the birth of Moses, that is about eighty years before the Israelites left Egypt, or one hundred and thirty-five [at most three hundred and fifty] years after the family of sixty-six males entered it, the king is represented as saying 'Lo, the people of Israel are more numerous and stronger than we are; come let us wisely prevent their multiplying' (*Ex. I. 9. 10*). Being alarmed at their numbers, he resolved to provoke their most deadly and desperate hatred. He 'made their lives bitter' by reducing them to slavery; he issued an order for the destruction of all their male children. After an unsuccessful attempt fully to execute his latter purpose, this order is said to have assumed the following horrible form: 'Then Pharaoh charged all his people, saying every son that is born ye shall cast into the river' (*Ex. I. 22*). To outrage to the utmost a formidable nation, to exercise upon it an extravagance of cruelty, which no tribe of men, however feeble, would tamely endure, virtually to declare a war of extermination upon the Israelites in the most odious form

which war could assume, are the expedients that Pharaoh is represented as adopting through dread of their enmity. Nor is this the most extraordinary part of the history. The Israelites, as far as appears from it, submitted without resistance to be made slaves, and to have their infants murdered as a matter of common usage. The voice of human nature pronounces this to be impossible. No people was ever so far degraded below the brutes, who expose their own lives in defence of their young.

“But the king is represented, at the same time, as in dread of their power, and fearful, lest they should withdraw themselves from Egypt, ‘lest they should join his enemies, and by force of arms leave the country’ (*Ex. I. 10*); and according to the narrative, one of his successors considered their remaining in Egypt as of so much importance, that he manifested the most insane obstinacy in refusing to permit their departure. It must have been only for their value as slaves that the kings of Egypt were so desirous to keep the Hebrews in their land. But how is this to be reconciled with an order for the destruction of their male children—that is for the gradual extermination of those Hebrew slaves, who were such valuable property, that supernatural inflictions of the most terrible kind were to be endured, or the hazard of them encountered, rather than that they should be suffered to quit the country.

“When, at last, an order for their departure was extorted, we find them represented as leaving the country in such haste that they ‘took their unleavened dough in the kneading vessels, wrapped up in their garments upon their shoulders’; and during the first day’s journey ‘baked unleavened cakes of the dough’, ‘for they were thrust out of Egypt, and they could not tarry; nor had they prepared for themselves any provision’ (*Ex. XII. 34. 39*). As we have before remarked, however, they carried with them ‘flocks and herds, even an abundance of cattle’; and they carried them into the desert which borders the Red Sea to the west, where no supply of herbage was to be found for their subsistence. Crossing the Red Sea, they commenced their march toward Mount Sinai, through a region of frightful sterility. In this desert, they journeyed for three days without water, and as would appear from the preced-

ing account, without food. At the end of the third day, they were furnished with sweet water by a miracle (*Ex. XV. 22-25*). What number had perished in the mean time, is not told. During their whole journeying and residence along the coast of the Red Sea, and in the desert of Sinai, where water for a few travellers is often difficult to be procured, we read of their having a miraculous supply only in one other instance (*Ex. XVII.*). Their sufferings from hunger, we are told, were great before their arriving at Sinai, and quails and manna were miraculously provided for their support (*Ex. XVI.*). Their cattle, of course, had perished, or been killed. The manna was continued for the whole forty years of their journeyings, till they came 'to an inhabited land'. Yet, before quitting their encampment around Sinai, they are again described as having an abundance of cattle for sacrifices, and of lambs for the passover, flour, oil, and wine, and a profusion of spices. Departing from Mount Sinai, they march through 'a great and terrible wilderness' (*Deut. I. 19*), the people complained, and wept, saying 'Who will give us flesh to eat?' and were again miraculously supplied with quails (*Num. XI.*). After this, their sufferings from want of water return; but their cattle are still alive, for they thus expostulate with Moses and Aaron: 'Why have ye brought the *people of God* into this wilderness, where both ourselves and our cattle must die?' (*Num. XX. 4*). Thus the whole nation of the Israelites, and not these only, but 'a mixed multitude who went with them' (*Ex. XII. 38*) are represented as remaining forty years in deserts, where they must have perished but for a constant miraculous supply of food; and as having at the same time herds of cattle, which, in their longings after flesh, they refrained from eating. The food of their cattle must also have been furnished by some astonishing miracle, of which the historian has supplied no account. Equally for men and beasts, an uninterrupted miraculous supply of water was necessary; but the supposition that such an uninterrupted supply was afforded, is precluded by the circumstance that four particular cases are specified in which it was given (*Ex. XV. 23. XVII. 1. Num. XX. 2. XXI. 16*). The Jewish Rabbis, though in general not apt to startle at absurdities, perceived this deficiency in their history, and

endeavored to supply it by a tradition, alluded to by St. Paul (1 *Cor.* X. 4) that the rock of Horeb, or the water which gushed from it, followed the Israelites in their wanderings.

“An incongruity, only less glaring, is found in the accounts of the wealth possessed by the Israelites, while encamped around Sinai, in gold, silver, brass, precious stones, fine linen of different colors, boards of setim wood, aromatics, and various other articles of luxury, and of their skill in different arts. They could have acquired neither their wealth nor their skill by their employment as slaves in Egypt in the making of bricks. Their skill, it may be said, was miraculously conferred. But this solution will not apply to the casting of the golden calf by Aaron. A part of their wealth, it may be said, that they procured from the Egyptians, from whom, before leaving Egypt, they asked and obtained ‘utensils of silver, utensils of gold, and raiment’ (*Ex.* XII. 35, 36). The story of their spoiling the Egyptians, in consequence of a divine direction, presents difficulties quite as serious as those which it may be brought forward to remove. But, however, great may have been the generosity of the Egyptians, in gifts of gold and silver, utensils and raiment, it will account only for part of the wealth of the Israelites, much of which consisted in other stores. Nor is any explanation to be given why the Israelites, who were removing such a profusion of articles of luxury into the desert, and who consequently had provided means for the conveyance of them, should have borne away in the hurry of their departure their yet unleavened dough in the kneading vessels upon their shoulders, and should have had no opportunity to provide any store of provisions for their own sustenance. If the Israelites possessed all those articles in the desert, they had, as I have said, means of transporting them. But such does not appear to have been the case. The camel is the only beast of burden which could have been used; and there is no mention of their possessing camels.”

§ 59. A large portion of the incidents, recorded by the Evangelists as occurring to Jesus, appear, on a close examination, to be mythical in their nature. The Gospels were written at a considerable time, as we shall see in a

subsequent chapter (XXI), after the crucifixion. Jesus lived in a country where very few had a clear idea of what history is, and with those few he and his twelve apostles had no intercourse. So far as we know, no record was made, during his life, of his discourses or history. About a generation after his crucifixion, Jerusalem was destroyed, and the few people dispersed, whose recollections of Jesus might have furnished exact information, in regard to his life, to a historian, or have furnished means for the confutation of a mythic biography. In the course of time biographies appeared—most of them in distant countries—which are marked by the characteristics which are found in the myths of Greece, Rome, Hindostan, and Skandinavia. Actions are attributed to Jesus because like actions were recorded of historical persons, to whom he bore a resemblance—because such actions were expected from the Messiah, predicted in the Jewish books—and because such actions were supposed to be natural and necessary to Jesus, as the writers conceived him to be. Such a system of composition, though on a much smaller scale, is now in progress in regard to the life of the Mormon prophet, Jo. Smith, more particularly in regard to events which are supposed to have occurred, when no person now living was present—so that there is no possibility of contradiction, except on the general principles of philosophical evidence : and these are almost as little understood among the Mormons as among the disciples of Jesus. This mythic composition appears to us fraudulent : it does not appear so to the writers, who imagine that the addition of particulars, not improbable in themselves, and calculated to describe the character, and increase the glory, of their hero, must edify the Church, and promote the cause of true religion. The narratives of the miraculous conception of John the Baptist and Jesus, the annunciation, the visit of the wise men, the dispute of the child Christ with the doctors in the Temple, the miracles, the entrance into Jerusalem, the transfiguration, and the resurrection, are strongly marked with the peculiarities of the myth : and in many passages we are able not only to trace the myth back to a much earlier age, but we are also able to show its direct historical falsehood, in so far as Jesus is concerned. This subject

is one, the full elucidation of which cannot be summed up in a few general principles : but requires the particular examination of all the numerous myths in the Gospels : and I shall be compelled to confine my attention here to a few of the mythic passages.

And first of the miraculous conception of John the Baptist (*Luke I*). The events, here recorded, are not such as occur in the ordinary course of nature, and therefore cannot be strictly historical : and when we consider their nature and subject, they must be, if not historical, then mythic. The account was probably written by a Christian of the Jewish school, mainly for the purpose of magnifying the importance of Jesus, and possibly with a view of making proselytes among the followers of John, by exhibiting the relationship of the Baptist to the Christ as his peculiar and highest destiny : and also by holding out the expectation of a state of temporal greatness for the Jewish people at the reëpearance of the Christ.\* An attentive consideration of the Old Testament histories, to which the announcement and birth of John bear a striking affinity, will render it abundantly evident that this is a just view. But it must not be imagined that the author of our narrative first made a collection from the Old Testament of its individual traits ; much rather had the scattered traits respecting the late birth of different distinguished men, as recorded in the Old Testament, blended themselves into a compound image in the mind of their reader, whence he selected the features most appropriate to his present subject. Of the children born of aged parents, Isaac is the most ancient prototype. It is said of Zacharias and Elizabeth, the parents of John, that " they both were advanced in their days " ; so Abraham and Sarah were " advanced in their days " (*Gen. XVIII. 11*), when a son was promised to them. It is likewise from this history that the incredulity of the father, on account of the advanced age of both parents, and the demand of a sign, are borrowed in our narrative. As Abraham, when Jehovah promised that he shall have a son and a numerous posterity, who shall inherit the land of Canaan, doubtingly inquires

\* The contents of the three succeeding pages are mostly taken from Strauss' *Life of Jesus*.

“Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it” (*Gen. XV. 8*); so Zacharias asks “Whereby shall I know this?” The incredulity of Sarah is not made use of for Elizabeth; but she is said to be of the daughters of Aaron, and the name Elizabeth, may perhaps have been suggested by that of Aaron’s wife (*Ex. VI. 23*). The incident of the angel, announcing the birth of the Baptist, is taken from the history of another later born child, Samson. In our narrative indeed, the angel appears first to the father in the Temple, whereas in the history of Samson, he shows himself first to the mother, and afterwards to the father in the field. This however, is an alteration, arising naturally out of the different situations of the respective parents (*Jud. XIII*). According to popular Jewish notions, it was no unusual occurrence for the priest to be visited by angels and divine apparitions, while offering incense in the Temple. The command which before his birth predestined the Baptist—whose later ascetic mode of life was known—to be a Nazarite, was taken from the same source. As to Samson’s mother, during her pregnancy, wine, strong drink, and unclean food were forbidden, so a similar diet is prescribed for her son, adding, as in the case of John, that the child shall be consecrated to God from the womb. The blessings which it is predicted that the people of Israel shall realize from these two men are similar (compare *Luke I. 16, 17* with *Jud. XIII. 5*); and each narrative concludes with the same expression concerning the hopeful growth of the child. It may be too bold to derive the Levitical descent of the Baptist from a third Old-Testament history of a late-born son,—Samuel (compare *I. S. I. 1*; and *I. Ch. VII. 27* with *Luke*); but the lyric effusions in the first chapter of the third Evangelist are imitations of this history. As Samuel’s mother, when consigning him to the care of the High Priest, breaks forth, in operatic fashion, into a hymn (*I. S. II. 1*), so the father of John does the same at the circumcision; though the particular expressions in the canticle uttered by Mary have a closer resemblance to Hannah’s song of praise than that of Zacharias. The significant appellation of John (dear to God), predetermined by the angel, had its precedent in the announcements of the names of Isaac and Ishmael (*Gen. XVI. 11*).



XVII. 19) : but the ground of its selection was the apparently providential coincidence between the signification of the name and the historical destination of the man. The remark that the name of John was not in the family (*Luke I. 61*), only brought its celestial origin more fully into view. The tablet upon which the father wrote the name (*v. 63*), was necessary on account of his incapacity to speak ; but it also had its type in the Old Testament. Isaiah was commanded to write the significant name of Maher-shalhash-baz upon a tablet (*Is. VIII. 1*). The supernatural incident of the narrative, of which the Old Testament may seem to offer no precise analogy, is the dumbness. But if it be borne in mind that the asking and receiving a sign from heaven, in confirmation of a promise or prophecy, was usual among the Hebrews (*Is. VII. 11.*) that the temporary loss of one of the senses was the peculiar punishment inflicted after a heavenly vision (*Acts IX. 8. 17*)—that Daniel became dumb whilst the angel was talking with him, and did not recover his speech till the angel had touched his lips, and opened his mouth (*Dan. X. 15*)—if we bear all these things in mind, the origin of the dumbness of Zacharias will also be found in the legend, and not in historical fact. Of two ordinary and subordinate features of the narrative, one—the righteousness of the parents of the Baptist (*v. 6*)—is merely a conclusion founded upon the belief that to a pious couple alone would the blessing of such a son be vouchsafed, and consequently is void of all historical worth ; the other—the statement that John was born in the reign of Herod the Great (*v. 5*)—is, without doubt, a correct calculation. Thus, we stand here upon purely mythical-poetical ground—the only historical reality which we can hold fast, as positive matter of fact being this—the impression made by John by virtue of his ministry, and his relation to Jesus was so powerful as to lead to the subsequent glorification of his birth in connection with the birth of the Messiah in the Christian legend.

An amusing specimen of the manner in which the New Testament myths had their origin, is given by Matthew (*XXI. 1-9*), in his account of the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. The Evangelist says that Jesus, when near the city, sent a couple of his disciples to get a she-ass and

foal which they should find at a designated place, and bring them to him. "And the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them, and brought the ass and the colt, and put on *them* their clothes, and they set him [Jesus] thereon" that is on the two asses; and so he rode into Jerusalem. The reader will ask how he rode on two asses at the same time; but will not get a satisfactory reply from any of the apologists of the Bible. They are all puzzled at such a statement. The meaning that Jesus rode "on them" is still plainer in the original Greek, than in the English; and the last shift of the theologians is to assert that Jesus had some of those inscrutable ways, which are attributed to Jehovah, whenever he is detected in doing any absurd or abominable action. But why did Matthew write such stuff? To this question we have a satisfactory answer. He says of the triumphal entry

"All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet" Zechariah, who wrote "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, thy king cometh unto thee! He is just and having salvation; lowly and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass" *Zech. IX. 9.*

The Evangelist understood this to refer to Jesus, and supposing that it had been fulfilled, wrote it down so; and understanding that the king was to make his entry on two asses, wrote that down in the same manner.

"And lo! [when Christ was crucified] the veil of the temple was rent asunder from the top to the bottom: and the earth was shaken, and the rocks were rent, and the sepulchres laid open: and many bodies of saints who slept, were raised, and leaving their sepulchres after his resurrection, entered the holy city and appeared to many." *Mat. XXVII. 52, 53.*

"Who, it may be asked [says Norton] were these saints? Not disciples of Christ: for many of them had not died. Not unconverted Jews of that time, for to them such a title would not be applied. How long had they lain in their sepulchres? We cannot but suppose that corruption had done its work on the larger portion: and is it to be thought that God would recreate, as it were, those mouldering bodies without some purpose far different from what can be discerned?"

Matthew says, (*II. 16*) that, when Herod heard of the birth of Jesus, "the King of the Jews," he was troubled, and for fear ordered that "all the children that were in Bethlehem and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under," should be slain. But it is a well established historical fact that Herod died three years before the year 1 A. D. Christians say that there is an error in our reckoning; but our reckoning is vastly more reliable than their gospels. Hennell remarks that this wholesale murder "is not mentioned by the other three Evangelists, nor by Josephus, although the latter is very minute in detailing the barbarities of Herod. The conduct attributed to Herod is in itself absurd: he makes no search after the one dangerous child, to whom the visit of the wise men must have afforded a good clue, but slays the children of a whole town and the adjoining country in a mass. It is inconceivable that any fit of anger should lead a politic old king, however tyrannical, to indulge in such useless and costly cruelty. And how could Josephus, who has filled thirty-seven chapters with the history of Herod, omit all allusions to such a wholesale murder? Lardner supposes that Josephus wilfully suppressed this fact, which is rather hard upon Josephus, since Mark, Luke, John, and all other historians are as silent as he." This myth was taken not from Jewish history, but from an older myth of Hindostan. The birth of the Boodhist savior of mankind, Sakya-Muni, was the occasion of a royal murder of the innocents in the same manner and for the same motives, as are recorded of the Jewish affair, which happened five centuries later. Strauss in his *Critical Examination of the Life of Jesus* has discussed very thoroughly the New Testament myths which were of Jewish origin; but those, which originated in Hindostan, and were imported into Judea and engrafted upon Christianity by the Boodhistic Essenes have not yet been investigated.

## CHAPTER XI.

### CONTRADICTIONARY STATEMENTS.

“Gulliver has such fables but not such contradictions” BOLINGBROKE.

§ 60. Two contradictory statements can not both be true: a divine revelation could contain no falsehood: the Bible is full of contradictions and falsehoods: and therefore is not a divine revelation. I presume it may be safely said that no book in existence contains so many contradictions as the Bible.

In all ages, since the death of Jesus, these discrepancies have been a source of annoyance and difficulty to the Christian apologists, and numerous attempts have been made to reconcile the contradictory passages, but the explanations are generally founded on improbable, and many of them on most absurd, assumptions. The more reasonable Christian critics confess judgment at once, and say that the text has been corrupted or interpolated: the less reasonable assert that the contradictions either do not exist, or that they are so unimportant as not to deserve notice. Paley says “I do not know a more rash or unphilosophical conduct of the understanding than to reject the substance of a story by reason of some diversity in the circumstances with which it is related. The usual character of *human* testimony is substantial truth under circumstantial variety.” I do know a more rash and unphilosophical conduct—it is to suppose that a book marked, in a high degree, by *human* defects is not *human* testimony but *divine*: —to receive as a revelation from Heaven an old book, which is notorious for the multitude of its absurd and irreconcilable contradictions and falsehoods.

There are many contradictions between different passages of the *Pentateuch*, but these have a bearing upon the question whether that book was written by Moses, and accord

ingly will be reserved for the chapter on the *Genuineness of the Biblical Books*. Other contradictions in regard to miracles will be reserved for the chapter on that subject.

The most extensive class of discrepancies is composed of those which are found between the books of *Kings* (including *Samuel*) and the books of the *Chronicles*. The writer of the latter books sought to glorify the kingdom of Judah, and particularly King David, and to magnify the importance of the Levites: the author of *Kings* seems to have been more disposed to be truthful and impartial. Some of the contradictions are shown in the following parallel passages.

*Kings.**Chronicles.*

David numbered Israel at the instigation of Jehovah. 2. S. XXIV. 1.

It was at the instigation of Satan. 1. Ch. XXI. 1.

David had concubines. 2 S. V. 13.

The concubines are not mentioned in the parallel passages in *Chronicles*. 1. Ch. XIV. 3.

David massacred two-thirds of the Moabites. 2. S. VIII. 2.

This cruelty is not mentioned by the Chronicler. 1. Ch. XVIII. 3.

David burned men of Rabbah in brick-kilns. 2. S. XII. 31.

Not mentioned by the Chronicler 1. Ch. XX. 3.

David's adultery with Bathsheba and murder of Uriah, and the reproof of his wickedness by the prophet Nathan are fully stated in *Kings*. 2. S. XI. 2—XII. 26.

All these interesting facts are discreetly omitted in *Chronicles*. 1. Ch. XX.

David gave up two brother-in-law and five step-sons to be murdered. 2. S. XXI. 1—11.

No mention.

Solomon had 700 wives, 300 concubines, and was idolatrous. 1. K. XI.

No mention.

The incest of Ammon, son of David, and the murder of the criminal by his brother. 2. S. XIII.

No mention.

*Kings.*

In the reign of Rehoboam (son of Solomon) "Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord, and they provoked him to jealousy, with their sins which they had committed, above all that their fathers had done. For they also built them high places, and images, and groves on every high hill and under every green tree. And there were also Sodomites in the land; and they did, according to all the abominations of the nations which the Lord cast out before the children of Israel." 1. *K. XIV.* 22-24.

Abijam "walked in all the sins of his father," Rehoboam. 1. *K. XV.* 3.

Asa, son of Abijam, did not remove "the high places." 1. *K. XV.* 14.

In the reign of Jehoshaphat son of Asa, "the high places were not taken away, for the people offered and burned incense yet in the high places" 1. *K. XXII.* 43.

In the reign of Jehoash, "the high places were not taken away: the people still sacrificed and burned incense in the high places." 2. *K. XIII.* 3.

Heathen worship in reign of Azariah. 2. *K. XV.* 4.

The people practised heathen worship in the reign of Jotham. 2. *K. XV.* 35.

Hezekiah "removed the high places, and broke the images, and cut down the groves, and broke in pieces the brazen serpent which Moses had made; for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it." 2. *K. XVIII.* 4.

*Chronicles.*

Rehoboam "forsook the law of the Lord and all Israel with him." 2. *Ch. XII.* 1.

Abijah was a pious man. 2. *Ch. XIII.* 2. 11

Asa did remove "the high places." 2. *Ch. XIV.* 3.

Jehoshaphat "took away the high places and groves out of Judah." 2. *Ch. XVII.* 6.

In the reign of Joash "all the people went to the house of Baal and broke it down, and broke his altars and his images in pieces." 2. *Ch. XXIII.* 17.

No mention. 2. *Ch. XXVI.*

The people "did corruptly" 2. *Ch. XXVII.* 3.

Hezekiah "opened the doors of the house of the Lord and repaired them" 2. *Ch. XXIX.* 3.

*Kings.*

In the *Kings* (2. S. VI.) the priests and Levites do not appear on the occasion at all, and sacrifice is offered by David himself, whereas under the law a priest should have offered it.

Hiram presented 20 measures of oil to Solomon. 1. K. V. 11.

The Ammonites obtained 1000 mercenaries of King Maacah to fight against Israel. 2. S. X. 6.

In the battle 700 charioteers were slain. 2. S. X 18.

For David's offence in numbering the people, Jehovah proposed to inflict one of three great evils on Judea, one of which was a seven years famine. 2. S. XXIV. 13.

Solomon "went to sacrifice there [at Gibeon] for that was the great high place." 1 K. III. 4.

In all these cases the Chronicler shows an evident desire to conceal the sins or magnify the honors of Judah. Many other cases might be cited, but the quotation of the passages would require more space than can be afforded in this book. I shall now give some contradictions which do not appear to owe their origin to any dishonest purpose in the writers—

There was war between kings Asa and Baasha all their days. 1. K. XV. 33.

Baasha died in the 26th year of Asa. 1. K. XIV. 6. 8.

Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he mounted the throne. 2. K. VIII. 26.

*Chronicles.*

In the *Chronicles* (1. Ch. XIII. XV. XVI), the priests and Levites play a principal part in the removal of the Ark by David to Jerusalem.

He presented 20,000 measures 2. Ch. II. 10.

They obtained 32,000 chariots of war. (1. Ch. XIX. 7.). There never were 32,000 chariots of war, at one time, in all western Asia.

In the battle 7000 charioteers were slain. 1. Ch. XIX. 8.

The Chronicler says it was a three years' famine. 1. Ch. XXI. 11. 12.

Solomon went to Gibeon, "for there was the tabernacle of the congregation of God which Moses" had made. 2. Ch. 1. 3.

In Asa's reign, Judah had peace during seven years of Baasha's time. 2. Ch. XIV. 1. 6.

Baasha built Ramah in the 36th year of Asa's reign. 2. Ch. XVI. 1.

He was forty-two years old, when he mounted the throne. 2. Ch. XXII. 2.

*Kings.*

King Abijam reigned three years and died before Jeroboam. 1. *K. XV.* 1. 2. 9.

Solomon had 40,000 horses in his stalls! 1. *K. IV.* 26.

There were in the time of David 800,000 soldiers in Israel and 500,000 in Judah (2. *S. XXIV.* 9.) The Jews were not divided into the two nations of "Israel" and "Judah" until two generations after this census, but were composed of the twelve tribes.

Matthew and Luke, both give a genealogy of Jesus. The former begins at Abraham and comes down to Joseph; the latter begins at Joseph and carries the line up to Adam. Matthew says there were 26 generations between Jesus and David; Luke says there were 43. Matthew says "Jacob begot Joseph", and Luke says Joseph was "the son of Heli." Christians try to reconcile the difficulty by asserting that Luke gives the genealogy of Mary; but the assertion has not a particle of evidence to support it. A human biographer, if giving, in such a case, the genealogy of a woman, would have stated the fact clearly so as not to be misunderstood. Such a method of interpretation may get rid of a discrepancy, but it accuses Jehovah, the alleged author, of being little better than a fool. There are but two or three names which are found in both genealogies — so little resemblance is there between them. Matthew mentions Salathiel and says he was the son of Jechonias; Luke says he was the son of Neri. Certainly, Salathiel did not have two fathers. The supposition that Luke gave the genealogy of Mary will not account for the discrepancies beyond Salathiel; every discrepancy there implies an inevitable falsehood in the Scripture. Luke says that Rhesa was the son of Zorobabel, but the author of *Chronicles* (1. *Ch. III.* 17. 19) says that Zerubabel had no son of that name. Luke says that Sala was the son of Cainan and the grandson of Arphaxad; the author of

*Chronicles.*

Abijah lived after Jeroboam's death, waxed mighty, married fourteen wives, and begat two sons and fourteen daughters. 2. *Ch. XIII.* 1. 2. 20. 21. *XIV.* 1.

Solomon had 4000 horses in his stalls. 2. *Ch. IX.* 25

There were 1,100,000 soldiers in Israel and 470,000 in Judah. 1. *Ch. XIX.* 5. 6.



*Genesis* says Salah was the son of Arphaxad ; and he does not mention Cainan (*Gen. X. 24. XI. 12*). Matthew and Luke say that Zerubabel was the son of Salathiel, but in *Chronicles* it is written that he was the son of Pedaiah. Matthew says that "Joram begot Ozias" (*Mat. I. 8*), but in the books of *Kings* and *Chronicles* it is stated that Ozias was the great-great-grand-son of Joram, — three kings, in the direct line, reigning between the two. Dr. Doddridge supposes that Matthew intended to punish Ahaziah for his wickedness by leaving his name out ! These genealogies of Jesus after all do not amount to much, for if the New Testament is to be believed, it does not appear that Jesus had in his veins a particle of the blood of any one mentioned in all these lists. His only human blood was of Mary, and the Evangelists do not give the least hint to enable us to discover that she had a drop of David's blood in her veins.

A large portion of the *Pentateuch* is occupied with giving directions, prescribed by Jehovah in regard to the manner of managing the sacrifices. These directions purport to have been given when the Jews were brought out of Egypt, and to have been written by the man who led them out. In later years, it was discovered, that the greater the ceremonies the less was the valuable religion, and the sacrifices became an eyesore to the better class of the Jews. The books of the later prophets contain many passages showing that they had little respect for the ancient ceremonies. The clearest of these passages is in *Jeremiah* (*VII. 22*), where he says Jehovah told him "I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burned offerings or sacrifices". Did Moses lie ? did Jeremiah lie ? or did they both lie ? or both tell the truth ?

The author of *Exodus* (*VI. 3*) says that Jehovah was not known to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob by the name of Jehovah. Yet in *Genesis* (*XXVIII. 13*) it is said that the Lord appeared to Jacob in a dream and told his own name (Jehovah in the Hebrew Bible). And elsewhere, (*Gen. XXII. 14*), it is said that Abraham called the place of the proposed sacrifice of Isaac, "Jehovah-jireh ;" and in *Genesis IV. 26*, it is said, "then men began to call on the name of Jehovah."

Moses says (*Gen. XXXII. 19*) that Jacob bought the field of Sychem, while Luke says (*Acts VII. 15, 16*) that Abraham bought it.

There is a discrepancy between *Genesis* (*XLVI. 26, 27*), and *Acts* (*VII. 14*), in regard to the number of Israelites who went to Egypt with Jacob: Moses says there were sixty-six, and Luke says there were seventy-five.

Did Aaron die on the top of Mount Hor, on the way from Kadesh to the Red Sea (*Num. XX. 28*), and also at Mosera on the way from Beeroth to Gudgodah, (*Deut. X. 6*)?

In *Nehemiah* (*VII.*) there is an enumeration of the men of the people of Israel in detail and in total; but the total as given by the prophet 42,360, does not agree with the total, obtained by adding together the particulars, which amount to 29,818. Watson in his Reply to Paine admits the discrepancy, but asserts most positively, without being able to show a particle of evidence to support his assertion, that the discrepancy is owing to some error in the transcribing.

David is described as "a mighty valiant man, and a man of war" (*1 S. XVI. 18*), and afterwards he is described as "a youth", "stripling", who had never had any fights save with wild animals, who had never worn armor, and who took his sling and pebbles to fight against the Philistines, because, after trial, he found the sword and armor of Saul too cumbersome. *1 S. XVII. 33-42*.

David brought the head of Goliath to Jerusalem (*1 S. XVII. 54*), which was then, and for a long time afterwards a city of the enemies, against whom David was fighting. *1 Ch. XI. 4*.

Abraham did not leave Haran till after the death of his father Terah (*Acts VII. 4*). Terah died one hundred and thirty-five years after the birth of Abraham (*Gen. XI. 32*). Abraham left Haran when he was seventy-five years old. *Gen. XII. 4*.

Jeremiah (*XXI. 9*) advised the Israelites to desert to the Chaldeans: and he denied (*XXXVII. 14*) that he gave such advice; and then we are told that he was cast into two different prisons for giving it. *Jer. XXXVII. 16, XXXVIII. 6*.

The author of the book of *Joshua* (*X. 13*) quotes the book of *Jasher* as authority for the arrest of the sun by

Joshua, and the author of *Kings* (1 *K. I.* 18) quotes the same book to prove the sayings of Saul four hundred years later.

“God did tempt Abraham” (*Gen. XXII.* 1). “God tempteth not any man”. *James, I.* 13.

Saul was much pleased with David before the battle with Goliath (1 *S. XVI.* 21, 22). After the death of Goliath, David was an entire stranger to Saul (1 *S. XVII.* 55). Bayle remarks “It is somewhat strange that Saul did not know David that day, since that young man had played several times on his musical instrument before him, to disperse those black vapors which molested him. If such a narrative as this should be found in *Thucydides*, or in *Livy*, all the critics would unanimously conclude that the transcribers had transposed the pages, forgot something in one place, repeated something in another, or inserted some preposterous additions in the author’s work. But no such suspicions ought to be entertained of the Bible”.

Did Peter deny Christ to a man (*John XVIII.* 26. *Luke XXII.* 58), or to a maid? *Mat. XXVI.* 71. *Mark XII.* 69.

Matthew says (*XXVII.* 34), that, at the crucifixion, they gave Jesus “vinegar mixed with gall” to drink, but Mark (*XV.* 23) says “wine mixed with myrrh”.

Judas repented according to Matthew (*XXVII.* 3), and it is implied in *Acts* (*I.* 18), that he did not repent. Matthew says he gave back the thirty pieces of silver to the priests; *Acts* says he did not. Matthew says the priests with that money bought a field to bury strangers; *Acts* says he bought a field for himself. Matthew says he hanged himself; according to *Acts*—“He burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out”. Matthew accounts for the designation of the stranger’s graveyard, as the field of blood, by saying that it was bought with the reward of iniquity; but *Acts* says it was because of Judas’ tragic death there.

The expulsion of the money changers from the temple took place soon after the baptism of Jesus, according to John (*II.* 13), but Matthew (*XXI.* 12), Mark (*XI.* 15), and Luke (*XIX.* 45), place the event in the last visit to Jerusalem, and just before the crucifixion.

John (*I.* 28, 40, 41) says that Jesus called Simon and Andrew, at Bethabara, beyond Jordan, in the presence of John the Baptist, while Matthew says (*IV.* 12, 18) the call occurred at the sea of Galilee after the temptation on the mount, and after John was cast into prison.

According to Matthew (*III.* 16. *IV.* 1, 2), Mark (*I.* 11, 12), and Luke (*III.* 22. *IV.* 1, 2), Jesus, after being baptized by John, was forthwith led out into the wilderness, and tempted by the devil during forty days : but John (*I.* 33, 35, 43. *II.* 1, 12, 13) completely excludes the temptation. He says that on the first day after the baptism, Jesus was with John, on the second day he conversed with Peter, on the third day he attended the marriage in Cana, then he went to Capernaum, and then to Jerusalem, so that it was impossible for him to have spent any forty days in the wilderness.

John the Evangelist (*I.* 29-34) says that John the Baptist "bare record" of Christ at the baptism :—"This is the son of God". Again, a few days later, and long before the imprisonment of the Baptist, the latter, in a long discourse, is represented saying : "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand" (*John III.* 27) : and yet Matthew (*XI.* 2), and Luke (*VII.* 18), state that when the Baptist was in prison, he sent two of his disciples to Jesus to learn whether he was really the Christ, or whether he was only the forerunner of a greater ? Mark (*I.* 11) says that at the baptism, there was a voice from Heaven :—"Thou art my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased". How then could John the Baptist doubt, himself being inspired, and having such evidence before him ? St. John must have manufactured those speeches ; for Apollos, an "eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures", who was a disciple of the Baptist, knew not Christ, and long after his death was baptising with the baptism of John, when he was converted by Paul. *Acts XVIII.* 25 ; *XIX.* 3.

Matthew (*V.* 12) and Mark (*I.* 14) assert that Jesus did not go into Galilee until after the Baptist's imprisonment, but John states (*III.* 33) not only that Jesus went into Galilee immediately after the baptism and before the Baptist was imprisoned, but even baptised the latter in Judea.

While Paul was in Damascus, "the Jews took counsel to kill him. But their laying in wait was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket". *Acts. IX. 23-25.*

But according to Paul's own story, it was the governor that wanted to kill him. "In Damascus, the governor under Aretas, the king, kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me. And through a window, in a basket, was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands".

There a number of discrepancies in the different accounts of the miracle at Saul's conversion.

The first account (*Acts IX. 1-9*) says that Saul was going to Damascus to persecute the Christians there, when suddenly "a light from Heaven" shone round about him, and he fell to the earth. A voice addressed him, ordering him to go into the city, and it should be told him what he should do. Some men with him "stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man".

The second account (*Acts XXII. 3-11*) says the light was "a great light": and those who were with Saul "saw indeed the light and were afraid; but they heard not the voice."

In the third narrative (*Acts XXVI. 9-20*) Saul says, himself speaking, that he went with authority from the chief priests to persecute the Christians, when "I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun \* \* \* and when we were *all* fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.' And I said 'Who art thou, Lord?' And he said 'I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest. But rise and stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness, both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee: delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles, to whom I now send thee.'"

The first and second accounts contemplate that Saul should be told in Damascus, what he should do for the

Lord : and the message was delivered by Ananias accordingly, as related in another part of the *Acts* : the third account represents the Lord as delivering his message directly on the spot.

Saul was blind from the effects of the light, "above the brightness of the sun" (the affair took place in "mid-day") : and the Lord went to Ananias, a Christian in Damascus, told him where Saul was, and ordered him to go and restore him to sight by laying on of hands. Now, Ananias had a pretty high opinion of Jehovah, but he imagined the Lord did not know so much about Saul as he ought to before ordering one of his servants to put himself, a Christian, within the clutches of that bloody persecutor : and he answered "Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem : and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name" (*Acts IX. 13, 14*). "So you see", hints Ananias, "if I go near Saul, he may nab me, and broil me over a slow fire, which would not be agreeable, as I am a man of weak nerves ; besides my business requires my personal attention." The Lord orders him to do as he was bid, for Saul was all right.

Now, it so happens that the lying priest who wrote this story, exposes his fraud beautifully. How could Ananias tell the Lord that Saul had authority to bind the Christians? How could Ananias know anything of the sort? The priests at Jerusalem, of course, did not tell that Saul had authority to seize the Christians, for such telling would defeat the purpose, neither did Saul tell of his authority, or he would have told at the same time of his conversion, and the report of the latter would have reached Ananias as surely as that of the authority. The fact is that the author of the *Acts* wanted to make a dramatic story, and in making the attempt was green enough to botch the job.

When Ananias went to Saul he said to him, "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost" (*Acts IX. 17*). Now, according to the three accounts heretofore given, neither Jesus nor any other person "appeared" unto Saul.

Paul tells the story differently. He says that Ananias came to him and said, " 'Brother Saul, receive thy sight.' And the same hour I looked up upon him. And he said, 'The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.' "

On the morning of the resurrection, says Matthew, (*XXVIII.* 1), Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to the sepulchre. According to Mark (*XVI.* 2) Mary Magdalene, the other Mary, and Salome went. Luke tells us (*XXIII.* 55. *XXIV.* 1—10), that Mary Magdalene, the other Mary, Joanna, "and other women," went together to the tomb; and John (*XX.* 1) says that Mary Magdalene went alone.

Matthew states that an angel descended from Heaven and rolled away the stone as the women came. Mark says the stone was rolled away when the women arrived there, and when they entered, they saw a young man clothed in a long white garment, sitting on the right side. According to Luke, they found the stone rolled away, and inside after a little time they saw that "two men stood by them in shining garments." John says, Mary Magdalene found the stone rolled away, and saw two angels "sitting the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain."

Matthew says that, after the two women left the tomb, Jesus met them and requested them to tell Peter and the disciples to meet him in Galilee. Mark states that the young man in white requested the three women to direct the disciples to meet Jesus in Galilee. Luke asserts that the six or more women, finding the sepulchre empty, were told by the "two men in the shining garments," that Jesus had arisen, saying nothing about going to Galilee; and thereupon the women told the apostles, who disbelieved, and Peter ran to the sepulchre to satisfy himself. John says, the one woman told Peter and John that the sepulchre was empty, whereupon those two "ran both together" to the tomb.

According to Matthew, Jesus met the two women going from the sepulchre, requested them to send the eleven to meet him in Galilee, whither they went, and where he met them, and where "they worshipped him : but some doubted." Mark affirms that Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene, who went and told his disciples, and they "believed not." Afterwards he appeared to two of the apostles and these two told the others, who did not believe. Afterwards he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat and upbraided them with their unbelief, and "so then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was taken up into Heaven." Luke states that on the day of the resurrection, Christ appeared to two of the apostles on the road to Emmaus, and had a long conversation with them. That same day he appeared to the eleven at meat in Jerusalem, ate "broiled fish, and of an honey comb," spoke with them for some time ; led them out as far as Bethany, and was carried up to Heaven before them. John says, that Jesus appeared in the sepulchre to Mary Magdalene, and the same day in the evening, he appeared to ten apostles, Thomas being absent. Eight days later, Christ met the whole eleven in the same place, and Thomas who then saw him for the first time after the resurrection, being somewhat skeptical, stuck his finger into the hole to know whether it was there yet. Afterwards, Jesus showed himself to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias. The *Acts* says Jesus was seen of the apostles for forty days after the resurrection.

There is a remarkable discrepancy between the report, given by the four Evangelists of the last words of Jesus to his apostles :

*Matthew's report* : — "All power is given unto me in Heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations ; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you : and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." *Mat. XXVIII.* 18, 19, 20.

*Mark's report* : — "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved ; but he that believeth not, shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe ; in my name shall they cast out devils ; they shall speak with new tongues ; they shall take up



serpents ; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them ; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." *Mark. XVI. 15-18.*

*Luke's report* :— " Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day : and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father, upon you : but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." *Luke XXIV. 46-49.*

*John's report* :— " Peace be unto you ! as my Father has sent me, even so send I you.' And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, ' Receive ye the Holy Ghost.' Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them ; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.'" *John XX. 21-23.*

We have certainly found in this chapter an abundant supply of the " circumstantial variety ", which usually marks " *human* testimony " ; but whether there is any of the " substantial truth ", which should mark divine testimony, may be doubted. Is Jehovah the author of all these contradictions ? Yes, or no ? If not, what is he the author of ? Do the Christians intend to assert that Jehovah is the author of all that is true, and the devil of all that is false, in their Scriptures ? Certainly, they will not assert that any thing occurs merely of itself. Who then is the author of these discrepancies ?

## CHAPTER XII.

### INCONSISTENT DOCTRINES.

“By thy words thou shalt be condemned”.—JESUS.

§ 61. The Bible contains a record of four alleged covenants between Jehovah and mankind. The *first* covenant was that if Abraham, and his descendants should observe the ordinance of circumcision, and nothing more than that, (*Gen. XVII. 10*) they should inherit the land of Canaan forever, have a great multitude of children, and have Jehovah for their exclusive God. The *second* covenant was that the Jews should observe the Mosaic law, and in consideration thereof, Jehovah would be their exclusive God, and give them all kinds of temporal prosperity. The *third* covenant was that the Jews, who should act in accordance with the requirements of moral law, as taught by Jesus, and should observe the ceremonial commands of the Mosaic law, should enjoy everlasting and infinite joy in Heaven. The *fourth* covenant made with Paul, is, that all men, who shall be led by the Holy Ghost to believe that Jesus is the Redeemer of mankind, shall be saved in a future life. With four schemes of salvation so various, it might be expected, that there would be some inconsistencies in the Scriptures.

§ 62. *The New Testament asserts and the Old denies the immortality of the soul, and future rewards and punishments.* The immortality of the soul is one of the chief points of Christ's teaching. All the New Testament books make it a prominent doctrine. In the XVth chapter of the *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Paul holds a lengthy discourse on eternal life. The sanctions of morality—the rewards for the deserving and the punishments for the wicked—are all confined, according to the New Testament, to the next world. Everlasting and intense delight in heaven, or pain in hell, is to be the portion of every man according to his deeds on earth: and surely that sanction should be enough.

The Evangelists in no place promise pleasure in this world to the followers of Christ, or threaten earthly punishment to sinners. On the contrary, the Christians are warned that they must turn their backs on the pleasures of this world, if they wish to secure a title to the joys of the next. The Lord shows no especial favors here to the faithful : " He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust " (*Mat. V* 45) : " He is kind to the unthankful and to the evil " (*Luke VI*.28) : and Jesus represents Dives as being in hell, and Lazarus as being in heaven for no other reasons than that the former was rich, and the latter poor upon earth. *Luke XVI*. 19.

The Old Testament teaches that the soul dies with the body. A few texts may be found to show that the doctrines of the life of the soul after the death of the body was not unknown, but the weight of authority is all against a resurrection. The silence of Moses in the law in regard to immortality, is equivalent to an express denial of it. He does not use the word. He represents Jehovah as taking particular care, after Adam had eaten the apple of knowledge, that he should not also eat of the apple of life, and " live forever " (*Gen. III*. 22). " Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return ", was the divine exclamation. There is no hint of a future life—an entire exclusion of it. There is no suspicion in the *Pentateuch* of a deathless soul. Solomon, the wisest of all men, gifted even with superhuman wisdom (*1 K. III*. 11), asserts (*Ec. I*. 4), that man passes away, " but the earth abideth forever ". And again he says : " That which befalleth the son of man, befalleth the beast : even one thing befalleth them : as the one dieth, so dieth the other : yea, they have all one breath ; so that man hath no preëminence above a beast : for all is vanity. All go unto one place : all are of dust and all turn to dust again " (*Ec. III*. 19, 20). And elsewhere he uses the emphatic language, " the living know that they shall die ; but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward ; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love and their hatred and their envy is now perished : neither have they any more a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun. Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink

thy wine with a merry heart ; for God now accepteth thy works. Let thy garments be always white ; and let thy head lack no ointment. Live joyfully with thy wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity ; for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labor which thou takest under the sun. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might ; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest". The opinion of Job is equally clear : he says that, "as the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away : so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more" (*Job VII. 9.*) David declares that "the dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence" (*Ps. CXV. 17.*) For fear that the Jews might adopt the old Egyptian superstition of a future life, Isaiah adds his negative : "The grave can not praise thee ; death cannot celebrate thee : they that go down into the pit, cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise thee". *Is. XXXVIII. 18. 19.* See also *Job XIV. 7. 12. XIX. 26. XXI. 32,* and *Psalms CII. 11. 12.*

The Old Testament prescribes a minute code of things to be done, and things to be avoided ; the disobedient are threatened with severe punishments, and the faithful encouraged with the promise of great rewards. But all these rewards and punishments are to be administered on this earth. Adam's sin was to be punished in this world only. The punishment of Cain was to be that the earth should not yield her strength to his tillage (*Gen. IV. 12.*) The wickedness of the Antediluvians was so great that "it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at heart ;" yet there is no mention of any punishment except the flood (*Gen. VI. 13.*) Ham's unlucky eyes were damned by Noah, with Jehovah's consent, in the condemnation of himself and all his descendants to slavery on this earth (*Gen. IX. 25.*) The people of Sodom were struck with blindness and destroyed with "brimstone and fire" (*Gen. XIX. 11, 24, 25.*) Abraham's willingness to obey the Lord was to be rewarded on earth by the increase of his posterity to be a great nation, with Jehovah for their God and protector. No mention is made of reward in Heaven (*Gen. XVII. 17.*) Deeds, esteemed very meri-

torious or wicked, are seldom recorded in the Pentateuch without the accompanying statement of the swift administration of reward or punishment, according to the merit or demerit. The exaltation of Phineas and the destruction of Korah were notable cases. And the idea is held out that such reward and punishment on earth are to be looked for invariably. So, when Moses was giving the commandments, he said to them, "Ye shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God hath commanded you, that ye may live and that it may be well with you, and that he may prolong your days in the land which ye shall possess" (*Deut. V. 33*). And Solomon holds the same opinion, for he says that "By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches and honor and life" (*Prov. XXII. 4*). Jehovah sanctions the decalogue not with threats of punishments in a future life, but with offers of reward in this. He says "Honor thy father and thy mother *that* thy days may be long in the land" (*Ex. XX. 12*). The idea of final settlement with man for all his sins and virtues, before he leaves this world, is particularly strong with Moses, and is set forth with great force in the beginning of Deuteronomy. Chapter seventh contains the words of Jehovah, conveying assurance to the Jews that obedience to the law of Moses would be rewarded by the fulfilment of the promise to Abraham (*Gen. XVII. 6, 7*), and disobedience should be punished with destruction. In chapter twenty-eighth of Deuteronomy, there is a long enumeration of the blessings which Jehovah will bestow upon the Israelites, if they shall be true to him, and of the evils which he will inflict, if they turn away and neglect his laws and ordinances. The blessings promised are all kinds of earthly prosperity, and the long list concludes thus: "the Lord shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers to give thee." The evils threatened for disobedience are the sword, famine, pestilence, "madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart," consumption, fever, inflammation, extreme burning, blasting, mildew, all the diseases of Egypt, trembling of heart, failing of eyes, sorrow of mind, renewed captivity in Egypt; and, finally, "the Lord shall send upon thee

cursing, vexation and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed." Not a word of Heaven or Hell! It is very clear that Moses was determined not to patronise those institutions. See, likewise, *Lev. XXVI.* 3, 4, 15-17; *Ex. XX.* 12; *Ps. LVIII.* 11.

No Christian author, worthy of note, contends that a future life was taught by the Old Testament. Warburton, in his work on the *Divine Legation of Moses*, unable to evade the plain denial of the soul's immortality in the *Pentateuch*, says "The absence or omission of a future state of rewards and punishments in the Mosaic religion, is a certain mark of its divinity." If that be so, what does the presence of that dogma in the New Testament prove? Can its absence prove the divinity of one book, and its presence that of another?

§ 63. *Moses and Jesus differ in regard to the interpretation of the myth of Adam's fall.* The author of the *Pentateuch*, in giving an account of the early history of mankind, thought proper to introduce the myth prevalent among all the ancient nations of western Asia of a golden age, when the earth and nature were inconceivably beautiful, when the whole animal creation was at peace, when men were free from pain and death, satisfied in every want, gratified in every desire without exertion, perfectly happy and sinless, and even ignorant of the distinction between right and wrong. The present condition of mankind is accounted for by supposing that the first man violated a command of Jehovah, and for that offense was rendered sinful and mortal, liable to disease and pain, and compelled to live in misery, and to earn his support by his labor. These were the punishments, and according to Moses, the only punishments inflicted for the disobedience of Adam.

Our human ideas of justice require that penalties shall be inflicted only for deeds which are known to be prohibited, and that the penalty inflicted shall have been declared beforehand, so that he, who may offend, shall have a proper idea of the magnitude of the suffering to which violation of the law will expose him. And as the fear of punishment is one of the strongest inducements which men feel to prevent their breaking the laws, and as that fear exercises the greater influence in proportion as the punishment is under-

stood to be certain and severe, so the judicious lawgiver will be careful that the penalty shall not be underrated. He will not only declare the punishment, but he will publish it in language which will not be misunderstood. In prohibiting the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil to Adam, Jehovah took the precaution to describe the punishment which would be inflicted for a violation of the divine command—"In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (*Gen. II. 17*), meaning that he should be rendered mortal—"for dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return" (*Gen. III. 19*). This language clearly implies that Jehovah intended, Adam expected, and Moses understood that no other punishment would be inflicted than *that* threatened, and *that* specified as having been inflicted in accordance with the threat. The language of the Lord, when pronouncing sentence on the male offender, is given word for word by the conscientious reporter, thus: —

"Cursed is the ground for thy sake : in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee : and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground : for out of it wast thou taken : for dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return." (*Gen. III. 17—19*).

There is not the remotest indication that any punishment in a future life was thought of by any of the parties concerned : and in fact the writer of *Genesis* evidently had no belief in any life after the death of the body. Throughout the whole Bible, the fall of Adam is scarcely referred to—never referred to as a matter for which there would or could be any expiation—never referred to as subjecting man to any other punishment than that inflicted in this life. The story of the apple is not mentioned between the fourth chapter of *Genesis* and the last of *Malachi*.

In the time of Jesus, the doctrine of the immortality of the soul was adopted by the majority of the people in Judea, and was firmly rooted among that class in which he hoped to make the most of his converts. Another doctrine had also some prevalence—that man was born wicked, that he was naturally sinful. Christ and his followers connected these two doctrines with the myth of the fall, to which a

new interpretation was given. The chief punishment of Adam was not inflicted on earth as represented by Moses, but was the condemnation of all men to hell, from which they could be rescued only by believing on Jesus Christ.

§ 64. *The Biblical writers had different ideas in regard to the number of the gods.* In the Old Testament the deity is usually spoken of as one—single in his nature; but there are many passages which show that different doctrines were entertained. The Hebrew word *Elohim* which occurs in the first verse of *Genesis*, and is the only name used for God in that chapter, and is frequently used afterwards, is plural in its form and means “Gods,” but it is generally united to a singular verb; as though a later age had endeavored to correct the ancient polytheism, but did not dare to abandon the old name of the divinities. When Jehovah destroyed Babel, he said to himself “let us go down.” He forgot that there was only one of him. The quotations made in chapter VII. of this book, from the history of these peculiar favorites of the Almighty show that idolatry was very extensively practised among them during the greater portion of the time from the exodus to the Babylonian Captivity, and that with this idolatry, polytheism, human sacrifices, and the grossest obscenities of phallic worship were connected. Besides, it is plain, from numerous passages, that the Jews before the exodus were not free from polytheistic ideas. Jacob said “If God will be with me, and will keep me in the way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father’s house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God.” (*Gen. XXVIII. 20.*) Jehovah saw that Jacob was in earnest, and for fear of losing a worshipper, swallowed his indignation at such insolence, and brought the patriarch home safe. If Jehovah had not done his duty to his worshipper, the latter would probably have adored Baal or Moloch. Moses ordered the Jews to abstain from going “after other gods, of the gods of the people which were round about” them (*Deut. VI. 14.*): and he declares that Jehovah was the greatest of “all gods.” (*Ex. XVIII. 11. XV. 11.*) And even in the late time of Jeremiah the same idea prevailed. The word of Jehovah came to that prophet, to the effect that “the gods which have not made the earth—even they



shall perish from the earth and from under these heavens" (*Jer. X. 11*). The Lord did not deny the existence of other gods, but warned the Jews that they would make a bad bargain by worshipping other divinities, whom he intended to annihilate. In a still later time, however, the Jews came to have a faith much nearer to pure monotheism. Lessing speaks thus of the polytheistic idea in Judea:—"So far as we can learn from the Old Testament, the Israelites before the time of the Babylonish captivity, had no correct idea of the unity of God. Otherwise they would not have given the same name to the false deities of other lands, and they would not have styled Jehovah *their* God—the God of *their* country, and the God of *their* fathers. It is plain that where he is called the only god, the meaning is that he was the first, the greatest, the most perfect. He recognized the divinities of the heathens as gods, and he claimed to be superior to them in wisdom and in power. So long as the Jews found no reason to doubt the superiority of their God, so long they were true to him; but when they saw that another people, by the providence of its God, surpassed themselves in wealth or power, just so soon did they go a-whoring after the strange gods, supposed to be more powerful. [The prophets spoke of their desertion of Jehovah not as *atheism*, but as *infidelity* or *idolatry*. No Christian writer of the present day would say that the Mohammedan worships a God different from Jehovah.] But when the Jews were carried to Babylon, and had their minds opened as by a revelation, and saw a nation with a purer idea of monotheism and became more familiar with the writings of Moses, they became another people, and were no longer capable of running after strange gods. All idol-worship was at an end. If this undeniable change in the religious history of the Jews is not to be thus explained, then it is inexplicable. They might desert a national divinity, but they could not desert the only God."

But amidst all the polytheistic ideas of the Old Testament there is no mention of a "trinity," and indeed that word is nowhere to be found in the Bible, nor is there any hint that God is three-fold in his nature. It has been said that the "three men" who appeared to Abraham, on their way to Sodom, were the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and

the last two were they whose sight excited such wicked desires in the hearts of the depraved natives of that place. This, however, is an unfounded assumption, and was only resorted to as a desperate shift for testimony that the gods of the Old and New Testament are the same. There is nothing to connect the plural of Elohim with the Trinity of the Christians. Moses says "The Lord, our God, is one Lord" (*Deut. VI. 4*); there is no hint at three in one. Jehovah declares "I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me" (*Deut. XXXII. 39*).

The New Testament is interpreted by ninety-nine out of a hundred Christians to teach that God is one, but is composed of three persons. In several passages Jesus is reported as representing himself of the same nature with Jehovah, as "I and my Father are one" (*John X. 31*); "I am in the Father and the Father in me" and "Before Abraham was, I am." *John VIII. 58*, &c.

The three persons of the Godhead are distinct individuals and can act separately from each other. The Virgin Mary was impregnated by the Holy Ghost (*Mat. I. 18*; *Luke I. 35*), and the child conceived was the Son. In the acts of impregnation and conception, the second and third persons of the Godhead acted separately from the Father, and from each other. What the Father was doing in the meantime is not stated. The Son was so far independent of the Father that he was not so much in favor with the latter at one time as at another (*Luke II. 40, 52*). The desires of the first and third members of the Divine firm did not always agree. The junior partner said, on one occasion, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless, not *my* will but *thine* be done" (*Luke XXII. 42*). Indeed, he frequently used expressions to show that their purposes did not always coincide (*John V. 30*; *VI. 39*; *Mat. VII. 21*; *XII. 50*). The Father seems to have been even too indifferent to the feelings of the Son, and the latter, in the bitter agonies of the cross, cried out, reproachfully, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (*Mark XV. 34*).

It is plain that, if these three persons be one, they are not three in the same sense in which they are one. Jesus frequently exhibited symptoms of human weakness; and

was it possible for him to be at the same time God and man, finite and infinite? Paul says, "There is one mediator between God and man, the man Jesus Christ" (1 *Tim. II. 5*). Could Jesus mediate between himself and another party? When Jesus was called "good", he objected to the title, asking, "Why callest thou me good"? implying that there was none good save another—Jehovah (*Luke XVIII. 19*). The author of *Hebrews* (*V. 8. 9*) said that Jesus learned "obedience by the things which he suffered, and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation". How could divine nature be originally imperfect? Or was his human nature capable of perfection? So, too, Paul says Christ "pleased not himself" (*Rom. XV. 3*). If divine, he ought to have been a pretty good judge.

§ 65. *The Bible teaches inconsistent doctrines in regard to what is necessary for obtaining divine favor.* The Old Testament required descent from Jacob, and observance of the Mosaic law. Jesus said, "All that ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets" (*Mat. VII. 12*). "He [Christ] shall [on Judgment-day] reward every man according to his works" (*Mat. XVI. 27*). James taught the same doctrine, "By works a man is justified" (*James II. 24*). Paul and Mark teach differently: "He that believeth, and is baptised, shall be saved, but he that believeth not, shall be damned" (*Mark XVI. 16*). "The just shall live by faith" (*Rom. I. 17*). "Whatsoever is not of faith, is sin" (*Rom. XIV. 23*). There is still another doctrine: "By grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works lest any man should boast" (*Eph. II. 8. 9*). The Old Testament represented Jehovah as having no favor for any nation save the Jews. However much he was offended at their rebellions, he never, for one instant, became the God of any other tribe. "The Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldst keep all his commandments: and to make thee high above all nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honor" (*Deut. XXVI. 17. 18*). The New Testament teaches a different doctrine: love is the fulfilment of the law, salvation depends on faith (*Mark*

XVI. 16) ; “Jews and Gentiles” “are all under sin” *Rom. III. 9.*

§ 66. *The general spirit and purpose of the New Testament differs greatly from that of the Mosaic law.* The Old Testament is full of a sanguinary spirit, and, if received as of divine authority, never would educate a nation to feelings of charity, love, moderation, humility, or justice toward foreigners, while the New Testament would have such an influence. By the *Pentateuch* death was the punishment for blasphemy (*Lev. XXIV. 23*), for Sabbath-breaking (*Num. XV. 32*), for idolatry (*Deut. XIII. 6 ; XVII. 5 ; Ex. XXII. 20*), for filial stubbornness (*Deut. XXI. 18*), and for adultery (*Deut. XXII. 22*). Nations in the neighborhood of Judea, if idolatrous, were to be destroyed utterly, “smiting them with the edge of the sword”, “making no covenant with them, and showing no mercy to them”, unless it were to carry off the virgins for concubines, after slaying all the males and married women.

The following quotations from different books will serve to show something of the spirit of the Old Testament :

“Thy foot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies, and the tongue of thy dogs in the same”. *Ps. LXXVIII. 22.*

“Thou shalt not seek their [the Amorites’ and the Moabites’] peace nor their prosperity, all thy days, forever”. *Deut. XXIII. 6.*

“Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty”. *Jud. I. 23.*

“Wretched daughter of Babylon ! Blessed be he who shall requite thee as thou hast treated us. Blessed be he who shall take thy little ones, and dash them against the stones”. *Ps. CXXXVII. 8. 9.*

“The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance : he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked”. *Ps. LVIII. 10.*

“Do unto them as unto the Midianites, as to Sisera, as to Javon, at the brook of Kison, which perished at Endor ; they became as dung for the earth”. *Ps. LXXXIII. 9.*

“O my God, make them like a wheel, as the stubble before the wind, as the fire burneth the wood, as the flame setteth the mountain on fire. So persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm”. *Ps. LXXXIII. 13.*

“Let them be confounded and troubled forever ; yea, let them be put to shame and perish”. *Ps. LXXXIII. 17.*

“I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh”. *Deut. XXXII. 42.*

“An eye for an eye”, and “a tooth for a tooth”, (*Ex. XXI. 24* ; *Lev. XXIV. 20*) was the rule of conduct toward Jews—but toward Gentiles there was “no merey”.

David, in *Psalm CIX.*, thus hurls his curses at some enemy :

“Let his days be few ; and let another take his office. Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow. Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg ; let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places. Let the extortioner catch all that he hath ; and let the stranger spoil his labor. Let there be none to extend mercy unto him ; neither let there be any to favor his fatherless children. Let his posterity be cut off ; and in the generation following let their name be blotted out”.

“It may be well”, says Kitto (*Cyc. Bib. Lit.*) “here to notice what are called the vindictive Psalms, namely those which contain expressions of wrath and imprecations against the enemies of God and his people [and David himself] such as *Psalms LIX., LXIX. LXXIX.*, and which in consequence are apt to shock the feelings of some Christian readers. In order to obviate this offense, most of our pious commentators insist that the expressions are not maledictions or imprecations, but simple declarations of what will or may take place. But this is utterly inadmissible, for in several of the most startling passages, the language in the original is plainly imperative, and not indicative (*Ps. LIX. 14* ; *LXIX. 25. 28* ; *LXXIX. 6*). The truth is that only a morbid benevolence, a mistaken philanthropy, takes offense at these psalms ; for, in reality they are not opposed to the spirit of the Gospel [at least not the Mosaic portion of it], or to that love of enemies which Christ enjoined. Resentment against evil-doers is so far from being sinful that we find it exemplified in the meek and spotless Redeemer himself (*Mark. III. 5*). If the emotion and its utterance were essentially sinful, how could Paul (1 *Cor. XVI. 22*) wish the enemy of Christ to be accursed (*anathema*), or say of his own enemy Alexander, the coppersmith, ‘The Lord reward him according to his works’, (2 *Tim. IV. 14*) ; and especially, how could the spirits of the just in heaven call on God for vengeance ?” *Rev. VI. 10*.

“The Lord is a man of war.” *Ex. XV. 3*.

The spirit of the New Testament is very different from all this.

“God is love.” 1 *John IV.* 8. 2 *Cor. XIII.* 11.

“Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you. *Mat. V.* 44.

Christ repealed the eye-for-an-eye and tooth-for-a-tooth doctrine, and prohibited revenge (*Mat. V.* 44 ; *Luke VI.* 28 ; *Acts VII.* 60 ; *Rom. XII.* 14). He said nothing of punishing blasphemers, Sabbath-breakers, idolaters, or stubborn sons, in this world, and he directed that the punishment of an adulteress should be inflicted only by sinless persons, which was equivalent to saying that the Jewish law against adultery should not be executed at all. *John VIII.* 11.

§ 67. *The Old and New Testaments disagree in regard to the perpetuity of the Jewish law.* There are few points in which the Old Testament is clearer than that the law of Moses was intended to remain in force forever. When Jehovah chose Abraham to be the father of God's people, he used the following very perspicuous words : “ I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant ; to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession ; and I will be their God ” (*Gen. XVII.* 7. 8). Whether Abraham had a bad memory, or whether the covenant was not of sufficient importance for him to keep it before his mind, Moses does not say, though he informs us that Jehovah repeated his promise no less than five different times to Abraham (*Gen. XII.* 1-8 ; *XIII.* 14-17 ; *XV.* 1-5, 13-21 ; *XVII.* 1-8 ; *XXII.* 15-18). To Isaac the promise was renewed but once (*Gen. XXIV.* 2-5), and to Jacob thrice (*Gen. XXVIII.* 13-15 ; *XXXV.* 10-12 ; *XLVI.* 2-3). Jehovah did not expressly state on all these occasions that the covenant should last forever, but that was plainly implied. During the time of Moses the Lord frequently alluded to the promise, which he “sware unto Abraham, and Isaac and Jacob ;” but when he found out what a stiff-necked race the Jews were, he gave them to

understand that the contract was mutually binding, and if they would not observe their share, he not only would not observe his part, but he would give them a hell on earth besides (*Deut. VIII. 20*). It was nevertheless very plain that he never intended to entirely fulfil his threat, but purposed to preserve his law to Israel forever. "The statutes and the ordinances, and the law, and the commandments which he [Moses] wrote for you, ye shall observe to do forevermore" (*2. K. XIII. 37.*). "Therefore shall ye lay up these my words [the whole law] in your heart and in your soul and bind them for a sign upon your head that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye shall teach them to your children, speaking of them, when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" etc. (*Deut. XI. 18. 19*). The threats against the Jews in no place hint a withdrawal or destruction of the Mosaic law, or its repeal to make room for an improved code. Moses said (*Deut. XXVII. 26*), "cursed be the man that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them." So too the writer of the *CIVth Psalm* (8th verse) speaks of the covenant and "the word which he [Jehovah] commanded to a thousand generations". And eight hundred and fifty years after the alleged time of Moses, after the Jews had committed nearly all their great offences against the law, the Lord said to Jeremiah (*XI. 3*), "cursed be the man that obeyeth not the words of this covenant." Besides the numerous promises that the covenant with Abraham should endure forever, the only consideration for which—circumcision—was always faithfully observed by the Jews, there were numerous promises that minor points of the law should be sacred forever. Thus, Levi should minister forever to Jehovah and be his heir (*Deut. XII. 19*; *XIV. 27*; *XVIII. 5*; *Num. XVI. 40*; *III. 10*). Offerings should be made forever (*Ex. XXIX. 42*). The Mosaic Sabbath should be observed forever (*Ex. XXXI. 15-17*); and the same method for washing, and the same kind of oil for ointment should be used forever. *Ex. XXX. 21, 31*.

The publication of the New Testament as a divine revelation was an abrogation of the law of Moses. The two systems are almost at the extremes of all known religious

codes for mildness and severity. It is impossible to reconcile them, and no author has attempted to do so. The declaration of Jesus that he came to fulfil the Mosaic law, to every "jot" and "tittle" (*Mat. V. 17, 18*), amounts to nothing, when we know the consequence of his teaching. And although he had not intended to abrogate it, yet since its binding force is denied in the New Testament, the two "covenants" must be considered as hostile to each other.

§ 68. The Christian's excuse for the inconsistencies of his different revelations, is that mankind, in different stages of society, required different teachings. Archbishop Whately says, "Any one who regards the Bible, as many Christians do, as *one book*, containing divine instructions, without having formed any clear notions of what does, and what does not, belong to each dispensation, will of course fall into the greatest confusion of thought. He will be like a man who should have received from his father, at various times, a great number of letters containing directions as to his conduct, from the time when he was a little child just able to read, till he was a grown man; and who should lay by all these letters with care and reverence, but in a confused heap, and should take up any one of them at random, and read it without any reference to its date, whenever he needed his father's instructions how to act." If this defense be sufficient, how are we to know that the *Koran* and the *Book of Mormon* are not divine revelations? What right have we to assert that Pythagoras and Sakya-Muni were not inspired? How do we know that the leader of the Chinese rebels and the Medicine-men of the Sioux Indians are not in direct communication with God, as they claim to be? What right have we to say that their doctrines are not suited to their respective tribes? According to this doctrine, either there is no truth, or Jehovah inspires his prophets to teach lies. Speak up plainly: which is it?



## CHAPTER XIII.

### BAD MORALITY.

“Religion and morality, as they now stand, compose a practical code of misery and servitude; the genius of human happiness must tear every leaf from the accursed book of God, ere man can read the inscription on his heart.”  
—SHELLEY.

§ 69. If an omnipotent, all-wise, and all-good Governor of the universe should give a written revelation as a guide for men in their actions upon earth, it might reasonably be presumed that such revelation would contain a perfect code of moral law. Almost every transaction of human life has a close connection with some important question of morality, which may be said to comprise within itself the welfare of the race. And yet, all-important as moral laws are to humanity, men differ greatly in regard to them. Polygamy, concubinage, slavery, castes, despotic governments, thieving, murder, religious intolerance, celibacy, non-resistance to evil, and revenge have always been, and are now considered by some persons to be right, and by others to be wrong. Not these things alone, but a vast number of other minor matters, which come home every day to every member of society, are connected with disputed questions of morality. Certainly then, a book-revelation, if given at all, would throw new and valuable light on these points. It would expressly command our chief duties, and expressly forbid all offenses against morality, into which we are the most likely to fall. The prohibitory portion of the law would probably mention more particulars than the mandatory: as it is more easy to say what should not, than what should be done. Thus, the Mosaic decalogue contains nine prohibitory, and but one mandatory clause. And all those actions, which are of common occurrence, and have much influence on the course of human affairs, which are not expressly prohibited, are understood to be permitted and proper. Under our civil laws, every act is legal which is

not made criminal by an express law. Sometimes, however, the civil law does not prohibit deeds admitted by all to be evil, because the law could not be enforced, or for some similar reason : but no such cause can operate in moral codes which, in that character, cannot be enforced by men. The moral law finds its sanctions in the conscience alone, and it cannot omit to forbid every evil action. Every act, not prohibited in a perfect moral code, must be not only permissible, but in every respect, morally right. Every one will admit that if a moral code were given by divine revelation, it would be perfect. If these principles be correct, then I can safely declare that the Christian Scriptures are not a divine revelation.

§ 70. *The Bible legalizes Slavery.* Moses commands "of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you—of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begot in your land : and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession ; they shall be your bondmen forever." *Lev. XXV. 45. 46.*

The passages in which the great Jewish lawgiver expressly recognised the existence, legality, and propriety of slavery are entirely too numerous to be all quoted here : and in fact, it is not necessary to quote them ; for there is not a word in the Bible against human bondage, and if there were nothing for it, it would still be permitted by the law of interpretation above referred to—a law which is well understood to be correct in all judicial tribunals. But a few more quotations and remarks on the subject may not be out of place. In the tenth commandment, the binding force of which Jesus recognised, Moses said "neither shalt thou covet thy neighbors house, his field, or his *man-servant* or his *maid-servant*, his ox or his ass" (*Deut. V. 21*). The word translated "servant" is well understood to mean slave, property. So, in another passage, the lawgiver says,

"If a man smite his *servant* or his *maid* with a rod, and he die under his hand, he shall be surely punished. Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished : for he is his *money*." *Ex. XXI. 20, 21.*

That passage shows the meaning of the word "servant," and shows also that the "servants" were the mere money

of their masters, so long as they were not murdered outright. Thus, we see that slavery was not only permitted and legalized, but even expressly ordained and made a duty to his chosen people, by Jehovah.

It is not to be supposed likely that God Almighty would change his views of morality : and it is not to be believed, except upon the strongest possible evidence, that he has done so. Christians, whose morality is far superior to that of the Bible, say that slavery is prohibited in the New Testament : but the thought has a wish for its father, and blindness for its mother. Jesus never said a word against slavery ; he never used the little sentence, so easily to be spoken "human bondage is contrary to morality and should be prohibited by civil law." He never hinted any disapproval of it. He never spoke of the blessings of freedom, never lamented the miseries of slavery. He directed those who believed to sell all their property and follow him ; he did not say they should set free their slaves. He said that man's whole duty to his fellow-man was taught by Moses in the words "love thy neighbor as thyself" (*Mat. XXII. 36—40. Lev. XIX. 18*) and there is no good reason to suppose that he understood the phrase to mean anything more than Moses meant when he first used the same words. The maxim was not at all inconsistent with slavery according to the writers of the *Pentateuch*, and had Jesus adopted a different interpretation from that universally received, by those to whom he spoke, he should have said so. Jesus then recognised the legality of slavery.

And so did the apostles. Paul said not a word against it, and he had not shunned to declare "all the counsel of God" (*Acts XX. 27*). On the contrary he frequently exhorted "servants" to obey their masters, and he declared that "there is no power but of God" and thus whosoever "resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God" and should receive "damnation." So also he said that, if a man was "called" to be a "servant", that is, if he was born in slavery, he should abide in the calling, but if he should be "made free" he should accept the emancipation. The slave's attachment to the condition to which he was "called" should not be so strong, as to make him refuse freedom when offered to him (*1. Cor. VII. 20—22*). Paul was not an

abolitionist : no, he was an illustrious "doughface." But he was consistent : he worked up to his rule. He once found a fugitive slave, named Onesimus, in his congregation, and instead of putting him on some "underground railroad," he sent him back to his master Philemon, with a letter addressed to the latter, in which the self-styled "apostle" asked kind treatment for the slave, but gave no hint that slavery is wrong, or that there was anything in this case to distinguish it from that of fugitive slaves generally. Peter evidently was of the same opinion with Paul, as will sufficiently appear from a number of passages, quoted in a subsequent part of this chapter, ordering the faithful to submit to all the social and political circumstances and institutions in, or under, which they might be placed.

Neither was slavery an unknown thing in the days of Jesus, in the Roman empire. The founders of Christianity could not possibly overlook it. In the second chapter of the *Decline and Fall*, Gibbon "shows \* from standard authorities that Rome at this time [during the lives of the apostles] swayed its sceptre over one hundred and twenty millions of souls ; that in every province and in every family absolute slavery existed ; that it was at least fifty years later than the date of Peter's letters, before the absolute power of life and death over the slave was *taken from the master, and committed to the magistrate* ; that about sixty millions of souls were held as property in this abject condition ; that the price of a slave was four times that of an ox ; that their punishments were very sanguinary ; that in the second century, when their condition began to improve a little, emancipation was prohibited, except for great personal merit, or some public service rendered to the state ; and that it was not till the third or fourth generation after freedom was obtained, that the descendants of a slave could share in the honors of the state. This", says Stringfellow, "is the *state, condition, or relation* among the *members of the apostolic churches*, whether among *Gentiles*, or *Jews*, which the Holy Ghost by Paul for the Gentiles, and Peter for the Jews, recognized as lawful". \* \* \* \*

\* I quote this from "Scriptural and Statistical Views in favor of Slavery, by Thornton Stringfellow, D.D.", after having looked at Gibbon and seen that it is correct.

Now, I ask, can any man, in his proper senses, from these premises bring himself to conclude, that slavery is *abolished* by *Jesus Christ*, or that obligations are imposed by him upon his disciples that are subversive of the institution?"

No, Brother Stringfellow! The Gospel of *Jesus Christ* lends neither aid nor comfort to the abominable doctrine of "inalienable human rights", which were promulgated by the "infidels" of France, and incorporated in the American Declaration of Independence by that arch-enemy of the Gospel, Thomas Jefferson. Those Christians who assert a contrary doctrine, are afflicted by a desire to make themselves better than their Bible and their Savior; and my candid belief, Stringfellow to the contrary notwithstanding, is, that they have succeeded, in so far as slavery is concerned.

I shall not argue the question of the morality of slavery; I take it for granted that it is horribly wrong; and that the Bible is wrong in approving the accursed system of human bondage.

§ 71. *The Bible sanctions polygamy and concubinage.* Abraham had a concubine, Jacob had two wives, and David and Solomon numbered their wives and concubines by the hundreds. Both, polygamy and concubinage, were common in Israel, as it appears from the Old Testament, for hundreds of years, but never were they forbidden by the law or the prophets. Moses was even in favor of concubinage, and, after a successful invasion of the Midianite territory by a Jewish army, he issued the following order—"Kill every male among the little ones [the men had been slaughtered before, in accordance with the merciful commands of Jehovah], and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him. But all the woman-children that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves" (*Num. XXXI. 17, 18*). Slavery implies concubinage, and Moses made provision in his law for the case that a Jew should take a slave-woman to his bed (*Ex. XXI. 7, Deut. XXI. 11-14*). He even provides that where there are children by two wives, the eldest son shall be entitled to "a double portion of all that he [the father] hath," even though the father hate the son and the mother, and love another wife and her son (*Deut. XXI. 15-17*). And in case that one

of several married brothers died, Moses required one of the surviving brothers to take the widow to wife in addition to the matrimonial stock on hand (*Deut. XXV. 1-9*). The great lawgiver takes frequent occasion to denounce adultery and other sins of lechery, but he never includes concubinage or polygamy under that head. The New Testament indirectly recognizes the legality of polygamy by silence in regard to it. Neither Jesus nor his apostles ever said a word against it; and it was a common practice in their day. They could not have been ignorant of that fact. The only expression used by Christ, which can be interpreted to disapprove of polygamy, was that man and wife should be "no more twain but one flesh" (*Mat. XIX. 5, 6*). But in this phrase he only repeated the words of Moses, who said "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh" (*Gen. II. 24*). That expression, when used by Moses, did not forbid polygamy, and why should it when used by Jesus? Paul said every man should have "his own wife" and every woman have "her own husband" (*1. Cor. VII. 21*), but this is not sufficiently explicit to repeal the law of Moses, sanctioned by centuries of practice among God's chosen people, and finally confirmed by the silence of Jesus. The Mormons say that Paul meant that every man should have at least one wife.

§ 72. *The Pentateuch legalized revenge.* Moses said "Breach [wound] for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; as he that causeth a blemish in a man, so shall it be done to him again" (*Lev. XXIV. 20*). The Jewish law allowed, and even required the nearest relative of a man who had been killed by his fellow, to follow and slay the homicide, even if the latter was excusable or even justifiable in the killing (*Deut. XIX. 4-6*). Kitto remarks "The Mosaic law (*Num. XXXV. 31*) expressly forbids the acceptance of a ransom for the forfeited life of a murderer, although it might be saved by his seeking an asylum at the altar of the tabernacle, in case the homicide was accidentally committed (*Ex. XXI. 13, 1 K. I. 50; II. 28*). If, however, after Judaism had been fully developed, no other sanctuary had been tolerated but that of the Temple at Jerusalem, the chances of escape of such a homicide from the hands of the avenger ere he reached the gates of the Temple, must have

become less in proportion to the distance of the spot, where the murder was committed, from Jerusalem ; six cities of refuge were, therefore, appointed for the momentary safety of the murderer, in various parts of the kingdom, the roads to which were kept in good order to facilitate escape. Thither the avenger durst not follow him, and there he lived in safety, until a proper examination had taken place before the authorities in order to ascertain whether the murder was a wilful act or not. In the former case he was instantly delivered up to the *goel*, or avenger of blood, against whom not even the altar could protect him (*Ex. XXI. 14* ; *1 K. II. 29*) ; in the latter case, though he was not actually delivered into the hands of the *goel*, he was, notwithstanding, not allowed to quit the precincts of the town, but was obliged to remain there all his lifetime, or till the death of the high priest."

§ 73. *The Bible justifies treachery and assassination.* While the Jews were in captivity among the Moabites, Jehovah "raised up a deliverer" for his chosen people in the person of Ehud, who, pretending to have a secret errand for the king of the Moabites, was admitted to the royal presence alone, and then assassinated the monarch, thus bringing on a state of affairs, which ended in the deliverance of the Hebrews (*Jud. III. 15-22*). It does not appear from the sacred record that the king had been guilty of any wrong : on the contrary, Jehovah had "strengthened Eglon, the king of Moab, against Israel," and aided him to enslave them. Not long afterward "the Lord sold" the children of Israel into the hands of Jabin, the king of Hazor, whose captain was Sisera. Sisera was defeated in a battle with the Jews, and fled from the field "to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite ; for there was peace between Jabin, the king of Hazor, and the house of Heber, the Kenite." Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said to him, "Turn in, my Lord, turn in to me : fear not." Sisera went in, and lay down to sleep : and Jael smote a nail into his temple with a hammer, and killed him (*Jud. IV. 15-21*). This treachery and assassination, instead of being denounced as sinful, is upheld as a model of virtue, and Deborah, an inspired prophetess, (*Jud. IV. 4*), composed a song in honor of the deed. She says, "Blessed

above women shall Jael, the wife of Heber, the Kenite, be" (*Jud. V. 24*), and gives especial praise to the deceitful cunning which preceded the assassination. Rabab, the harlot, was also elevated to high honor for treachery. *Josh. II. VI. 17, 25.*

74. *The Bible justifies oppression of the Gentiles.* The writers of the Old Testament do not recognize the human rights, or pay any regard to the feelings of the Gentiles. The Jews were justified, according to the directions of Jehovah, in taking to themselves all the possessions of the heathens, and if they resisted, they were to be slaughtered, one and all, unless with the exception of the virgins, who might be kept alive as captives and chambermaids—or chamber-girls. If a Jew was so wicked as to take a free Gentile woman to wife, he was guilty, by so doing, of a great crime, and any other Jew, if we may judge by the case of Phineas, had a right to assassinate him, and the assassin, by that deed, was certain to gain the favor of his fellow-citizens, and of the great Jehovah. The meat of the animals, which died by disease, was forbidden to the children of Israel; but they were told by Jehovah that they might sell it to the stranger within their gates. The Jew might lend money to the stranger upon interest, but not to a brother Jew. Usury demanded of the latter, would have offended Jehovah; but he cared nothing about the Gentiles. Some persons are under the impression that the Lord required his "peculiar people", when about to enter Canaan, to exterminate all the Phœnician Gentiles, dwelling therein, at once; but this is a mistake. He said "Ye may not destroy them at once, lest the wild beasts increase upon you". *Ex. XXIII. 29. 30. Deut. VII. 22.*

There are a few precepts of a high morality scattered through the *Pentateuch*, but they are completely lost in the great mass of grosser matter. The teaching, "love thy neighbor as thyself" is most effectively contradicted, and its influence for good destroyed, by its insertion in the midst of such a multitude of priestly rules as are contained in Leviticus. The pervading spirit of the Old Testament is wrong. The book was the work of rude men in a rude age, when every tribe in Western Asia had its exclusive language or dialect; when, for want of a common language,



and in the absence of commercial relations, there was little friendly intercourse between foreign nations, and when each tribe had its separate priesthood which found its interest in discouraging all mixture with foreign nations. The Jews, though the favorites of Heaven, were governed according to a code far more bloody and illiberal than that which prevailed among many other nations of the same ages. Morell acknowledges that "an imperfect morality is plainly discernible throughout the period of the Old Testament dispensation, and frequently embodied too in the Old Testament Scriptures. The fierce spirit of warfare, the law of retaliation, the hatred of enemies, the curses and imprecations poured upon the wicked, the practice of polygamy, the frequent indifference to deception to compass any desirable purposes, the existence of slavery, the play, generally speaking, given to the stronger passions of our nature—all these bespeak a tone of moral feeling far below that which Christianity has unfolded". Even if the writings of Moses and the other Jewish prophets had not expressly taught the Hebrews to systematically violate the rights of the poor and strange persons, yet the lineaments in which Jehovah and his favorites are painted, would be enough to show that no high morality could prevail where these Scriptures were received as divine. The Mosaic Deity was a cruel, blood-thirsty, vindictive, changeable, deceitful character, who delighted in slaying tens of thousands to avenge a fancied insult, or in leading his blind worshippers to slay the males and married women, and carry off into captivity and concubinage the unprotected virgins of some heathen tribe.

§ 75. *The New Testament teaches slavish submission to all kinds of tyranny.* The morality of Jesus is full of mildness, humility, and charity. A common expression among Christian writers is, that his moral precepts are sufficient in themselves to prove his divine mission and to entitle the Bible to our belief and reverence. Many of the greatest and purest freethinkers have not hesitated to declare that there were no rules of moral conduct equal to those contained in the Sermon on the Mount. But on this point, as in regard to the moral character of Jesus, I must put myself in opposition to the weight of authority among my friends, as well as my foes, in religious opinions. Mildness,

humility, charity, and sympathetic love for the suffering are far from making up the full list of virtues demanded by a high morality. I venture to contend that the moral teachings of Jesus are very objectionable, and that no man can live by them, or should endeavor to live by them. They are, indeed, mild and kind in spirit, but they err as much in inculcating humility, as did Moses upon the other side in encouraging his followers to hate and despise and avoid all Gentiles. The founder of Christianity could not tolerate the old Hebrew law of "an eye for an eye", and "a tooth for a tooth", and "blood for blood"—even if the first blood had been shed accidentally or justifiably; but he taught that the child must submit to the parent, the wife to the husband, the servant and the slave to the master, and the subject to the ruler; and all this unconditionally. His teaching will appear more clearly from the texts:

*Servants must obey their masters.* Eph. VI. 5. 7; Col. III. 22; 1. Tim. VI. 1; Tit. II. 9; 1. Pet. II. 11.

"Servants obey in all things your masters." Col. III. 22.

"Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters as worthy of all honor." 1. Tim. VI. 1.

"Exhort servants to be obedient to their own masters, and to please them well in all things." Titus II. 9.

"Servants be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward." 1. Peter II. 18.

*Wives must obey their husbands.* Eph. V. 22—24. 33; Col. II. 18; Tit. II. 5; 1. Pet. III. 1.

"A man indeed \* \* is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man." 1. Cor. XI. 7—9.

"The head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is the man." 1. Cor. XI. 2.

It would appear from these texts that as Jesus mediates between man and God, so does the husband mediate between the woman and Jesus. Is it proper for women to pray to be saved for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ? Should it not be "for the sake of Our Lord, my husband?"

*The people must obey the priest.* Mat. X. 14; Luke X. 16; 1. Cor. IV. 1.

"Obey them that have rule over you, and submit yourselves,

for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account." *Heb. XIII. 7. 17.*

*Subjects must obey their Rulers.*

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers : For there is no power but of God ; the powers that be are ordained of God [Tyrants, demagogues and fools included]. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God ; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." *Rom. XIII. 1. 2.*

"He [the ruler] is the minister of God to thee for good." *Rom. XIII. 4.*

"Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates." *Titus III. 1.*

"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake : whether it be to the king as supreme ; or unto governors as unto them that are sent by him." *1 Peter II. 13. 14.*

Pray and give thanks "for kings and for all that are in authority." *1, Tim. II. 2.*

*Men must never resist oppression.*

"I say unto you that ye resist not evil ; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain." *Mat. V. 39-42.*

"Unto him that smiteth thee on one cheek, offer also the other ; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again." *Luke VI. 29, 30.*

"Being persecuted, we suffer it." *1 Cor. IV. 12.*

"Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." *1. Peter II. 21.*

These precepts may appear to be full of the spirit of love and humility ; they may appear very beautiful, and purely philanthropic ; but, if put in practice by any large community of men, they would be productive of more evil than the bloody code of Moses. If they be true, all political and social institutions are established with Jehovah's approval ; all magistrates, all heads of families, all slave-owners—indeed, all persons having power to injure another or compel him to service—are appointed to their positions by him ; and however evil they may appear to be, it is still the duty of every Christian to submit, and when smitten on one cheek, to turn the other. The Christian should presume that the possession of power by the wicked is destined for some good purpose by an inscrutable Providence, whose

ways are beyond human ken ; and that the oppression of the righteous is the chastening which He inflicts upon those whom he loveth. Against the human instrument who inflicts this chastening, the sufferer has no right to revolt and take up the sword. It is true that the Jews did revolt against their heathen oppressors, into whose hands they had been given by Jehovah, and he approved their conduct, and secured their success, but this was not until he was satisfied that their repentance was thorough and sincere, and that the chastening was sufficient. Besides, one of the purposes of Jesus in coming to earth was to notify the people that the old system of doing business was abrogated. And, accordingly, we find that these precepts of non-resistance to evil, because all "the powers that be [whether political, social, or physical], are ordained of God" are clear and unmistakable in meaning, coupled with no qualifications, conditions, or limitations, put forward in the most prominent portions of the New Testament ; announced very broadly in the Sermon on the Mount, repeated frequently and by the highest authorities, such as Jesus, Paul and Peter, and never contradicted expressly or impliedly by the letter or spirit of the Gospel, or by the conduct of any one recognized in it, as of authority. Jesus says "Resist not evil ;" Paul says "There is no power but of God ;" Peter commands, "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man." In no place does the New Testament say or imply that if Christians be outrageously oppressed, and can easily relieve themselves of the yoke, with little pain to any one, they may resort to force to obtain the relief ; but it does say that, if the Christian be smitten on one cheek, he must "offer" the other.

The Evangelists, as interpreted by orthodox commentators, tell us ostensibly, in accordance with divine inspiration, that the omnipotent and all-wise God came down to earth to redeem mankind from sin, and to teach pure morality and religion, and lived, as a man, among men, thirty-three years. They have preserved four separate records of his actions, which, of course, we must presume from his divine nature, to have been faultless, and to have been intended as examples for all men. And Peter expressly refers the Christians to the model set before them—"Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." As

Peter says, Jesus "suffered;" he was subjected by evil men to oppression, pain, ignominy and death, and he submitted: he "suffered;" and never, in the whole course of his life did he resist any evil offered to him; bitter as was the cup of death, unjustly as it was offered to him, gladly as he would have rejected it, able as he was, by a word, to call twelve legions of angels from heaven to his rescue, and to overthrow instantaneously the whole Roman power, incalculably beneficial as might have been his continued residence and teaching among men, he offered no resistance; he submitted to all the evil which his enemies saw fit to inflict on him; and no Christian can find a word in the New Testament to justify him for acting otherwise. Letter and spirit, precept and example,—all concur in commanding believers of the Gospel to submit, without resistance, to the rod of the tyrant and the lash of the master. The tyrant and the master are the ministers "of God to him for good."

That it is impossible for men in general ever to be governed by such doctrine, is plain to every sensible man, from the teachings of every-day experience, as well as from those of universal history; and it is also plain that it would be highly injudicious for one man or a few men alone to adopt such principles. "Make yourself sheep," says the proverb, "and the wolves will eat you." The moment, it is known, that I act on the principle of non-resistance to evil, that moment I am doomed to spoliation and slavery; and so it would be with any man, or community, or nation of men. Few men have attempted to practice the principle; perhaps no one ever succeeded in avoiding gross violations of it. All would be almost irresistably tempted at times to act like the Quaker passenger, in a ship-of-war, who, during a battle with a vessel of an enemy, seeing a hostile sailor climbing up the side of the vessel by a rope, hastily seized a hatchet and cut the rope, remarking, "Friend, thee can have that rope, if thee wishes."

The doctrine of passive submission is so absurd, so evidently unfit for observance in practical life, that the thinker is apt to say, "Certainly, Jesus never meant any such thing: he spoke figuratively: he intended only to teach the evil effects of greedy selfishness, the wickedness of hasty appeals to force; he sought only to impress on the

minds of his followers, as forcibly as possible, the duty of generous self-sacrifice for the good of others, the increased happiness which would result to the race from the adoption of kindness in all intercourse with our fellows. His words do not say this, but he must have meant it. He meant something, and any other meaning would be absurd." But this interpretation is in no wise warranted by the language of Jesus, which has a plain meaning, and that meaning made yet plainer by the commentary of his conduct. To assert that Jesus in saying "resist not evil" intended to teach no more submissiveness to oppression than was practised by Aristides or Socrates, would be as unreasonable as to say that Moses in ordering the Jews to slay all the males, and married women of a heathen tribe, and to save the virgins for concubines, intended only to inculcate a proper spirit of self-defense. Besides, we shall hereafter see (chapter XV), that this doctrine of non-resistance to evil, absurd and impracticable for the active members of modern civilized society, was natural, and even absolutely necessary for Jesus. It may be said that earth would be a paradise, if all men were to practice love and non-resistance as taught in the New Testament; but what folly to talk of this, when it can never occur! Gospels should be suited to men as they are.

It has been said that the order to "obey God rather than man" (*Acts V. 29*) requires resistance to tyrants. But the idea that "resistance to tyrants is obedience to God" far from being contained in the New Testament, is contrary to its whole spirit. The subjects are bound to submit to every punishment inflicted on them, and to obey every order from their government, except in case such order should require them to violate the express law of God, as contained in the Bible. The circumstances, under which the phrase "obey God rather than man" was used, show this to be the sentiment of the apostles. The high priest forbade Peter to preach the Gospel, but Peter disobeyed that order, because it was in conflict with the express order of Jesus, "Preach the Gospel to every creature" (*Mark XVI. 15*); and after preaching, he justified himself by saying it was necessary to obey God rather than man. And when "Peter and some companions were beaten" for

violating the order of the chief priest, they did not pray to Jehovah for a legion of angels to resist the evil, but they suffered it, and went away "rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His sake" (*Acts*. V. 41). So too, Christians now-a-days, who by works of uprightness, benevolence and industry, are endeavoring to preach the Gospel of Jesus and its beneficent influences, should, if oppressed by evil-doers, far from thinking of resistance, submit to the evil, and rejoice that they are counted worthy to suffer shame for His sake. A man may preach with deeds as well as with words : and the same code of morality should govern the preacher and the worker. In obeying God rather than man, the Christian must not presume to seek for God's commands out of his Bible : if he goes to his own conscience, he declares the Bible to be a defective code : he trespasses on the domain of the Infidel, who says the inner moral sense is a surer guide than the traditions, written or unwritten, of rude and barbarous ages. If the Christian goes to his conscience in one case, he may as well go in all cases : if his conscience decides that the moral teaching of the Bible is incomplete, that something, which *should be* there, is omitted, he may as well say that things, which *are* there, ought to have been omitted. When the Christian wishes to know God's commands, he must go to the Bible only, the revelation of God's entire will, and he must look, first of all, to the words and deeds of Jesus, and be guided by them, with all submissiveness, sternly suppressing any thought of imperfection, which may arise in his corrupt reason or conscience.

§ 76. *The New Testament makes poverty a virtue.* Jesus had a great dislike for the accumulation of wealth ; he denounced it as a great stumbling block in the way of salvation, and an offense which should be recompensed by eternal pains in the future life.

"How hardly shall they that have riches enter the kingdom of heaven". *Mark*. X. 23.

"It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven". *Mat*. XIX. 24.

"Sell *all* that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven". *Luke XVIII*. 22.

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth \* \* \* \*  
 Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall  
 drink ; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. \* \* \* \*  
 Behold the fowls of the air : for they sow not, neither do they reap,  
 nor gather into barns, yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them.  
 Are ye not much better than they ? \* \* \* \* Take, therefore,  
 no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for  
 the things of itself”. *Mat. VI. 19. 25. 26. 34.*

“Blessed be ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God”. *Luke VI. 20.*

“But wo unto you that are rich ! for ye have received your  
 consolation”. *Luke VI. 24.*

“There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and  
 fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day ; and a certain beggar,  
 named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desir-  
 ing to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table :  
 moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass  
 that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s  
 bosom. The rich man also died, and was buried ; and in hell lifted  
 up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and  
 Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, ‘Father Abraham,  
 have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of  
 his finger in water, and cool my tongue : for I am tormented in this  
 flame’. But Abraham said, ‘Son, remember that thou in thy life  
 receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things, but  
 now he is comforted, and thou art tormented”. *Luke XVI. 19–25.*

The meaning of these texts is plain, and it is not con-  
 tradicted, limited, or qualified by any others in the New  
 Testament. The Son of Man had not where to lay his  
 head ; the apostles had nothing save one garment, a staff,  
 and a pair of sandals. The injunction of poverty was ad-  
 dressed to all ; obedience to it was essential ; and a young  
 man, who had, so far as appears, fulfilled all the require-  
 ments of the law in regard to love for God and man, was  
 not received among the disciples, because he would not sell  
 all his property, and distribute it to the poor (*Luke XVIII.*  
*18–22*). Jesus spoke of John, the Baptist, who had been  
 a hermit, living in the wilderness, and eating nothing save  
 grasshoppers and wild honey, as a prophet, than whom  
 there was none greater born of woman ; and by this decla-  
 ration, he might well be understood as approving the ascetic’s  
 mode of life. The early Christians appear to have  
 done their utmost to regulate their practice by the pre-  
 cepts of Jesus : “All that believed were together, and had



all things in common : and sold all their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need" (*Acts II. 44. 45*). The persons who did thus, were the immediate apostles and disciples of Jesus.

How little regard is paid, among the most zealous Christians of this age, to Christ's prohibition of the accumulation of riches, is known to every one. The Christians are right, and Jesus is wrong. The voice of this age declares that poverty is not a duty, but on the contrary, where it can be avoided, a decided violation of duty. The teaching of Jesus on this point is not so admirable as that of Johnson, who says "Resolve not to be poor. Whatever you have, spend less. Poverty is an enemy to human happiness. It often destroys liberty, makes some virtues difficult, and some impracticable". Morality requires a man to lay up treasures in this world, not extreme wealth, but still wealth. A high sense of morality does not require a rich man to despoil himself of all his property ; in fact, such a spoliation would justly be regarded in ordinary cases as an immoral act. The Christian father and Christian mother ordinarily make the art of accumulating riches the great study of their children, and tell them to bend every energy to that point ; and with every additional thousand dollars accumulated and secured, the parents' rejoicing and pride in their children increase, utterly regardless of the teaching of their Gospel that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of Heaven.

§ 77. *Jesus makes a virtue of celibacy.* One of the principal inducements for the accumulation of property, as felt by civilized men generally in this age—the supply of the wants of wife and children—was not recognised as proper by Jesus. He never taught that "every honest man should wive" ; he never told his disciples to marry ; never hinted to them that it was their duty to multiply their species. He himself was not married. So far as we know, none of his apostles married, after they had been chosen. Those of his disciples, who were married, must have deserted their wives to follow him : for women certainly could not troop about the country as Jesus and his apostles did. The relation of marriage has so much influence upon society, and

suggests itself to the moralist so often, that we cannot suppose Jesus omitted to approve of it, merely out of oversight. The omission must have been owing to the fact that he considered abstinence from sexual gratification a virtue. He prohibited divorce, except for adultery of the wife, but did not recommend marriage. He seems not only to have considered celibacy a virtue, but even self-castration. In his Sermon on the Mount, after saying that a lustful glance is adultery at heart, he goes on to say :

“ If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee : for it is profitable for thee, that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell”. *Mat. V. 27-30.*

The meaning of this cannot well be misunderstood, when the context is considered. The meaning of it is—Prefer castration to adultery of the heart. Nothing else can be made out of it, if it have any meaning at all. Moralists recommend marriage : Jesus does not. Once, while he was discoursing upon the law of divorce, his disciples said unto him :

“ ‘ If the case of the man be so with his wife [if no meanness, vice, or crime, other than adultery, will justify him in abandoning her:] it is not good to marry.’ But he said unto them, ‘ All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given. For there are some eunuchs which were so born from their mother’s womb : and there are some eunuchs which were made eunuchs of men : and there be eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.’ ” *Mat. XIX. 10-12.*

Such is his whole answer to the question of his disciples, whether it is good to marry. Certainly, no man of sense can be so blind as to misunderstand his meaning ; his advice to his hearers is very clearly to the effect that all who had nerve enough, should use their knives. Did he practise upon his own precept ? Was he “ able to receive ” his own teaching ?

Paul did not view the question in precisely the same light, but in a similar one. He never advised his converts “ for the kingdom of heaven’s sake ” to perform a surgical operation on themselves. He advised the unmarried to abide in that condition, but “ if they cannot contain, let them marry : for it is better to marry than to burn ” (*1 Cor*

VII. 8. 9). Women are good plasters to cure burns ;—that is Paul's doctrine. With him, " the sole reason \* for marriage is that a man may, without sin, vent his sensual desires. He teaches that *but* for this object it would be better not to marry. He wishes that all were in this respect as free as himself, and calls it a special gift of God. He does not encourage a man to desire a mutual soul intimately to share griefs and joys : one in whom the confiding heart can repose, whose smile shall reward and soften toil, whose smile shall beguile sorrow. He does not seem aware that the fascinations of woman refine and chasten society : that virtuous attachment has in it an element of respect, which abashes and purifies, and which shields the soul, even when marriage is deferred : nor yet that the union of two persons, who have no previous affection can seldom yield the highest fruits of matrimony, but often leads to the severest temptation. How *should* he have known all this ? Courtship before marriage did not exist in the society open to him : hence he treats the propriety of giving away a maiden, as one in which *her* conscience, *her* likes and dislikes, are not concerned (*Cor. VII* 37, 38). If the law leaves the parent " power over his own will " and imposes no necessity to give her away, Paul decidedly advises to keep her unmarried. The author of the *Apocalypse*, a writer of the first century, who was received in the second as John the apostle, holds up a yet more degrading view of the matrimonial relation. In one of his visions he exhibits 144,000 chosen saints, perpetual attendants of ' the Lamb ', and places the cardinal point of their sanctity in the fact that ' they were not defiled with women ' but ' were virgins ' (*Rev. XIV.* 4). Marriage therefore is defilement ! "

§ 78. *The Bible degrades woman.* The Christians assert that the elevated position of woman, in civilized nations, is owing to the influence of the Bible. This is one of those wild assertions which have attained credit because many are interested in making them, and few have denied their truth or attempted to show their falsehood. Where are those Biblical passages which declare the woman to be the equal of the man ? which declare that her rights and feelings are

\* F. W. NEWMAN. Phases of Faith.

as sacred as his? which declare that her soul is as precious as his? Where are the passages in which the prophets or apostles addressed themselves to the women, as a distinct class, except when commanding them to submit to their husbands? There are none.

There is, or has been, scarcely a nation, which has risen above the barbarous state, that did, or does, not treat its women as well, or better, than the ancient Jews did. Under the Mosaic law, a man might take as many wives as he could get; he could take as many concubines—free or slave—as he could support; and he might divorce his wife at his own pleasure. The only limit to his right of divorce was that he must give the discarded wife a paper, declaring that he had discarded her,—a ceremony which, as it appears to me, instead of being a favor to her, was only adding insult to injury. The language of Moses is as follows:

“When a man hath taken a wife and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favor in his eyes, because he hath found some *uncleanness* [!] in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it her in her hand, and send her out of his house.”  
*Deut. XXIV. 1.*

The divorce is thus made a matter of unlimited discretion with the husband; whenever he might pretend to find some *uncleanness* in her, he might “send her out of his house.” No matter how true she might have been to him; no matter how much property she might have brought to him; no matter how many children she might have borne to him; no matter how old and friendless and poor she might be;—the husband might still turn her adrift upon an uncharitable world. As for the woman, she was so low and helpless, that it was not supposed that she could want to be divorced in any case; or at least no amount of ill-treatment on the part of her husband would enable her to get a divorce. There is nothing to show that the Jewish practice was better than the Mosaic precept, in regard to the treatment of women. David discarded his wife, Michal, because she laughed at the absurd figure which he cut dancing naked in the streets; and this was a wife to whom he was under particular obligations. The fact is recorded, without a word of disapprobation, in the sacred history. The women who are mentioned in the Bible with the highest terms

of praise, to whose history the most space is devoted, are not such as to give us a very high conception of the Jewish ideal-women. Who are the heroines of the Old Testament? What great development of womanly character was there, under the immediate superintendence of Jehovah? Esther is a fictitious character, and not an admirable one at that. Ruth was a simple country-girl, who crept at night—innocently enough, perhaps—to the bed of a male relative. The only Old Testament heroines, of distinct moral character, are Jael, the treacherous murderess, and Rahab, the harlot traitress. "These be thy Gods, O Israel!"

And what did Jesus or Paul do to alter these Mosaic precepts, or condemn the Jewish practices? The sum total of all their alterations was that Jesus prohibited divorce at the discretion of the husband, and ordered that it should be granted only for adultery—that is adultery of the wife. Jesus, like Moses, made no provision whatever to grant a divorce on application of the wife. She might consider herself fortunate if a man would receive her under his protection. Under the New, as under the Old Testament, the husband has the right to beat his wife, and enforce obedience to his commands by any means which may appear to him to be necessary. His dominion is of the same nature, and comes from the same source, with that of the political ruler and the slaveholder. He is commanded to "do to others as he would have others do to him:" but like the other two, he is left to interpret the maxim as he pleases. If he sees fit to beat his wife, she must not only submit, but submit uncomplainingly. We know that husbands were in the habit of beating their wives in the time of Jesus: was it a practice in which morality was not concerned? or was it beneath his notice?

I shall not make a long argument to show that the oppression of woman is immoral or that their elevation to social freedom, and equality with man, are among the greatest aids and safeguards for the welfare of society. These are truths, which, though their force is not fully apprehended, yet require no proof in this book.

§ 79. *The morality of the Bible is defective for the want of an exposition of the fundamental rights of individual men.* No man can attain to a high morality, without pre-

viously possessing a clear idea of his own and his fellow's political and social rights. Mildness, humility, and kindness of external manner in ordinary intercourse, submission to insults and injuries, chastity, pecuniary liberality to the poor, and contempt of riches, will not suffice. In addition to these, it is necessary to comprehend the rights of personal liberty, self-government, self-defense, and social equality. He, who believes that slavery exists in accordance with divine law, can never be just to the slaves, no matter with what degree of mildness he may treat them. He, who believes that a tyrant has a "right divine to govern wrong," cannot be just to the subject. He, who thinks that polygamy is a laudable custom, in a moral point of view, can not be just to the women oppressed and degraded by it. He, who denies the right of resisting evil, cannot be just to those who are in arms to defend their rights. No man can be just to others, without knowing what justice to himself requires, and without demanding and enforcing that justice. He who submits to a very unjust act, and confesses that duty requires him to submit, while he has abundant means to resist successfully, commits an offense against humanity. He encourages injustice, and weakens the force of those sanctions, without which morality never has been and never can be maintained among men. He, who habitually grants to others more than they are entitled to, and makes his grants in a slavish manner, encourages them to over-estimate their rights and to commit injustice again. All our highest ideals of just men, (such as Epaminondas, Aristides and Timoleon among the Greeks), were men who had thought long and seriously of their rights and duties, and who were scarcely less strenuous and exacting, in demanding and enforcing their rights than in performing their duties. That a knowledge of our rights is requisite for a high morality is implied in the phrase "Do to others as you would have them do to you." The first question is, what should others do to you.

A high morality demands words as well as deeds. It requires not only that a man's actions shall be just, but also that he shall counsel and encourage others to do justice, that he shall give his moral support to every one who performs his duties and exacts his rights. The man, who is

notoriously and deeply oppressed, has not only a right to resist oppression, but he has also a right to an active expression of public opinion in his favor. The denial of his rights by the public, their indifference to his sufferings, and their failure to approve his conduct, are offenses against society and morality.

But all the deeds and words required to support the cause of justice, are not matters which come intuitively to the human mind. The love of justice is an innate faculty, but the requirements of justice, the rules of morality, are only to be understood, after long and deep study of the varied relations of life : and this is true not only of the minute rules, but even of some of what we ordinarily consider the first principles of justice. The ancient Hebrew, whose brother had been killed, was bound to slay the homicide, though the first slaying was accidental or justifiable. Many of the Thugs never supposed that thuggee was wrong : and writers on Hindostan say that a Thug was never known to offend a woman's modesty, before killing her. The vast majority of the Sudras of Hindostan do not believe that any injustice is done them by the institutions which keep their caste in a state of the most abject inferiority and subjection to the Brahmins. Many of the women, slaves, and subjects of the present day, oppressed by political and social inequality, do not doubt the absolute right of their masters to govern them as they are governed. Socrates did, and openly, without shame, spoke of deeds, which we dare not mention. Many Spartans, who intended to do no more than was just, supposed that a successful and well-managed theft by a boy, was very commendable : and if asked why they did not treat others, as they would wish to be treated, they would have replied, that they did : that if a boy could steal anything from them without detection at the time, he would be doing right, and they would applaud him for it. And they would have defended with considerable plausibility the morality of stealing in their community. They would have shown the benefits of watchfulness, and acuteness developed by their system, and the evil influences of the accumulation of great wealth in the hands of a few families, as exemplified in neighboring states, and the selfishness, luxury, degenerate habits and

want of patriotism, which generally flowed from a system calculated to encourage individuals to give all their time and energies to the increase of pecuniary wealth.

The code of morality in the New Testament is defective, because it fails to set forth the fundamental rights of man, and his particular duties. Jesus never said expressly or by implication, that personal liberty, political and social equality, religious toleration, and a share in the soil, in the accumulated property of former ages, are inalienable human rights. He never spoke of the moral progress of the race, a confidence in which is a not unimportant aid to the cause of morality. His moral rules were very scanty and not much, if at all, superior to those of contemporary or earlier teachers in heathen lands. His valuable moral teaching was limited to the phrase, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you"; but this was a general principle which the greatest tyrant could proclaim while oppressing his subjects, and declare that his tyranny and cruelty were just and necessary for the preservation of order and good government. This general principle may be interpreted, and is interpreted, to justify the greatest wrongs. Millions of slaves are held in deep ignorance, superstition, and moral debasement, by Christian masters, who assert that justice to the slave requires, that he should be held in hereditary bondage. The moralist must not stop at the maxim "Be just." That maxim is not new; man learns it so soon as he arrives at consciousness as a moral being, as a member of society. The moralist was not needed to announce it. It is the necessary teaching of an innate moral sense, which is never wanting to a sane man, and the active influence of which may or might be seen in the conduct of every tribe of men, who live or have ever lived. The moralist is needed to set forth particularly what justice is: and without that exposition, there is no great moral code: and for the want of such an exposition, the New Testament is defective.

Christian morality, as the morality of the most enlightened nations of our age is termed, is said by Christians to be the offspring—the natural and necessary offspring—of the New Testament; but it really does not owe its origin to any such source. It has grown with our political and



social institutions in a perfectly natural and gradual development through many ages ; and it will continue to grow, becoming better and purer as men become freer from superstition, ignorance, and political, social, and pecuniary bondage. Our morality is better than that of our forefathers three centuries ago ; and that of enlightened nations in two centuries from this time, will be superior to ours. Our morality is the product of the combined influence of our natural character and education, and it has progressed, not only to a considerable extent without the aid of the Bible, but even in despite of it. If it were due only to the Bible, we should know no such thing as progress in morality ; the moral code of the Christian world in the XIXth century should be the same as it was in the XVth ; whereas we know that there has been a very great change. Christians think that their Gospel, as the Word of God, must teach what is right, and they torture its meaning to suit their ideas. Thus, while the Bible condemns women, slaves and subjects to hopeless and unresisting submission to their condition, many of the ablest Christian moralists deny its plain signification on these points, and assert that the influence of their Gospel has been, and always will be the most effective agent to overthrow all kinds of political and social bondage ; and just as the progress of mental enlightenment and pecuniary prosperity bring with them a purer morality, just at that rate do they claim additional merit for the Bible. That book happens to be received as divinely inspired among the most enlightened and moral nations ; but it has never made them what they are. We have no right to complain of the Bible, as a human composition, because faith in it has not prevented the debasement of Mexico, or did not prevent the mental darkness and moral degradation of Southern Europe during the dark ages. The superior enlightenment and morality of the Saracens of Spain as compared with the whole Christian world, in the Ninth and Tenth centuries after Jesus, was not owing to the Koran ; nor was the superiority of the ancient Greeks and Romans over all contemporary nations for many centuries owing at all to the truth of their mythology. But when the Bible is held forth as a divine revelation, we must condemn it for the evils which it has failed to correct.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### DOCTRINES NOT ORIGINAL.

“Tze Kung asked if there was any one word which expresses the proper conduct of one's whole life. Confucius [500 B. C.] replied, ‘Will not the word *shoo* [love?] do it, i. e. do not to others what you do not wish them to do to you.’” — *The Four Books*. A V. 23. — *Translated by Rev. David Collie.*

Confucius said, “I compile and transmit to posterity, but write not anything new. I believe and love the ancients, taking Laou Pang for my pattern.” — *Same*. VII. 1.

§ 80. Were the doctrines of the Bible original with the authors of that book? If they were, there is a strong presumption that it is of a higher than human origin. The Bible was not written till men had lived many centuries upon the earth, nor till many studious and great men had thought deeply and written wisely of religion, morality, and civil government. Upon these and all similar subjects, original ideas are scarce, and he who would in this day compose an entirely new set of practicable rules for the action of men, under any and all circumstances in which they might be placed, would be almost entitled to recognition as an inspired prophet. If, on the other hand, it appear that the ideas advanced in the Bible were not original with its authors, we shall be justified in presuming that the book is a mere fraudulent human compilation. Where would be the necessity or propriety of revealing from heaven something that was previously known among men? It has been said that, to induce men to observe the laws of morality, it was necessary that they should believe that these laws were directly sanctioned by the Almighty God, that their violation would be visited by his wrath and eternal vengeance, and that, to give this sanction, a revelation was required. This argument may be worthy of consideration, though it might be used as well in favor of a counterfeit as of a genuine revelation. At least no one will deny that it would

be far more satisfactory to believers to have an entirely original revelation than to have a mere rehash of long-recognized truths. Unfortunately for the claims of the Bible to be a God-given revelation, it does not contain one important doctrine of a general character which can be proved to be original, while there is conclusive proof in regard to most of the prominent ideas, and strong evidence as to the remainder, to show that they were learned by the Hebrew prophets and Christian apostles from the priests and philosophers of the Heathen nations, or from that general sense of right and propriety which is common to all mankind.

§ 81. *Christianity is a mere revamp of Boodhism.* It is a creed cobbled together from ideas which had, for centuries, before the time of Jesus, been extensively received in Hindostan, Greece, and other lands connected with Judea by a frequent, if not a constant, intercourse. The evidence is at hand to sustain this assertion.

No intelligent man can study and compare the systems of Boodhism and Christianity with each other, without being astonished at their resemblance. Milman and Remusat both speak of Boodhism as "the Christianity of the East": forgetting, or wilfully shutting their eyes to the fact, that the more proper designation of the relation of these systems, according to the date of their origin, would be to style Christianity "the Boodhism of the West." And such it really is—nothing more. Both religions have the same universal, form-free character, the same mild morality, similar speculative doctrines, and the same general system of church-organization: both were founded on the ruins of older creeds, marked by the same features of exclusiveness, harshness, ecclesiastical dominion, and popular subjection; both were first taught to men by incarnate, virgin-born Gods, who are looked upon by their respective followers as the "Saviors" of mankind; both have been adopted by numerous and unconnected nations; and each has somewhere near 300,000,000 nominal believers—a far greater number than any other form of faith ever has acquired, and probably more than any other priest-born creed ever will acquire.

Brahminism was the foundation of Boodhism, as Judaism of Christianity. Under the Brahminic system, Brahma had

selected the Hindoos to be his peculiar people, he revealed himself to them alone, he taught them to abhor and avoid all foreigners, he selected one family to furnish all the kings, and another to furnish all the priests, and he required the whole people to observe strictly a complicated ceremonial law, in which one of the prominent points was worship by sacrifice.

The Boodhists do not deny the divine origin of Brahminism, but say it was superseded by their later revelation. Boodhism teaches that all nations are alike before God ; that its revelation is addressed to all mankind, and can be accepted by all on equal terms ; that the faithful Boodhist must not abhor, but must love the foreigners ; that observance of the Brahminic laws of sacrifice, of unclean meats, and the old religious ceremonies generally, confers no merit ; that the priesthood is confined to no one class ; and that the principal virtues are love to God and man, faith, humility, charity, and passive submission to oppression. The virtues of Boodhism have the same ascetic cast as those of Christianity. The Boodhists, like their Western imitators, have a tri-une God, with a Savior for one of the divine persons.

The life of this Savior, Sakya-Muni, bears much similarity to that of Jesus. He was an incarnate God, and was born of a married virgin, of royal blood. He spent six years in the wilderness as a hermit, and, having been purified by penance, he went to the populous districts of Hindostan, and to the sacred city of Benares, where he preached the gospel of Boodhism, wrought miracles, and made numerous converts. Sakya did not commit his doctrine to writing, but after his death, his disciples composed numerous sacred books, containing records of his life and teachings.

There is a strong resemblance between the government and ceremonies of the Boodhist and Roman Catholic Churches. "The monastic habit, holy water, counting rosaries to assist in prayer, the ordinances of celibacy and fasting, and reciting masses for the dead, worship of relics and canonization of saints are alike features of Boodhism and Romanism. Both burn candles, and incense and bells are much used in their temples : both teach a purgatory from which the soul can be delivered by prayers, and use a

dead language for their liturgy and their priests pretend to work miracles." \*

The faith of Boodha spread as rapidly and as extensively, and by as peaceable means, as that of Christ, and found more favor beyond the limits of its birthland, than in it. The morality of Boodhism is praised by nearly all writers upon the system as little if at all inferior to that of Christianity, and its influence is said to have been very beneficent. There is abundant evidence of the truth of what is here stated of Boodhism and its founder, and no learned man can deny or does deny that Sakya-Muni preceded Jesus by five hundred years. On these two points all the late writers on Boodhism, of the first reputation, are agreed—Hodgson, Hardy, Remusat, Klaproth, Cunningham, Bjornstjerna and St. Hilaire. Every sensible man will admit that the resemblance is so great, that the later system must be considered as a copy of the older one, if it can be shown that Jesus and the early Christians had any means of becoming acquainted with the doctrines of Sakya. That can be shown. Sakya said "My law is a law of mercy for all," and his disciples attached great importance to the conversion of the Gentiles—that is nations not of the Hindoo race. A great Boodhistic synod was held in the year 241 B. C. † which sent out nine missionaries, and these, it is reported, made 6,000,000 converts. Vast numbers of missionaries were sent out to far distant countries, and their enterprise and self-denial was little inferior to those of the later pioneers of Christianity. Traces of Boodhistic doctrine in Europe are to be found in very early times. Bjornstjerna says that the Druids copied many of their doctrines from the Boodhists, whose faith they learned from Phœnician traders. The Woden of the Skandinavians is supposed by many authors to be identical with Boodha. It is certain that the Boodhistic faith was known in Greece before the time of Jesus. "The famous doctrines of Pythagoras" says Cunningham "are intensely Boodhistical." Pythagoras was copied by Plato, and Plato was copied by St. John. The expedition of Alexander [330 B. C.] to the banks of

\* WILLIAMS. Middle Kingdom. Huc. Travels in Tartary. Vol. I Ch. V. Vol. 2. Ch. II. III.

† ALEXANDER CUNNINGHAM. Bhilsa Topes. Ch. X.

the Ganges brought the Greeks and the Hindoos into an intimate acquaintance with each other. The Essenes, a Jewish sect, with whom Jesus appears to have been intimate, derived many of their doctrines from the Boodhists—a fact now generally admitted—and some authors of reputation have described them as Boodhists. John the Baptist is supposed to have been a member of this sect.

The teachings of the immortality of the soul and eternal rewards and punishments in a future life were not received in purity by the great body of the Boodhists, but the Christians could have copied them from many sources, more particularly from the Platonists. “The Platonic theology is wonderfully near to the Christian [why not say the Christian is near to the Platonic—the new to the old? ]—in the tenets of the being, nature, name, qualities, and works of God ; and in the Platonic ethics, there is often an astonishing resemblance to the Christian, as in the doctrines in regard to the nature and dignity of the soul, the nature and influence of sin, the nobility and essence of virtue, the immortality of the soul, and future rewards and punishments”.\* Plato preceded Jesus by four centuries, and his teachings, within two centuries after his death, had spread to all the countries bordering on the eastern end of the Mediterranean. While the son of Mary was still in obscurity, Philo, a Jew of Alexandria, was famous for his writings in which he set forth and defended the Platonic doctrines.

§ 82. *The Mosaic law was a mere copy from the Egyptian.* There was a wonderful similarity between the religious doctrines and ceremonies of the Jews and Egyptians—a similarity too great by far to permit any reasonable man to believe that those nations derived their creeds and forms from different sources. This similarity will reduce us to a dilemma—we must believe either that the Egyptians copied from Moses, or that the latter copied from the former ; and if the Hebrew law-giver be proved to have obtained his ideas from the Egyptians, we can hardly be expected to believe that he got them from Jehovah. It was the common belief among the most intelligent of the ancient Greeks that the kingdom of Egypt, with its civil and religious forms, reached back into the most remote antiquity, far

\* C. ACKERMANN. Das Christliche in Plato.

earlier than any other nation near the Mediterranean. Such was the opinion of Solon (600 B. C.) one of the most learned men of his time, and he formed his opinion after conversing with the priests of Memphis. When Hecataeus visited Egypt, the priests took him into a large consecrated chamber, and there showed him the wooden statues of all the high priests of the kingdom, three hundred and forty-one in number, going back consecutively from his time to the foundation of the monarchy: and these statues had been made in the life-time of the respective originals, "who were all men and the sons of men".

The Egyptians had an elaborate religious creed and a complex ceremonial. "Superstitiously attached to their sacred institutions, and professing a religion which admitted much outward show, the Egyptians clothed their ceremonies with all the grandeur of solemn pomp; and the celebration of their religious rites was remarkable for all that human ingenuity could devise to render them splendid and imposing. They prided themselves on being the nation in which originated most of the sacred institutions afterwards common to other people". \* If the history of Abraham and his descendants, as given in *Genesis*, be true, the Jews, when they entered Egypt, were a few score of rude shepherds, who had never dwelt in houses, or had a permanent place of residence, who were unskilled in all the higher arts of civilized life, ignorant of letters, and destitute of enlightened, clear or positive ideas of religion or government. At this time (1700 B. C.) Egypt was already a kingdom of long standing, containing a dense and prosperous agricultural population, long accustomed to dwell in houses, skilled in the arts of peace and war, familiar with the use of hieroglyphical letters, and living under social, political and religious systems among the most complex ever devised by man. These facts are in substance asserted by all the great and celebrated men who have investigated the antiquities of Egypt. "It is indeed a remarkable fact that the first glimpse we obtain of the history and manners of the Egyptians, shows us a nation already far advanced in all the arts of civilized life; and the same customs and inventions that prevailed in the Augustan age of the people, after the ac-

† J. G. WILKINSON. Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians

cession of the eighteenth dynasty are found in the remote age of Osirtasen, the cotemporary of Joseph, nor can there be any doubt that they were in the same civilized state when Abraham visited the country". \* In the midst of this polished nation the Hebrews lived, poor, rude, engaged in an occupation particularly degrading in the eyes of the Egyptians, and finally reduced to unconditional slavery. Moses was born on the bank of the Nile, he was bred in the family of the Pharaohs, and he could not have avoided learning much of the politics and religion of the Egyptian kingdom. The author of the *Acts*, writing ostensibly by divine inspiration, says "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians". Under the leadership of Moses, the Jews escaped from Egypt, and after they entered Arabia, their chief gave them a code of laws, which are found to bear a wonderful resemblance to the laws of the land they had left. Under these circumstances, what reasonable man can believe that the Egyptians copied from the Jews? The former, a long-established and prosperous nation before the Jews existed, powerful, civilized, particularly priding themselves on the antiquity of their religious institution,—could they in the height of their prosperity, while the children of Israel were still always at war or in captivity with the Philistines, have copied the institutions of a hostile and despised and enslaved race, which had no laws until after it escaped from the brick-yards of the Nile? If there were any room for doubt, it would be removed by an examination of the existing monuments of the ancient Egyptians. The paintings and sculptures on the temples, obelisks and pyramids nearly, if not quite five thousand years old, confirm in the most explicit language the assertion of Wilkinson, that the customs of the country were the same long before the time of Moses as they were when Solon and Herodotus visited Memphis to learn wisdom, and returned to their native land with the opinion that the Egyptians were, not only the most ancient, but also the wisest of nations. Let us now examine whether, and in how far the religious institutions, ceremonies and ideas of the Hebrews and Christians resembled the institutions, ceremonies and ideas of the Egyptians and of other peoples.

\* KENRICK. Ancient Egypt.



Moses gave to his followers a sacred book, but before Abraham was born, the Egyptian priests had had their sacred books. The Hindoo Rig-Veda is supposed to date from about 1400 B. C. It was composed before the Brahminic theocracy had arisen, and Brahminism had its origin at least as early as 1200 B. C. There were also sacred books in China and Persia in ancient times, and there is no evidence that they did not exist as early as the *Pentateuch*. The books of Moses contained an account of the creation of the universe, the early history of the human race, the origin of the Jewish people, the genealogy of the principal families, a code of political, social and religious laws, and prophecies of future events. The sacred books of the Egyptians and other nations contained similar matter. The Jews, like the Egyptians and Hindoos, had no law of human origin.

The Jewish legislator established a priesthood with great wealth and political power, and made the priestly office hereditary in one family or tribe, as had been done many centuries earlier in the valleys of the Nile, the Euphrates and the Ganges.

Solomon erected a temple to the Lord one thousand years before Christ, but temples to the gods were common in Egypt, Chaldea, Phœnicia and Hindostan, many ages previous to that time. Ruins of religious edifices, built while the Jews were as yet unknown, are still standing on the sites of the Egyptian cities. The Philistines had a temple to Dagon before the time of Solomon (1 S. V. 2). Bishop Kitto gives it as his opinion, from the description of the holy of holies, that that place "was an adytum [a secret apartment] without windows"; and "The Lord said he would dwell in a thick darkness" (1 K., VIII. 12). The Egyptian temples had an adytum without windows, for the accommodation of their divinities.

Among the Israelites, and in accordance with the Mosaic laws, there were men who were prophets by profession; there were also prophets among heathen nations—the Egyptians, Greeks, Phœnicians, Persians and Chaldeans. Herodotus, who lived 460 years before Christ, wrote "The art of predicting future events in the Greek temples came also from the Egyptians, and it is certain that they were the first people who established festivities, public assemblies, proces-

sions, and the proper mode of communing with the Deity." Yet we learn from Homer that some of the Grecian oracles were already celebrated at the time of the Trojan war (1100 B. C.)

The Jews had an Ark of the Covenant (*Josh. III.*, 13 ; *2 S.*, *XV.* 24 ; *1 Ch.*, *XV.*, 2, 15), a box in which the Lord was supposed to make his home ; and so sacred was it, that, according to Moses, its mere touch was death to all but the priests. This ark was copied from the Egyptian ark, sacred boat or great shrine, which was carried in procession by the priests, as the Mosaic ark was borne by the Levites. The gods of the ancients were supposed to travel considerably, and to be entitled to the most honorable conveyance known. In the hills and plains of Greece, a chariot was the most fashionable vehicle for travelling, and in the Grecian pictures, the gods are represented in their chariots. But the settled portion of Egypt was confined to the bottom land of its great valley, subject to overflow every year, and intersected with large and numerous canals. There chariots were little used, and boats were the more ancient and honorable means of conveyance ; and, accordingly, the gods of Egypt were painted as sitting in boats, and were carried about in procession in boats. Moses did not see why his divinity could not travel in a boat as well in Judea as in Egypt, and he adopted the boat shrine.

It was on the model of the Egyptian shrine that "the Ark of the Covenant of the Hebrews appears to have been constructed, which contained the tables of the law, the pot of manna, and the rod of Aaron. The mixed figures of the cherubim, which were placed at either end and overshadowed it with their wings, has a parallel in some of the Egyptian representations, in which kneeling figures spread their wings over the shrine."\*

Hengstenberg says that "as regards the significance of the cherubim, their real agreement, in this particular, with the Egyptian Sphinxes cannot be doubted." Kitto, in his *Biblical Cyclopaedia*, for the purpose of explaining what the cherubim were, introduces engravings of Egyptian Sphinxes ---figures of various animals, with great outstretched wings. Some of these Egyptian figures appears to be exact pictures of the Hebrew "Seraphim," which were probably nearly

\* KENRICK, *Ancient Egypt*. Ch. XXI. Sec. II.

the same with the Cherubim. Isaiah saw the Lord sitting on a throne, and above it stood the seraphim. Each one had six wings : "with twain he covered his face ; and with twain he covered his feet ; and with twain he did fly" (*Is. VI. 2*). No one will assert that Judaism is older than the Egyptian drawings and sculptures of their sphinxes.

The religious ceremonies of the Hebrews bore a remarkable resemblance to those of the Egyptians. The Jews considered Jerusalem a holy city (*Is. II. 2* ; *Ps. LXIII. 15*), and attributed great religious merit to pilgrimages thither. In the valley of the Nile there were holy places also. The great temple of Artemis, at Bubastis, was visited by 700,000 pilgrims annually, if we can believe the report of Herodotus, who visited Egypt while the ancient superstition was still in full favor with the people.

The Egyptians offered sacrifices of vegetables and animals to the gods, and so did the Jews. The Jewish and Egyptian priests slew the sacrificial animals in the same manner, by cutting the throat. The Egyptians preferred red oxen, without spot, for sacrifice ; and Moses directed the selection of a red heifer (*Num. XIX. 2*). The custom of the scapegoat (*Lev. XVII. 21*) was common to both nations. A sacred fire was kept continually burning in the temples of Thebes as well as in Judea (*Lev. VI. 12, 13*). Egyptian priests took off their shoes in the temples, and Joshua took off his shoes in a holy place (*Josh. V. 16*). The Egyptian priests danced before their altars, and the same custom prevailed in Jerusalem (*Ps. CXLIX. 3*). The practice of circumcision, claimed by Moses as a divine ordinance, communicated to Abraham, is proved by the monuments of Egypt to have been fully established there, at a time long antecedent to the alleged date of Abraham. Herodotus wrote that, in his time, "The Phœnicians and Syrians say they learned it [circumcision] from the Egyptians." The Egyptians had their unclean meats, including pork, as well as the Jews. The Egyptians anointed their kings and priests long before there were any kings or priests in Israel. The Urim and Thummim (*Ex. XXVIII. 8, 10* ; *Lev. VIII. 8*) which play a stupid part in the books of Moses and Jo. Smith, were once not inappropriate figures

of Re, the god of light, and Thmei, the goddess of justice (whence the Greek "Themis"), worn on the breasts of Egyptian judges.

Moses taught the existence of only one God, or at least the Jews of a late period believed in and worshipped only one God. The Egyptian people worshipped many gods, but the priests of Egypt, as well as of ancient India, were monotheists. There was one doctrine for the initiated, another for the vulgar. The deity was called "I am" in Hebrew: and the same term is applied to the deity in the Institutes of Menu, and was applied by the Phœnicians to their great god. The ancient Jews held, and the modern Jews hold, the name of "Jehovah" in great reverence. A devout Jew considers the mere utterance of the word to be blasphemy. Our English Bible says, "He that uttereth the name of the Lord shall surely be put to death" (*Lev. XXIV. 16*). The Jews say this is an improper translation: it should be "He that uttereth the name of Jehovah" &c. The Septuagint says "Whoever uttereth the name of the Lord" &c. Michaelis thought that the Jews and the Septuagint are right. The Egyptians had a reverence precisely similar for the name of Osiris. Even Herodotus, after having been at Memphis, when writing about that divinity, would not use his name. Moses represented Jehovah as having a human shape, coming down to earth, visiting and conversing with men, causing all the occurrences of nature by immediate efforts of his will, frequently performing miracles, and empowering men to do miracles, and to foretell the future, choosing individual men and a particular nation to be his favorites, and establishing certain families to be kings and priests of his "peculiar people" for ever. Such ideas were familiar to all the ancient nations about the eastern shore of the Mediterranean. Jehovah led the armies of Israel to battle: and the gods of the Greeks, Phœnicians, and Egyptians were also reputed to be terrible in warring for their worshippers.

The Hebrew Scriptures, in some passages, exhibit a high conception of the divine attributes. According to Robertson, the following was the idea of God, as expressed by the ancient Brahmins: "As God is immaterial, he is above all conception; as he is invisible, he can have no form: but

from what we behold of his works, we may conclude that he is eternal, omnipotent, knowing all things, and present everywhere ?

Moses represents many of the most important events of the early history of the world to have happened in or near Judea : and almost every ancient nation held the same views in regard to its own soil. An orator in the Island of Crete, on a public occasion, once spoke thus : \* “ Upon this Isle all the arts were discovered. Saturn gave you the love of justice and your peculiar simplicity of heart. Vesta taught you to erect houses. Neptune taught you to build ships. You owe to Ceres the culture of grain, to Bacchus that of the vine, and to Minerva that of the olive. Jupiter destroyed the giants which threatened you. Hercules delivered you from the serpents, wolves, and other noxious animals. The authors of so many benefits, admitted by you to divine honors, were born on this soil and are now occupied in laboring for your happiness”. Cory, in the preface to his “ Ancient Fragments”, says “ In ancient times it was the prevailing custom of all the nations, including Egypt, India, Phœnicia, and Greece, to appropriate to themselves, and assign within their own territorial limits, the localities of the grand events of primeval history, with the birth and achievements of the gods and heroes, the deluge, the origin of the arts, and the civilization of mankind.”

The history of Creation, as given in *Genesis*, is a mere compilation of ancient traditions prevalent in the East, and similar traditions are given by Sanchoniathan, an old Phœnician author. Moses informs us that Abraham was the peculiar favorite of Jehovah, and was to be the father of the chosen people. This name Abraham is probably derived from the Hindoo Brahm, † the great spirit, the origin of all things, the creator of all other existences. Abraham was called Abram until late in life, according to *Genesis XVII. 5*, and he is said to have come from Ur of the Chaldees, a point east of Canaan, either on the Euphrates or farther east—possibly Hindostan itself, the home of Brahm-

\* So given in Barthelémy's Anacharsis.

† Brahm, derived from the same root as the Latin word *primus*, (first), the Celtic word *prionh* (chief), and the Gothic word *frum* (origin, beginning). It is supposed that our “from” is from “*frum*.”

inism. His name, his birth place, and his position as father of the chosen people, all suggest the derivation from the Hindoo Brahm.

“Even the traditionists among the Jews”, says Milman, “allowed that the names of the angels came from Babylon”.

Thus we have gone over the most prominent points wherein the ideas advanced in the Old Testament resemble ideas accepted among many nations existing during the time of the Jews. Although Moses evidently derived his principal doctrines from the Egyptians, yet the latter nation had many usages and principles of religion and politics, which the Jews did not see fit to adopt. The Egyptians believed in the immortality of the soul, in future rewards and punishments, in the adoration of numerous animals, and in the worship of idols. It is a matter of wonder that Moses rejected the doctrine of a future life ; perhaps the idea was too refined for the grossness of the people, who worshipped the golden calf : perhaps he thought it inconsistent with his doctrine of the full execution of divine justice on all men during their natural lives.

The religious ceremonies of the Egyptians and Jews were so similar that the Roman law, in the time of the Emperors to prohibit the worship of Isis in the capital, spoke of the Jewish worship as though it were not distinguishable from that of the Egyptians. And yet, the external ceremonies of both Jews and Egyptians, must have been familiar to the people who were masters of both of them.

§ 83. Next in order for our consideration are particular doctrines of the New Testament. The tri-une nature of God was the commonly received doctrine in Egypt and India many centuries before the time of Jesus. “The supreme being of the Hindoos is Brahm,—incomprehensible by any human understanding ; pervading and comprehending all things. Originally he reposed in the contemplation of himself ; subsequently his creative word has caused all things to proceed from him, by a succession of continued emanations. As creator he is named Brahma ; as the preserving power, Vishnou ; as the destroyer and renovator of the forms of matter, Siva. These three relations of the divine being constitute the trinity of the Hindoos.”\* “The

\* TENNEMAN, History of Philosophy.

great gods of Egypt were Neph, Amun, Pthah, Khem, Sate, Mant, Bubastus and Neith, one of whom generally formed, in connection with other two, a triad [Trinity], which was worshipped by a particular city or district, with a peculiar veneration. In these triads, the third member proceeded from the other two ; that is, from the first by the second—thus, the intellect of the Deity, having operated on matter, produced the result of these two under the form and name of the world, and on a similar principle appear to have been formed most of their speculative combinations. The third member of a triad, as might be supposed, was not of equal rank with the two from whom it proceeded ; and we therefore find that Khonso, the third person in the Theban triad, was not one of the great gods, as were the other two, Amun and Mant ; Horus, in the triad of Philæ, was inferior to Osiris and Isis ; and Anouke to Neph and Sate, in the triad of Elephantine and the Cataracts.” \*

The doctrine of the incarnation is probably as old as the trinity. “Wherever any approximation had been made to the sublime truth of the one great First Cause, either awful religious reverence or philosophic abstraction has removed the primal Deity entirely beyond the sphere of human sense, and supposed that the intercourse of the Divinity with man, the moral government, and even the original creation had been carried on by the intermediate agency, either in oriental language of an emanation, or in Platonic of the Wisdom, Reason or Intelligence of the one Supreme. \* \* \* This was the doctrine from the Ganges or even the shores of the Yellow Sea to the Ilissus : it was the fundamental principle of the Indian religion and Indian philosophy ; it was the basis of Zoroastrianism ; it was pure Platonism ; it was Platonic Judaism in the Alexandrian School. \* \* \* The more ordinary representative, as it were, of God to the sense and mind of man, was the Memra or the Divine Word ; and it is remarkable that the same appellation is found in the Indian, the Persian, the Platonic and the Alexandrian [and the Christian] systems”. † “The doctrine of Boodhism contains nothing but the main idea of the heroic poems of the Brahmias, fully understood

\* WILKINSON.

† MILMAN. History of Christianity Book I. ch. II.

and consequentially carried out—that is, that a man freeing himself by holiness of conduct from the obstacles of nature, may deliver his fellow-men from the corruption of their times, and become a benefactor, redeemer of his race, and also become a supreme God—a Boodha”. \* Wilkinson says “At Philæ, where Osiris [the Egyptian savior and incarnate God, who came down to earth to battle with Typho, the evil spirit] was particularly worshipped, and which was one of the places where they supposed him to have been buried, his mysterious history is curiously illustrated in the sculptures [made 1700 B. C.] of a small retired chamber lying nearly over the western adytum of the temple. His death and removal from this world are there described; the number of twenty-eight lotus plants points out the period of years he was thought to have lived on earth; and his passage from this life to a future state is indicated by the usual attendance of the Deities and Genii, who presided over the funeral rites of ordinary mortals. He is there represented with the feathered cap, which he wore in his capacity of Judge of Amenti, and this attribute shows the final office he held after his resurrection, and continued to exercise toward the dead at their last ordeal in a future state”. Again: “Osiris was called ‘the opener of truth’, and was said to be ‘full of grace and truth’. He appeared on earth to benefit mankind, and after having performed the duties he had come to fulfill, and fallen a sacrifice to Typho, the evil principle (which was at length overcome by his influence, after leaving the world), he arose again to new life, and became the judge of mankind in a future state”. Herodotus saw the tomb of Osiris at Sais, nearly five centuries before Christ. Similar redeemers were worshipped in other lands, and like Jesus many of them were born of virgins. Grote, speaking of the early legends of Greece, remarks that “the furtive pregnancy of young women—often by a god—is one of the most frequently recurring incidents in the legendary narratives”.

The teaching that belief in Jesus as the Son of God is the highest virtue or merit before the Almighty is not original. Crishna, a Hindoo divinity, says “Works affect

\* RITTER. History of Ancient Philosophy. Ch. II.



me not, nor have I any expectations from the fruit of works. He, who believeth me to be even so, is not bound by works”.

But it is claimed that the great merit of the New Testament is in its moral teachings, which are entirely original in their best features. These moral teachings are contained in such expressions as “Love thy neighbor as thyself” “Love is the fulfilment of the law” “Return good for evil ;” and “All that ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them, for this is the law and the prophets.” The fact that such phrases are made the foundation to claims of originality or peculiar merit, shows the ignorance of the people, and the unscrupulous policy of the clergy. The doctrine that love is the fulfilment of the law, taught in the New Testament with much emphasis, and the chief merit of the book in the eyes of many, is as old as human society. It was taught by Plato in almost the identical words ascribed to Jesus, and “*Platonic love*” is a phrase familiar to all civilized ears. We still have the writings of the great teacher of the Academy, wherein he says “Love\* is peace and good will among men, calm upon the waters, repose and stillness in the storm, the balm of sleep in sadness. Before him all harsh passions flee away ; he is the author of soft affections, destroyer of ungentle thoughts, merciful and mild, the admiration of the wise, the delight of the gods. Love divests us of alienation from each other, and fills our vacant hearts with overflowing sympathy : he is the valued treasure of the unfortunate, and desired by the unhappy, (therefore unhappy because they possess him not,) the parent of grace, of gentleness, of delicacy : a cherisher of all that is good, but guileless as to evil ; in labor and in fear, in longings of the affections, or in soarings of the reason, our best pilot, confederate, supporter and savior.” It so happens that St. John, who only of the Evangelists, lays a peculiar stress upon the all-sufficiency of love, had an opportunity of becoming thoroughly indoctrinated in Platonism, by his long residence among the Greeks at Ephesus. Men have always had a mental constitution similar to our own. The rudest savages have the same affections and passions which actuate citizens of en

\* See Mackay's Progress of the Intellect.

lightened nations. In all ages women have been found to love their children ; friends have been ready to aid each other at great cost to themselves ; soldiers have been willing to sacrifice themselves for their country. The disposition to act kindly and justly to others is born with all men, and he, who claims originality for expressing it, is a shameless impostor. Long before Christ, philosophers had taught that men should give to others the treatment they desired for themselves. Confucius in China, Isocrates in Greece, and Hillel in Judea expressed the sentiment in almost the very words, used by Jesus in later years. The doctrines of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and Cicero, in regard to the conduct of men toward each other, will suffer little by a comparison with the teachings of Jesus. Herder says that the morality of the ancient Brahmins was pure and elevated. Sir Wm. Jones has expressed his admiration of the spirit of the Institutes of Menu ; and Dr. Arnold speaks in high praise of the greatness of soul, exhibited by the Stoics. No chastity can ever surpass that of Lucretia ; no honesty that of Aristides ; Washington's disinterestedness was not purer than that of Timoleon ; and on a comparison of the conduct of Socrates and Jesus, daring trial and execution, the latter can certainly claim no preëminence. And yet we are asked to believe that Christ was the author of the teaching—"Do to others as you would have them do to you." The demand is preposterous. It would be equivalent to asking us to believe that in the ages before Christ, and in the lands where his teachings are unknown, there was and is no honesty, no truth, no friendship, no peace, no human society ; that all men were then and there liars, thieves, and murderers ; that, in fact, man is entirely wanting in the knowledge of what is right, or the disposition to do it, or both, until he has heard and believed the words of Jesus. The influence of the priestly lies in regard to the originality of Christ's teaching of the all-sufficiency of love, is so great that many, knowing their falsity, dare not declare it. The Rev. Mr. Milne, in the preface to his translation of the Chinese "Sacred Edict," expresses a fear that he shall be condemned for furnishing proof that before Jesus was born, a morality as pure as his was inculcated in the Celestial Empire. Milman is one of the few Christian au-

thors who have had the manliness and honesty to acknowledge that the New Testament morality was not new.

Sir Wm. Jones, knowing well the presumptuous assertion that the gospel of love, as taught by Jesus, was original with him, and knowing, also the falsity of the assertion, gave the propagandists of Christianity in Hindostan some good advice : " If the conversion of the Pundits and Maulavis, in this country, shall ever be attempted by the Protestant missionaries, they must beware of asserting, while they teach the gospel of truth, what those Pundits and Maulavis know to be false [the originality of the Christian morality] : the former would cite the beautiful Arya couplet, which was written, at least, three centuries before our era, and which pronounces the duty of a good man, even in the moment of his destruction, to consist, not only in forgiving, but even in the desire of benefiting his destroyer, as the sandal tree, in the instant of its overthrow, sheds perfume on the axe which fells it ; and the latter would triumph in repeating the verse of Sadi, who represents a return of good for good as a slight reciprocity, but says to the virtuous man ' Confer benefits on him who has injured thee' : using an Arabic sentence, and a maxim apparently of the ancient Arabs. Nor would the Mussulmans fail to recite four distiches of Hafiz, who has illustrated that maxim with fanciful, but elegant allusions :

' Learn from yon orient shell, to love thy foe,  
And store with pearls the hand which brings thee woe ;  
Free, like yon rock, from base, vindictive pride,  
Imblaze with gems the wrist that tears thy side :  
Mark where yon tree rewards the stony shower,  
With fruit nectarious or the balmy flower ;  
All nature calls aloud ; ' Shall man do less  
Than heal the smiter, and the railer bless?'"\*

I cannot find that Jesus prohibited polygamy. He certainly did not prohibit it in express terms : neither is it plain to me that he forbade it by necessary implication. But, if he had done so, he would not have been original. Law and custom, before his time, prohibited polygamy among the Greeks, Romans, and Germans. Neither was Christianity the first religion under which women obtained a high degree of personal freedom. The Egyptian women were remarka-

\* Eleventh Discourse before the Asiatic Society. 1794.

bly free for ancient times—quite as free as in most of the countries of modern Europe ; while, at a much later date, the Jewish women were complete slaves—so far as the law could make them such. “The old Roman matron\* was, relatively to her husband, morally as high as in modern Italy ; nor is there any ground for supposing that modern women have any advantage over the ancient in Spain and Portugal, where Germanic have been counteracted by Moorish influences. The relative position of the sexes in Homeric Greece exhibits nothing materially different from the present day. In Armenia and Syria, perhaps, Christianity has done the service of extinguishing polygamy ; this is credible, though nowise miraculous : Judaism also unlearned polygamy, and made an unbidden improvement upon Moses. In short, only in countries where Germanic sentiment has taken root, do we see marks of any elevation of the female sex superior to that of Pagan antiquity ; and as this elevation of the German woman in her deepest Paganism was already striking to Tacitus and his contemporaries, it is highly unreasonable to claim it as an achievement of Christianity.”

But Jesus himself laid claim to no originality, in his moral doctrines. On the contrary, he declares (*Mat. XXII. 35-40*) that all the law and the prophets hang on two commandments given by Moses, which are to love God with the whole heart (*Deut. VI. 5*), and to “love thy neighbor as thyself” (*Lev. XIX. 18*). How can Christians assert that these two commandments do not comprise the whole law, after the express declaration of Jesus that they do? And if they do comprise the whole law, how can the moral teachings of Jesus be original? In his work on the *Origin of Christianity*, Hennell has shown conclusively that many of the sayings of Jesus were repetitions or paraphrases of other sayings to be found in the Old Testament, or current among the Jews before his birth.

The same changes which have occurred in the doctrines of the Christian Church, are many of them prefigured in events among the heathen, thousands of years ago. The change of opinion, similar to that now in progress in regard

\* F. W. NEWMAN, *Phases of Faith*.

to the plenary inspiration of the prophetic writings, took place in Greece, before Christianity was thought of. "When superstitious people", says Neander, "thought that the God himself inhabited the priestess of the Delphic oracle, and spoke through her mouth, so that everything literally came from Phœbus himself, and when, on the contrary, the infidels tried to turn this representation into ridicule, and quoting the bad verses of the Pythian prophetess, laughed at the notion of this coming from Apollo, Plutarch thus replied—'The language, the expression, the words, and the metre, come not from God but from the woman. The God only presents the image to her mind, and lights up in her soul the lamp which illumines the future. The God uses the soul as an instrument, and the activity of the instrument consists in the property of representing, as purely as possible, what is communicated to it. It is impossible that it should be repeated perfectly pure,—nay, without even a large admixture of foreign matter.'" From the theory of partial inspiration, the Greeks and Romans went over to entire unbelief in the old religion, and Æschylus in Athens and Livy in Rome lamented over the skepticism of the age, the destruction in popular belief of that religion which was the only foundation of morality. And the "infidels" of those days sometimes surrendered at the eleventh hour, and made the *amende honorable* to the divinities of superstition, as do the skeptics of our own age. The Eleusinian mysteries held a position in pagan Athens, similar to that held in modern Europe by Christianity. The great majority of the initiated asserted that acquaintance with, and belief in, the mysterious doctrines of Eleusis (the single nature, spiritual essence, and infinite mercy of the Deity, the immortality of the soul, and future rewards and punishments) had contributed greatly to their happiness in life. Many of the Athenians, who during long lives, had disbelieved and ridiculed the mysteries, at the near approach of death, became anxious for admission, and were terrified at the idea of dying without the mercenary blessing of the priest.\* Diogenes refused to apply for admission, and spoke of the mysteries nearly as a philosopher of to-day might speak of the Christian Church. The Cynic said no church organiza-

\* BARTHELEMY. Anacharsis. Ch. LXVIII.

tion could give him any valuable aid in performing his duties : and he remarked that many thieves and murderers had been admitted to the mysteries, while Epaminondas and other good men had not. The Chinese philosophers when about to die, sometimes seek absolution from the Boodhists, whom they had always before neglected and despised.\*

# APPENDIX.





## APPENDIX.

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THIS Appendix is designed to contain authorities, and illustrations which could not be conveniently inserted in the text ; and also, in some cases, additional matter, which was overlooked or mislaid until too late to insert in the chapters.

The reader will please observe that the use of brackets [ ] throughout denotes the insertion by me of something additional in matter quoted.

I have used the phrases “ a historical ” and “ a historian, ” intentionally violating the generally received rule which requires “ an ” before words beginning with *h*, and accented on some other than the first syllable.

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### Notes to the Preface.

Goethe makes Faust declare that those who have opened their hearts to the world have ever been crucified and burned.

“ The mind which has outgrown the idea of a partial God is expected to retract, and to submit to vulgar opinion, under pain of that reproach of atheism which, though never incurred by barbarians, is an objection commonly urged against philosophy by those intellectual barbarians, who cling like children to the god whom they suppose to feed them, speak to them, and flatter them.”—*R. W. Mackay*.

“ Reformers in all ages, whatever their object, have been unpitied martyrs ; and the multitude have evinced a savage exultation in their sacrifice. Let in the light upon a nest of young owls, and they cry out against the injury you have done them. Men of mediocrity are young owls ; when you present them with strong brilliant ideas, they exclaim against them as false, dangerous, and deserving punishment.”—*Adventures of a Younger Son*.

“ An original thinker, a reformer in moral science, will thus often appear a hard and insensible character. He goes beyond the feelings and associations of the age ; he leaves them behind him ; he shocks our old prejudices ; it is reserved for a subsequent generation to whom his views have been unfolded from infancy, and in whose minds all the interesting associations have collected round them, which formerly encircled the exploded opinions, to regard his dis-

coveries with unmingled pleasure.”—*Samuel Bailey, Essay on the Formation of Opinions.*

“The artist [the philosopher], it is true, is the son of his time ; but pity for him, if he is its pupil, or even its favorite ! Let some beneficent divinity snatch him when he a suckling from the breast of his mother, and nurse him with the milk of a better time, that he may ripen to his full stature, beneath a distant Grecian sky. And having grown to manhood, let him return like a foreign shape to his century : not, however, to delight it by his presence, but dreadful, like the son of Agamemnon, to purify it.”—*Schiller—Translation by Carlyle.*

“To ask for nothing but results, to decline the labor of verification, to be satisfied with a ready-made stock of established positive arguments as proof. and to deery the doubter or negative reasoner, who starts new difficulties, as a common enemy,—this is a proceeding sufficiently common in ancient as well as in modern times. But it is nevertheless an abnegation of the dignity and and even of the functions of speculative philosophy.”—*Grote—History of Greece.*

“Ecclesiolatry or Bibliolatry is the modern heathenism, which, having supplanted the ancient, has for ages imitated the old craft of slandering as Atheists or Infidels all who aspire to a higher or purer worship.”—*F. W. Newman.*

“The impiety [frequently charged to freethinkers] is with those who have insidiously perverted the truth ; and not with those who seek with honest reverence to purify its desecrated shrine.”—*Revelation its own Nemesis.*

“There is an unbelief worse than the public scoffing.”

“The supposition that Christianity is a thing of the past—that it has done its work, in clearing the way during an age of darkness and barbarism, for the working of a more enlightened principle called “Progress” is a more popular view, and one which is tacitly and insensibly held by great numbers.”—*London Literary Gazette. Oct. 4th 1856.*

“No doubt Jannes and Jambres exclaimed with a pious horror, ‘What! give up the garlic and the cats which our fathers prayed to, and swore by! We shall never be guilty of that infidelity!’ But the priesthood of garlic came to an end, and the world still continued.”—*Parker.*

“To an American, accustomed to the simplicity of our modes of worship, the most prominent feature in European lands, save in the glorious fast-anchored isle,—and even there to great extent,—is, that in spite of the most imposing externals, the whole is little more than heartless formality—a wretched substitute for the bread of life.”—*Prof. Hitchcock.*

“A want of real vitality and earnestness, in our religious community, has been felt and proclaimed to be the great want of the age.”—*Pearson*.

“On all sides I found religion, but seldom religiousness; fear of God, but seldom love of God; good intention, but seldom good deed; professed Christians, but seldom followers of Christ. Not without reason, are a thousand voices raised to heaven in complaint over the decline of Christianity in our days. They complain for good cause. On one side, I see only indifference, ridicule, pride, and selfish effort to counteract the warning voice of conscience with cunning excuses: on the other side, I see youths and men and graybeards trembling in fearful doubts as to the fate of their souls, in this world, and beyond the grave.”—*Zschokke. Stunden der Andacht*.

“I believe they [Voltaire and the French philosophers of the XVIIIth century] have done more than even Luther or Calvin, to lower the tone of that proud hierarchy that shot itself up above the clouds, and more to propagate religious liberty, than Calvin or Luther, or even Locke.”—*John Adams*.

“Frederick [the Great] nevertheless, together with Voltaire and D’Alembert, stands in the foremost rank of those who fought for reason and civilization, and who conquered forever liberty of conscience and of speech.”—*Bartholomew. History of the Prussian Academy*.

#### Domain of Reason in Religion.—Ch. I.

§ 1. In speaking of “the little literary ability, which has come to light on this continent” (page 3), I mean only, that it is little in proportion to the number, wealth and intelligence of the people; but it is not discreditably small, when the position of the Americans in a new country, where peculiar inducements attract the ambitious into “politics” or trade, and where the government prostitutes herself to book-pirates, is considered.

#### *The Apostles Denounced Reason.*

“Avoid oppositions of science, falsely so called, which some professing have erred from the faith.”—1 *Tim. VI. 20*.

“The things of the Spirit of God are foolishness unto the natural man.”—1 *Cor. II. 14*.

“‘Believe or be damned’, is the ever persuasive refrain of our benignant ‘glad tidings to all mankind.’”—*Revelation its own Nemesis*.

Jesus is represented as “anxious to have men believe, without caring on what ground they believed.”—*F. W. Newman*

*The Catholic Church Denounces Reason.*

“We forbid all lay persons to discuss matters of faith, under pain of excommunication.”—*Decretal of Pope Alexander IV*

“Faith is not a mere conviction in reason : it is a firm assent it is a clear certainty, greater than any other certainty : and this is wrought in the mind by the grace of God, and by it alone.”—*J. H. Newman.*

The Pope publishes every year an *Index Expurgatorius*, or list of works which the members of the church are forbidden to read. The forbidden books are usually such as have a skeptical tendency.

In 1624, at the request of the University of Paris, and especially of the Sorbonne, persons were forbidden by an *arret* of Parliament, under pain of death, to hold or to teach any maxim contrary to ancient and approved authors, or to enter into any debate, but such as should be approved by the doctors of the faculty of theology.

“Human reason is feeble and may be deceived but true faith cannot be deceived.”—*Thomas A Kempis.*

“If your religion be false, you risk nothing in believing it true : if it be true, you risk all in believing it false.”—*Pascal.*

“It is necessary that there should be an authority, against which nobody shall have the right to argue.”—*J. de Maistre.*

“The principles of theology are above nature and reason.”—*Pascal.*

*The Protestants hostile to Free Inquiry.*

“Divine things, since they are beyond reason, appear contrary to reason.”—*Luther.*

“There is nothing more hostile to faith than reason.”—*Luther.*

“Reason is the bride of the devil.”—*Luther.*

“Build not your faith in the Divine Word on the sand of human reason.”—*Calvin.*

“It is folly to think of God according to the dictates of our mad, dazzled, and corrupt reason.”—*Luther.*

“In theology we balance authorities, in philosophy we weigh reasons.”—*Kepler.*

“It behoves us to make an entire and unconditional surrender of our minds to all the duty and to all the information which the Bible sets before us.”—*Chalmers.*

Dr. Arnold said that whenever doubts arose in his mind in re-

gard to dogmas of the established church his method was “to pause in his inquiries” and “to put down objections by main force.”

“The mere presentation of the evidences of Christianity to many minds is fraught with danger.”—*Christian Remembrancer*, (*Christian Quarterly*. London) Jan., 1857.

“When any thing, written in the Bible, is too hard for examination, it is our duty to captivate our understandings to the words, and not to labor in sifting out a philosophical truth by logic, of such mysteries as are not comprehensible, nor fall under any rule of natural science, for it is with the mysteries of our religion as with the wholesome pills for the sick, which swallowed whole, have the virtue to cure, but chewed, are for the most part cast up again without effect.”—*Hobbes*.

“Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise.”—*Protestant Poetry*.

“Reason is the most unreasonable of all things.”—*Henry Martyn*.

“People, who are born to orthodoxy, imbibe the opinions of their country or party, and never question their truth, are applauded for presuming that they are right. He that considers or examines is a foe to orthodoxy—is suspected of lukewarmness to suppose examination necessary, and of a tendency to apostacy, if he goes about it.”—*Locke*.

The following extract from Sleeman may give an idea of the domain of reason in the religion of Hindostan :

“The popular Hindoo poem of *Ramaen* describes the abduction of the heroine by the monster king of Ceylon, Rawan, and her recovery by means of the monkey general Hunnooman. Every word of this poem, the people assured us, was written, if not by the hand of the deity himself, at least by his inspiration. Ninety-nine out of a hundred among the Hindoos implicitly believe not only every word of the poem, but every word of every poem that has ever been written in Sanscrit [the sacred language of Hindostan]. If you ask a man whether he really believes any very egregious absurdity, quoted from these books, he replies with the greatest *naivete* [simplicity] in the world, ‘Is it not written in the book? and how shall it be there written, if not true?’ The Hindoo religion reposes on an entire prostration of mind—that continual and habitual surrender of the reasoning faculties which we are accustomed to make occasionally while we are at the theatre or in the perusal of works of fiction. \* \* \* With the Hindoos, the greater the improbability, the more monstrous and preposterous the fiction—the greater is the charm it has over their minds; and the greater their learning in the Sanscrit—the more they are under the influence of this charm. Believing all to be written by the deity or under his inspi-

ration, and the men and things in former days to have been different from the men and things of the present day, and the heroes of these fables to have been demi-gods or people endowed with powers far superior to those of the ordinary men of their own day, the analogies of nature are never for a moment considered; nor do questions of probability or possibility according to those analogies ever obtrude to dispel the charm with which they are so pleasingly bound. They go on through life, reading and talking of their monstrous fictions, which shock the taste and understanding of other nations, without ever questioning the truth of one single incident or hearing it questioned."

"History for this people [the Hindoos] is all a fairy tale."—*Rambles and Recollections of an Indian Official, by Col. Sleeman.*

Some Christians have dared to demur against the great opposition to free inquiry, but not one, to my knowledge, has ever dared to advise his hearers or readers to examine what has been written against Christianity. They dare not do that!

"We need not desire a better evidence that any man is in the wrong than to hear him declare against reason, and thereby acknowledge that reason is against him."—*Archbishop Tillotson.*

"What I most crave to see, and what still appears no impossible dream, is inquiry and belief going together."—*Dr. Arnold.*

"I shudder at the consequences of fixing the great proofs of religion upon any other basis than that of the widest investigation, and the most honest statement of facts."—*Rev. Sydney Smith.*

"With regard to Christianity itself, I creep toward the *light*, even though it *takes me away* from the more nourishing warmth. Yea, I should do so, even if the light made its way through a rent in the wall of the temple."—*S. T. Coleridge.*

"Let her [truth] and falsehood grapple! Who ever know truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter?"—*Milton.*

"There is a general obligation common to all Christians, of searching into the origin and evidences of our religion."—*Dr. Middleton.*

"One who has an aversion to doubt, and is anxious to make up his mind, and come to some conclusion on every question that is discussed, must be content to rest many of his opinions on very slight grounds. Such a one, therefore, is no lover of truth, or in the right way to attain it in any point. He may more reasonably hope this, who, though he may on many points perceive some (and perhaps a great) preponderance of probability on this or that side, is contented to come to a decisive conclusion, only on the few which he has been enabled thoroughly to investigate. \* \* A good

man, indeed, will wish to find the evidence of the Christian religion satisfactory : but a wise man will not for that reason find it satisfactory, but will weigh the evidence the more carefully, on account of the importance of the question.”—*Whately*.

*Philosophers on Reason in Religion.*

“O, my dear Kepler, how I wish we could have one hearty laugh together! Here at Padua, is the principal professor of Philosophy, whom I have repeatedly and urgently requested to look at the moon and planets, through my glass, which he pertinaciously refuses to do. Why are you not here? What shouts of laughter we should have at this glorious folly.”—*Galileo*.

“To steal into heaven, by the modern method of sticking, ostrich-like, your head into fallacies on earth, equally as by the ancient and by all conceivable methods, is forever forbidden.”—*Carlyle's Life of Sterling*.

“Whenever obsequious reverence is substituted for *bold inquiry*, truth, if she is not already at hand, will never be attained.”—*Hallam*.

“True faith is a belief in things probable.”—*Mackay*.

“He who cannot reason, is a slave; he who will not, is a bigot; and he who dare not, is a slave.”—*Drummond*.

“Belief consists in accepting the affirmations of the soul: unbelief, in denying them.”—*Emerson*.

“How far is it proper to deceive mankind?”—*Voltaire*.

“The character of the philosophy of the middle age is submission to authority other than that of reason. Modern philosophy recognizes no other authority than that of reason. It is Cartesianism which has accomplished this decisive revolution.”—*Cousin—Translated by O. W. Wight*.

“Socrates was free reflection; Descartes is free reflection elevated to the height of the most severe method. Descartes commences by doubting everything, the existence of God, that of the world, even his own existence; he only stops at that which he cannot doubt without ceasing even to doubt—at that which doubts within—at thought. Between the reflection of Socrates and the method of Descartes there is an interval of two thousand years. As the Greek dialectics are much more sincere, serious, and profound than those of India, so the method of Descartes is as much superior to the processes of the antique spirit, as our civilization is superior to that of Greece.”—*The same*.

“Reason must be our last judge and guide in everything. I do not mean that we must consult reason, and examine whether a pro-

position revealed from God, can be made out by natural principles, and if it cannot, that we may then reject it : but consult it we must, and by it examine whether it be a revelation from God or no."—*Locke on the Understanding, IV. 19.*

“Divest yourself of all bias in favor of novelty and singularity of opinion. Indulge them in any other subject rather than that of religion. It is too important, and the consequences of error may be too serious. On the one hand, shake off all fears and servile prejudices, under which weak minds are servilely crouched. Fix reason firmly in her seat, and call to her tribunal every fact, every opinion. Question with boldness even the existence of a God ; because if there be one, he must more approve of the homage of reason than that of blindfolded fear. You will naturally examine first the religion of your own country. Read the Bible then as you would read Livy or Tacitus. The facts which are within the ordinary course of nature you will believe on the authority of the writer, as you would do those of the same kind in Livy or Tacitus. The testimony of the writer weighs in their favor, in one scale, and their not being against the laws of nature, does not weigh against them in the other. But those facts of the Bible which contradict the laws of nature must be examined with more care, and under a variety of phases. Here you must recur to the pretensions of the writer to inspiration from God. Examine upon what evidence his pretensions are founded, and whether that evidence is so strong, that its falsehood would be more improbable than a change in the laws of nature, in the case he relates. For example, in the book of Joshua we are told the sun stood still several hours. Were we to read that fact in Livy or Tacitus, we should class it with their showers of blood, speaking of statues, beasts, &c. But it is said the writer of that book was inspired. Examine, therefore, candidly what evidence there is of his having been inspired. The pretension is entitled to your inquiry because millions believe it. On the other hand, you are astronomer enough to know how contrary it is to the laws of nature, that a body revolving on its axis, as the earth does, should have stopped [suddenly], should not by that sudden stoppage have prostrated animals, trees, buildings, and should after a certain time have resumed its revolutions, and that also without a general prostration. Is this arrest of the earth’s motion, or the evidence which affirms it, most within the laws of probability ? You will next read the New Testament. It is the history of a personage called Jesus. Keep in your eye the opposite pretensions ; *first*, of those who say he was begotten by God, born of a virgin, suspended and reversed the laws of nature at will, and ascended bodily into heaven ; and *secondly*, of those who say he was a man of illegitimate birth, of a benevolent heart, enthusiastic mind, who set out without pretensions, ended in believing them, and was punished capitally for sedition, by being



gibbeted according to the Roman law. \* \* \* Do not be frightened from this inquiry by any fear of its consequences. \* \* \* In fine, I repeat, you must lay aside all prejudices on both sides, and neither believe nor reject anything, because any other persons or description of persons have rejected or believed it. Your own reason is the only oracle given you by heaven, and you are answerable, not for the rightness, but the uprightness of your decisions.”—*Thomas Jefferson—Letter to Peter Carr, Aug. 10, 1787.*

“Those who have not thoroughly examined to the bottom their own tenets, must confess they are unfit to prescribe to others : and are unreasonable in imposing that as truth on other men’s belief, which they themselves have not searched into, nor weighed the arguments of probability, on which they should receive or reject it.”—*Locke.*

“Whoso would be a man, must be a non-conformist. He who would gather immortal palms, must not be hindered by the name of goodness, but must explore, if it be goodness. Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind. Absolve you to yourself, and you shall have the suffrage of the world.”—*Emerson.*

“Better is the faith that springeth from thy heart, Than a better faith belonging to a stranger.”—*Alger. Oriental Poetry.*

“The new man must feel that he is new, and has not come into the world mortgaged to the opinions and usages of Europe, Asia, and Africa.”—*Emerson.*

“He who does not like living in the furnished lodgings of tradition, must build his own house, his own system of thought and faith for himself.”—*Zschokke.*

“Truth courts the light.”—*Parker.*

“So long as our belief in religion is merely a matter of memory, of rote and of blind reception, so long can we have no firmness, no truth, no rest, no blessing in the highest sphere of our capacity.”—*Zschokke.*

“To side with truth is noble when we share her wretched crust,  
Ere her cause bring fame and profit, and ’tis prosperous to be just:  
Then it is the brave man chooses, while the coward stands aside,  
Doubting in his abject spirit, till his Lord is crucified,  
And the multitude make virtue of the faith they once denied,  
For humanity sweeps onward : where to-day the martyr stands  
On the morrow crouches Judas, with the silver in his hands ;  
For in front the cross stands ready, and the cracking fagots burn,  
While the hooting mob of yesterday in silent awe return  
To glean up the scattered ashes into History’s golden urn.”

(Quoted in *Parker’s Sermon on The True Idea of a Christian Church.*)

“As much freedom as you shut out, so much falsehood do you shut in.”—*Parker*.

“When the discovery and profession of truth is attended with danger, the prudent are silent, the multitude believe and impostors triumph.”—*Mosheim*.

“There are two sets of learned men. One candidly seeks truth by natural means, and is always willing to have his opinions and principles examined by the test of reason. Another, who learn by rote a set of opinions and a way of thinking, and who betray themselves by their anger and surprise, whenever those principles are questioned or canvassed.”

“There are few of the great truths now recognized which have not been treated as chimerical and blasphemous before they were demonstrated.”—*Agassiz*.

“These ancient preoccupations of our minds, these several and almost sacred opinions, are to be examined, if we will make way for truth, and put our minds in that freedom which belongs and is necessary to them. A mistake is not the less so, and will never grow into a truth, because we have believed it for a long time though perhaps it be the harder to part with: and an error is not the less dangerous, nor the less contrary to truth because it is cried up and had in veneration by any party.”—*Locke*.

“The investigation of all subjects comprehensible and scrutable to the human faculties, is the undoubted privilege of a rational understanding.”—*J. C. Prichard*.

“Reason and truth are the only hope of mankind. It is through them alone that any essential improvement in the condition of men—of individuals and of nations—is to be wrought out. Weak instruments they may be, often overborne and silenced by the discordant clamor of men’s passions and prejudices and folly, by selfishness and sin:—but there are no other. It is by reason that truth is discovered, and through reason that it is addressed to our hearts. By what other influence should they be controlled? By what other influence should our permanent affections be formed? Certainly neither by false doctrines, nor by unsubstantial imaginations, nor by the blind, disorderly working of natural impulses good and bad. Intellectual truth is the essential constituent of moral goodness. Whoever acts with the purpose of serving his fellow men, does so from a recognition of the truth of certain propositions which arise in his feelings, and find confirmation in his reason.”—*Norton*.

*Religion a valuable political institution.*

‡ 2. “Among all the useful institutions that demonstrate the superior excellence of the Roman government the most considerable

perhaps, is the opinions which people are taught to hold concerning the gods ; and that which other men regard as a disgrace, appears, in my judgment, to be the very thing by which this republic is sustained. I mean superstition, which is impressed, with all its terrors, and influences the private actions of the citizens and the public administration of the state, to a degree that can scarcely be exceeded. The ancients, therefore, acted not absurdly, nor without good reason, when they inculcated the notions concerning the gods, and the *belief of infernal punishment* ; but much rather are those of the present age to be charged with rashness and absurdity in endeavoring to extirpate these opinions ; for not to mention other effects that flow from such an institution, if among the Greeks, for example, a single talent only be entrusted to those who have the management of any of the public money, though they give ten written sureties, with as many seals and twice as many witnesses, they are unable to discharge with integrity the trust reposed in them. But the Romans, on the other hand, who in the course of their magistracies and in embassies disburse the greatest sums, are prevailed on by the simple obligation of an oath to perform their duty with inviolable honesty. And as in other states, a man is rarely to be found whose hands are pure from public robbery, so among the Romans it is no less rare to discover one that is tainted with this crime.”—*Hampton's Polybius, Vol. II. Book. VI.*

“ Philosophers unite in regarding truth as inseparably allied with human happiness, and error as essentially hostile to it. It was otherwise with the sages of antiquity, amongst whom there was a prevalent dissociation of the utility from the truth of a doctrine. It was supposed that a dogma might be advantageous and even necessary to society and to political institutions, although it were false, and that it ought in this case to be strenuously supported and shielded from scrutiny even by those who were aware of its character.”—*Samuel Bailey—Pursuit of Truth.*

“ It seems to have been the settled conviction of most of those [living about the beginning of the Christian era] who had the sincerest desire of attaining truth themselves, that to the mass of mankind, truth was in many points inexpedient and unfit to be communicated ; that, however desirable it might be for the leading personages in the world to be instructed in the true nature of things, there were many popular delusions which were essential to the well-being of society.”—*Whately—Essay on the Writings of St. Paul.*

#### *The Dishonesty of Priests.*

§ 2. “ Every church establishment is a mighty joint-stock company of error and deception, which invites subscriptions to the common fund, from the largest amounts of hypocrisy to the lowest penny and farthing contribution of acquiescence in what conscience does not entirely approve.”—*Blanco White.*

The English church, "the child of regal and aristocratical selfishness and unprincipled tyranny, she has never dared to speak boldly to the great, but has contented herself with lecturing the poor."—*Dr. Arnold.*

"The whole body of the clergy in every established church may be divided into three classes;—those who heartily believe the doctrines of their creed: the smallest number, I suspect, by far:—those who by repeated efforts, and by carefully limiting their inquiries, have succeeded in silencing their own doubts, and in persuading themselves that these doctrines admit of a plausible defense;—and in the last place, a very considerable number, indeed, and perhaps the most injurious to the interests of religion, who give their solemn assent to doctrines which they do not believe."—*Norton.*

SPEECH OF RED JACKET AGAINST THE MISSIONARIES.—"These men know we do not understand their religion. We cannot read their book: they tell us different stories about what it contains, and we believe they make the book talk to suit themselves. If we had no money, no land, and no country to be cheated out of, these black-coats would not trouble themselves about our good hereafter. The Great Spirit will not punish us for what we do not know. He will do justice to his red children. These black-coats talk to the Great Spirit and ask for light, that we may see as they do, when they are blind themselves, and quarrel about the light which guides them. These things we do not understand, and the light they give us makes the straight and plain path, trod by our fathers, dark and dreary. The black-coats tell us to work and raise corn; they do nothing themselves, and would starve to death if somebody did not feed them. All they do is pray to the Great Spirit: but that will not make corn or potatoes grow: if it will, why do they beg from us, and from the white people? The red men knew nothing of trouble until it came from the white men: as soon as they crossed the great waters, they wanted our country, and in return they have always been ready to teach us how to quarrel about their religion. Red Jacket can never be the friend of such men."—*History of the Indian Tribes of North America, by T. L. McKenny and James Hall.*

"To worship the urine of cows, which the Parsees and Hindoos drink, that they may obtain forgiveness of sins, is not more ludicrous than to worship the comb, or a shred of the garment, of the mother of God."—*Feuerbach. Essence of Christianity.*

"When I heard the bell toll to call people together in the steeple-house, it struck at my life, for it was like a market-bell to gather people together, that the priest might set forth his wares for sale. Oh! the vast sums of money that are got by the trade they make of selling the Scriptures, and by their preaching, from the

highest bishop down to the lowest priest. What one trade in the world is comparable to it? Notwithstanding the Scriptures were given forth freely, Christ commanded his ministers to preach freely, and the prophets and apostles denounced judgment against all covetous hirelings and divines for money.”—*George Fox*.

DESCRIPTION OF A FASHIONABLE PRIEST.—“A bishop among us is generally supposed to be a stately and pompous person, clothed in purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day; somewhat obsequious to persons in power, and somewhat haughty and imperative to those who are beneath him: with more authority in his tone and manner, than solidity in his learning: and yet with much more learning than charity or humility; very fond of being called my lord, and driving about in a coach with mitres in the panels, but little addicted to visiting the sick and fatherless, or earning for himself the blessing of those who are ready to perish,

—————‘Familiar with a round  
Of ladyships—a stranger to the poor’—————

decorous in his manners, but no foe to luxurious indulgences: rigid in maintaining discipline among his immediate dependents, and in exacting the homage due to his dignity from the undignified mob of his brethren, but perfectly willing to leave to them the undivided privileges of comforting and of teaching their people, and of soothing the sins and sorrows of their erring flocks; scornful, if not openly hostile, upon all occasions, to the claims of the people, from whom he is generally sprung, and presuming everything in favor of the royal will and prerogative, by which he has been exalted; setting indeed, in all cases, a much higher value on the privileges of the few, than the rights that are common to all, and exerting himself strenuously that the former may ever prevail; caring more accordingly for the interests of his order, than the general good of the church, and far more for the church than the religion it was established to teach; hating dissenters still more bitterly than infidels; but combating both rather with obloquy and invocation of civil penalties, than with the artillery of a powerful reason, or the reconciling influences of an humble and holy life; uttering now and then haughty professions of humility, and regularly bewailing at fit seasons, the severity of those Episcopal labors, which sadden and even threaten to abridge a life, which to all other eyes appears to flow on in almost unbroken leisure and continuous indulgences.”—*Edinburgh Review, Dec.* 1828.

“The French clergy does not live now [1828] as in times past but shows a regularity of conduct worthy of the apostles. Happy effect of poverty!—Happy fruit of the persecution suffered in the grand epoch when God visited his church. It is not one of the least blessings of the revolution, that not only the curés, always

respectable, but even the bishops are moral men.”—*Courier*. Quoted in the *Edinburgh Review*, March, 1829.

### What is Christianity?—Ch. II.

‡ 7. Butler says the real question in studying the truth of the Bible is not “whether it be a book of such sort, and so promulged, as weak men are apt to fancy a book containing a divine revelation should.”—*Analogy of Religion*, Part II., Ch. III.

“There are no degrees in infallibility.”—*Coleridge*.

“How can infallible truth be conveyed in defective and fallible expressions.”—*Same*.

Parker says the believers in a supernatural revelation imagine it to be “an afterthought of God interpolated in human affairs.”

#### *Perversions of the meaning of the Bible.*

‡ 8. The plain meaning of the Bible is perverted greatly by the Christian priests in many cases, but I shall refer here only to two points—Public Prayer and the Observance of Sunday.

**PUBLIC PRAYER.** Every one knows that public prayers are offered in every Christian church every Sunday, and in a great many other places on other occasions. And yet, praying in public is expressly forbidden by Jesus.

“When thou prayest thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are; for they love to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. \* \* But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father, which is in secret.” *Jesus in Mat. VI. 5, 6.*

“When he [Jesus] had sent the multitude away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray.” *Mat. XIV. 23.*

“And they [Jesus and his Apostles] came to a place which was named Gethsemane, and he saith unto his disciples ‘Sit ye here while I shall pray.’” *Mark XIV. 32.*

“And again he [Jesus] went away and prayed.” *Mark XIV. 39.*

“And he [Jesus] withdrew himself into the wilderness and prayed.” *Luke V. 16.*

**OBSERVANCE OF SUNDAY.** Neither Jesus nor his disciples commanded the observance of Sunday as a sacred day. Under the dispensation of Paul, the Sabbath (that is the Jewish Sabbath, for it is a perversion of language to apply the word “Sabbath” to Sunday) was abrogated, with all the other ceremonial observances of the Mosaic law—

“One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth

every day alike. Let every man be persuaded in his own mind." *Rom. XIV. 5.*

"Let no man judge you in meat or drink, or in respect of a holy-day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath." *Col. II. 16.* Paul here means to tell his converts that it is nobody's business how much pork they eat, or how many Jewish festival days they disregard, or how much they labor on the Sabbath.

The First Council in Jerusalem, writing to the Churches of Paul, said "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, to lay upon you, no greater burden than these necessary things; that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well" (*Acts XV, 28, 29*).

This Council was called expressly to consider how far the Gentile converts should observe the Mosaic law; and their opinion is expressed in the verses quoted. All the observances, commanded in the law of Moses and not there expressed, were declared unnecessary.

"We deem it wicked to fast on the Sunday or to pray on our knees."—*Tertullian.*

"The "Manicheans were damned for fasting on the Lord's day."—*St. Ambrose.*

The *Daily News* (of London,) a year or more since, published the following list of extracts—

1. St. Chrysostom, whose prayer is read every Sunday in all [Episcopal] churches, says—"After the congregation is dismissed, every man may apply himself to his lawful business."—*Hom. v. on Matt. i.*

2. St. Athanasius says—"We keep no Sabbaths as the ancients did, except an eternal Sabbath, which shall have no end."—*See Heylin de Sabb., p. 183.*

3. Eusebius, the ecclesiastical historian, speaking of the Patriarchs, says "They cared not for corporal circumcision—no more do we; nor for the observation of Sabbaths—no more do we."—*Eccl. Hist. p. 7.*

4. St. Augustin says—"He that literally keeps the Sabbath savors of the flesh; but to savor of the flesh is death."—*De. Spir. et. Lit. c. xiv.*

5. Calvin says—"by changing the day and yet attributing to this day when changed the same sanctity which the Jews did to their Sabbaths, we retain the same typical distinction of days as had place among the Jews. Those who now cling to them go thrice as far as the Jews themselves in their gross and carnal superstition of their Sabbath worship."—*Inst. viii. 34.*

6. Beza says—"On the Lord's day no cessation of work is

required; that would be not to abolish Judaism, but merely to put it off to another day."—*Or. the Apoc. i. 10.*

7. Archbishop Cranmer required of the clergy to teach the people that they would grievously offend God if they abstained from working on Sundays in harvest time.—*See Cranmer's Visitation Articles.*

8. Jeremy Taylor says "the Lord's day did not succeed in the place of the Sabbath, but the Sabbath was abrogated. The Lord's day was merely an ecclesiastical institution."

9. Paley says—"Cessation upon Sunday from labor beyond the time of attendance upon public worship is not intimated in any passage of the New Testament, nor did Christ or His apostles deliver any command to their disciples for the discontinuance upon that day of the common offices of their professions." Again: "The resting on that day from our employments, longer than we are detained from them by attendance upon public worship, is to Christians an ordinance of human institution."—*Mor. Ph., v. 7.*

10. Whately, Archbishop of Dublin, says "The Lord's day is to be held purely as a religious festival. Judaism being abolished, all its ritual observances must, of course, be wholly at an end; so that we are no more compelled to keep the fourth commandment than we are to keep the worship of the temple, or the daily sacrifice." *Essays on the writings of St. Paul.*

11. Dr. Arnold says "That Sunday should be a day of greater leisure than other days, and of the suspension, as far as may be, of the common business of life, I quite allow; but, then, I should have much greater indulgence for recreation on a Sunday than you might have; and if the railway enables the people in the great towns to get out into the country on a Sunday, I should think it is a very great good."—*Dr. Arnold's Life, vol. ii. p. 210.*

12. Luther says—"If anywhere the day is made holy for the mere day's sake—if anywhere any one sets up his observance upon a Jewish foundation—then I order you to work on it, to ride on it, to dance on it, to feast on it, to do anything that reproves this encroachment on the Christian spirit and liberty." *See Coleridge's Table Talk, vol. ii. p. 316.*

#### Character of Jehovah.—Ch. III.

§ 11. "The feelings, Fear, Reverence, Devotion, Love, naturally personify God—humanize the Deity, and represent the Infinite under the limitations of a finite and imperfect being, whom we 'can know all about.' He has the thoughts, feelings, passions, limitations of a man; is subject to time and space; sees, remembers, has a form. This is 'Anthropomorphism.'"—*Parker.*

*Jehovah is a Biped.*

§ 12. "And he [Gideon] said unto him [Jehovah] 'If now I



have found grace in thy sight, then show me a sign that thou talkest with me. Depart not hence. I pray thee until I come to thee, and bring forth my present and set it before thee.' And he [Jehovah] said 'I will tarry until thou come again.'"—*Jud. VI. 17, 18.*

*Jehovah weak.*

§16. That the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles considered Jehovah as an imperfect and weak being is evident from the manner in which they often addressed him. Take the following examples:—

"And He [Jehovah] said unto him [Abram] 'I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.' And he [Abram] said 'Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?'" *Gen. XV. 7, 8.*

"And Jacob vowed a vow, saying 'If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then the Lord [Jehovah] shall be my God.'" *Gen. XXVIII. 20, 21.*

"And he [Moses] said 'O, my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of [not me, but somebody else] whom thou wilt send.'" *Ex. IV. 13.*

"Speak thou [Moses] unto Pharaoh, King of Egypt, all that I [Jehovah] say unto thee.' And Moses said, before the Lord, 'Behold, I am of uncircumcised lips, and how shall Pharaoh hearken unto me?'" *Ex. VI. 29, 30.*

"And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said 'Lord, wherefore hast thou so evil entreated this people? Why is it that thou hast sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he hath done evil to this people; neither hast thou delivered thy people at all.'" *Ex. V. 22, 23.*

"And he gave unto Moses \* \* two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God" (*Ex. XXXI. 18*). "And Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands and brake them beneath the mount." *Ex. XXXII. 19.*

"And Moses said unto the Lord 'Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant? And wherefore have I not found favor in thy sight, that thou layest the burden of all this people upon me? Have I conceived all this people? Have I begotten them, that thou shouldst say unto me 'Carry them in thy bosom, as the nursing-father beareth the sucking-child, unto the land which thou swarest unto their fathers? Whence should I have flesh to give unto all this people? For they weep unto me, saying 'Give us flesh that we may eat!' I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me. And if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand' [right off].'" *Ex. XI. 10-15.*

"And Moses said 'The people among whom I am, are 600,000

footmen, and thou hast said 'I will give them flesh that they may eat a whole month.' Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them to suffice them?' And the Lord said unto Moses 'Is the Lord's hand waxed short? Thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not.'" *Num. XI. 21-23.*

Moses advised Jehovah not to give way to his fit of passion against the Jews, because if he should, "The Egyptians will hear it," and will say Jehovah "was not able to bring this people into the land which he swore unto them." *Num. XIV. 11-20.*

"And Joshua said 'Alas! O, Lord God, wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites to destroy us? Would to God we had been content and dwelt on the other side Jordan.'" *Josh. VII. 7.*

"And the Lord said unto Samuel \* \* 'fill thy horn with oil and go.' \* \* And Samuel said 'How can I go? If Saul hear it he will kill me.'" *I. S. XVI. 1, 2.*

"It displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry" that Jehovah did not destroy Nineveh, after compelling Jonah to prophesy its destruction; and he prayed "Therefore now, O Lord, take, I beseech thee, my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." *Jonah IV. 1, 3.*

When Jehovah ordered Ananias to go and baptise Saul, he replied "Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem; and here he hath authority to bind all who call on thy name." Ananias wished to be excused from that duty, supposing that Jehovah was ignorant of the danger or too careless of the comfort of his worshippers. *Acts. IX. 11-16.*

When Jehovah appeared in a vision to Peter and ordered him to eat all kinds of unclean animals, Peter replied "Not so, Lord, for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." *Acts, X. 9-16.*

"While the orthodox church preserved a just medium between excessive veneration and improper contempt for the law of Moses, the various heretics deviated into equal but opposite extremes of error and extravagance. From the acknowledged truth of the Jewish religion, the Ebionites had concluded that it could never be abolished. From its supposed imperfections the Gnostics as hastily inferred that it never was instituted by the wisdom of the Deity. There are some objections, against the authority of Moses and the prophets, which too readily present themselves to the skeptical mind; though they can only be derived from our ignorance of remote antiquity and from our incapacity to form an adequate judgment of the Divine economy. These objections were eagerly embraced and as petulantly urged by the vain science of the Gnostics. As those heretics were, for the most part, averse to the

pleasures of sense, they morosely arraigned the polygamy of the patriarchs, the gallantries of David and the scraglio of Solomon. The conquest of the land of Canaan and the extirpation of the unsuspecting natives, they were at a loss how to reconcile to the common notions of humanity and justice. But when they recollected the sanguinary list of murders, of executions, and of massacres, which stain almost every page of the Jewish annals, they acknowledged that the barbarians of Palestine had exercised as much compassion towards their idolatrous enemies, as they had ever shown to their friends or countrymen. Passing from the sectaries of the law to the law itself, they asserted that it was impossible that a religion which consisted only of bloody sacrifices and trifling ceremonies, and whose rewards, as well as punishments, were all of a carnal and temporal nature, could inspire the love of virtue or restrain the impetuosity of passion. The Mosaic account of the creation and fall of man was treated with profane derision by the Gnostics, who would not listen with patience to the repose of the Deity after six days labor, to the rib of Adam, the garden of Eden, the trees of life and knowledge, the speaking serpent, the forbidden fruit and the condemnation pronounced against human kind for the venial offense of their first progenitors. The God of Israel was impiously represented by the Gnostics as a being liable to passion and to error, capricious in his favor, implacable in his resentment, meanly jealous of his superstitious worship, and confining his partial providence to a single people and to this transitory life. In such a character they could discover none of the features of the wise and Omnipotent Father of the universe." *Gibbon, Decline and Fall, Ch. XV.*

*Soliloquy of Jehovah.*

“ From an eternity of idleness  
 I, God, awoke : in seven days toil made earth  
 From nothing ; rested, and created man :  
 I placed him in a paradise, and there  
 Planted the tree of evil, so that he  
 Might eat and perish, and my soul procure  
 Wherewith to sate its malice, and so turn,  
 Even like a heartless conqueror of the earth  
 All misery to my fame. The race of men  
 Chosen to my honor, with impunity  
 May sate the lusts I planted in their hearts.  
 I will beget a son, and he shall bear  
 The sins of all the world : he shall arise  
 In an unnoticed corner of the earth,  
 And there shall die upon a cross, and purge  
 The universal crime ; so that the few

On whom my grace descends, those who are marked  
 As vessels to the honor of their God.  
 May credit this strange sacrifice, and save  
 Their souls alive : millions shall live and die,  
 Who ne'er shall call upon their Savior's name,  
 But, unredeemed, go to the gaping grave.  
 Thousands shall deem it an old woman's tale,  
 Such as the nurses frighten babes withal :  
 There in a gulf of anguish and of flame  
 Shall curse their reprobation endlessly.  
 Yet tenfold pangs shall force them to avow  
 Even on their beds of torment where they howl,  
 My honor and the justice of their doom."

*Shelley. Queen Mab.*

#### Character of Jesus—Ch. IV.

##### *Opinions of Philosophers on the Character of Jesus.*

§ 19. " Whatever be the spirit with which the four Gospels be approached, it is impossible to rise from the attentive perusal of them without a strong reverence for Jesus Christ. Even the disposition to cavil and ridicule is forced to retire before the majestic simplicity of the Prophet of Nazareth. Unlike Moses or Mahomet he owes no part of the lustre which surrounds him to his acquisition of temporal power; his is the ascendancy which mankind, in proportion to their mental advancement, are least disposed to resist—that of moral and intellectual greatness. The virtue, wisdom, and sufferings of Jesus, will secure to him a powerful influence over men so long as they continue to be moral, intellectual and sympathising beings. And as the tendency of human improvements is towards the progressive increase of these qualities, it may be presumed that the empire of Christianity, considered simply as the influence of the life, character and doctrine of Christ over the human mind, will never cease."—*Hennell—Origin of Christianity*

Goethe says The Spirit of God is nowhere more beautifully revealed than in the New Testament.

The celebrated Hindoo Freethinker and Reformer, Rammohun Roy, wrote, " After long and uninterrupted researches into religious truth, I have found the doctrines of Christ more conducive to moral principles, and better adapted for the use of rational beings, than any others which have come to my knowledge."

Carlyle styles Jesus a divine man.

" Abstracting what is really his, from the rubbish in which it is buried, easily distinguished by its lustre from the dross of his biographers, and as separable from that as the diamond from the dunghill, we have the outlines of a system of the most sublime mo-

rality, which has ever fallen from the lips of man.”—*Thomas Jefferson—Letter to Mr. Short, Oct. 31, 1819.*

“ I think Christ’s system of morals and his religion, as he left them to us, the best the world ever saw or is likely to see ; but I apprehend that they have received various corrupting changes.”—*Benjamin Franklin—Spark’s Biography, p. 515*

“ I confess to you that the holiness of the Gospel is an argument which speaks to my heart, and to which I should regret to find a refutation. Look at the books of the philosophers, with all their pomp, how small are they in comparison ? Can it be that a book, at once so simple and so sublime, can be the work of man ? Can it be that he, whose history is there written, was but a man ? Are these the words of a fanatic or of an ambitious partizan ? What sweetness, what purity of manners ! What touching grace in his discourses ! What nobleness in his maxims ! What profound wisdom in his words ! What presence of mind, perspicacity, and justice in his replies ! What command over his passions ! Where is the man, the sage who can live, suffer, and die without weakness and without ostentation ? When Plato described his imaginary just man, covered with all the disgrace of crime, and worthy of all the rewards of virtue, he painted Jesus Christ, feature for feature ; the likeness is so striking that all the Fathers of the church perceived it, and it was impossible to mistake it. How prejudiced, how blind must he be, who would dare to compare the son of Sophroniscus to the Son of Mary. How little resemblance between them ! Socrates, dying without pain, without ignominy, easily supported his character to the last ; and if this easy death had not honored his life, we should doubt whether Socrates, with all his genius, was more than a sophist. He invented, it is said, moral law ; but others before him had practiced morality ; he said no more than others had done ; he only reduced to precepts previous examples. Aristides had been just before Socrates defined justice ; Leonidas died for his country before Socrates taught the duty of love of country ; Spartans were self-denying before Socrates inculcated sobriety ; before he defined virtue, Greece had abounded in virtuous men. But whence from among the Jews did Jesus derive that elevated pure morality, of which he alone gave the example and the precept ? In the midst of the most furious fanaticism, was heard the sublimest wisdom, and the simplicity of the most heroic virtues honored the vilest of all people. The death of Socrates, philosophising among his friends, was the mildest possible ; that of Jesus, by a horrible torture, abused, derided, cursed by the whole people, was the most fearful that could be imagined. Socrates, taking the prisoner’s cup from the weeping officer, pardons him ; in the midst of his frightful sufferings Christ blesses his executioner. Yes, the life and death of Socrates were

those of a sage ; but the life and death of Jesus were those of a God."—*Rousseau, Emile*

Voltaire says, "He must have been a sage since he declaimed against priestly impostors and superstitions ; but the sayings and doings imputed to him, were not always those of a wise man."

Mendelsohn considered Jesus as a generous enthusiast.

"Nothing that is here said, can imply even the most distant disrespect to the moral character of Jesus Christ. He was a virtuous and amiable man. The morality that he preached and practised, was of the most benevolent kind : and though similar systems of morality had been preached by Confucius, and by some of the Greek Philosophers many years before, by the Quakers since, and by many good men in all ages, it has not been exceeded by any."—*Thomas Paine. Age of Reason.*

"A man [Jesus] is born in the world,—a real man—such a one as it has never seen : he lives a life consistently the very highest : his wisdom is the calm earnest voice of humanity : to the worldly and common-place so exasperating, as forcing upon them their own worthlessness,—to the good so admirable that every other faculty is absorbed in wonder."—*J. A. Froude. Nemesis of Faith.*

"If ever man was God, and God was man, Jesus Christ was both."—*Byron.*

"Alone in all history, he [Jesus] estimated the true greatness of man. The idioms of his language and the figures of his rhetoric, have usurped the place of his truth : and churches are built, not on his principles, but on his tropes."—*Emerson.*

"We hold that God has so arranged matters in this beautiful and well-ordered, but mysteriously governed universe, that one great mind, after another, will arise from time to time, as such are needed, to discover and flash forth, before the eyes of men, the truths that are wanted, and the amount of truth that can be borne. We conceive that this is effected by endowing them,—or by having arranged that nature and the course of events shall send them into the world endowed—with that superior mental and moral organization, in which grand truths, sublime gleams of spiritual light will spontaneously and inevitably arise. Such a one, we believe, was Jesus of Nazareth,—the most exalted religious genius whom God ever sent upon the earth : in himself an embodied revelation ; humanity in its divinest phase—God manifested in the flesh', according to Eastern hyperbole : an exemplar vouchsafed in an early age of the world, of what man may and should become in the course of ages, in his progress towards the realization of his destiny : an individual gifted with a glorious intellect, a noble soul, a fine or-

ganization, and a perfectly-balanced moral being : and who by virtue of these endowments, saw further than other men

“ Beyond the verge of that blue sky  
Where God’s sublimest secrets lie : ”

an earnest, not only of what humanity may be, but of what it will be, when the most perfected races, shall bear the same relation to the finest minds of existing times, as these now bear to the Bushmen or the Esquimaux.”—*Greg. Creed of Christendom.*

*Philosophers on the Spirit of the New Testament.*

“ The Christian religion raises the dim perception of divine existence, which is apparently born with, and natural to all men, to the simplest and most enlightened ideas of the Deity—to ideas the most worthy of the Godhead and the most elevating to mankind ; purifies the mind from all superstitions of the agency of demons and wizards, and creates in every human soul, wherein it prevails an overflowing fountain of unbounded confidence in God, of love for all good, of all-embracing humanity, of exhaustless fortitude in adversity, of temperance and humility in prosperity, of patience in suffering, of peace of heart, of content with the present, and of never-dying hope for a better future. The faith of Jesus was a pure theosophy in the simplest sense of the word.”—*Wieland—Vernunft in Glaubenssachen. Section XXVII.*

“ The Gospel of Christ is one continued lesson of the strictest morality, of justice, of benevolence, and of universal charity.” *Bolingbroke Fragments of Essays, XX.*

Jeremy Bentham says the Religion of Jesus has a “ benevolent system of morals.” *Introduction to “ Not Paul but Jesus.”*

“ Even supposing it to have been purely a human invention, it has been the most amiable and the most useful invention that was ever imposed on mankind for their good.” *Bolingbroke.*

“ I value the religion of Jesus not as being absolute and perfect truth, but as containing more truth, purer truth, stronger truth than has ever yet been given to man.” *Greg.*

“ The Bible is pervaded by a sentiment which is implied everywhere—viz., *the infinite sympathy of the Pure and Perfect God with the heart of each faithful worshipper.* This is that which is wanting in Greek philosophers, English Deists, German Pantheists, and all formalists. This is that which so often edifies me in Christian writers and speakers, when I ever so much disbelieve the letter of their sentences. Accordingly, though I saw more and more of moral and spiritual imperfections in the Bible, I by no means ceased to regard it as a quarry whence I might dig precious metal though the ore needed a refining analysis ; and I regarded this

as the truest essence and most vital point in Christianity—to sympathize with the great souls from whom its spiritual eminence has flowed; to love, to hope, to rejoice, to trust with them.” *F. W. Newman.*

“A system of noble theism and lofty morality as Christ delivered it.” *Greg.*

“Whatever errors may have crept in among the simple, yet sublime views, published by Christ, the practical moral character of his Gospel has always stood prominently above the abstract doctrines.” *Blanco White.*

“There is no book which I love and esteem so much as the New Testament, with the devotional parts of the Old. There is none which I know so intimately, the very words of which dwell close to me, in my most sacred thoughts, none for which I so thank God, none on which my soul and heart have been to so great an extent moulded. In my early boyhood, it was my private delight and daily companion: and to it I owe the best part of whatever wisdom there is in my manhood. Yet, after more than thirty years’ study of it, I deliberately before God and man protest against the attempt to make it a law to man’s understanding, conscience, or soul: and am assuredly convinced that the deepest spiritual mischief has occurred to the churches,—nothing short of a stifling of the Spirit of God (with few intervals) for seventeen centuries and a half, from taking the Bible (or New Testament), instead of God himself, as our source of inspiration.”—*F. W. Newman—The Soul.*

*Christian Authors on Jesus.*

“Sweep away the perfection we see actualized in him, and there is no point in the world’s history on which we could fix our gaze as by any possibility becoming the starting point of the higher life—no other realization of divine perfection in humanity—no other example of the Word becoming flesh and dwelling with us.”—*Morell.*

“There is not in the character of Christ one trait of mortality; nothing which for an instant bespeaks him allied to the infirmities of man; no change, no guile, no conflict of passion, no wavering of heart, no pride of spirit; without thought for himself, without love of command, a man of sorrow, rejected and despised; who bore in his bosom the rebuke of many people, and moved silently on in the paths of affliction; healing and comforting mankind; and laying the foundations of that blessed religion, the voice of which has gone out into all lands, and called man from the alternate slumber and fury of his savage life to the sweets and glories of industry and peace.”—*Sydney Smith.*

“The character of Christ is a part of the morality of the Gospel: one strong observation upon which is, that, neither as re-



presented by his followers, nor as attacked by his enemies, is he charged with any personal vice. \* \* \* Some stain pollutes the morals, or the morality, of almost every other teacher, and of every other lawgiver. Zeno the Stoic, and Diogenes, fell into the foulest impurities : of which also Socrates himself was more than suspected. Solon forbade unnatural crimes to slaves. Lucurgus tolerated theft as a part of education. Plato recommended a community of women. Aristotle maintained the general right of making war upon barbarians. The elder Cato was remarkable for the ill-usage of his slaves : the younger gave up the person of his wife. One loose principle is found in almost all the pagan moralists—is distinctly, however, perceived in the writings of Plato, Xenophon, Cicero, Seneca, Epictetus—and that is the allowing, and even the recommending to their disciples, a compliance with the religion, and with the religious rites, of every country into which they came. In speaking of the founders of new institutions, we cannot forget Mahomet. His licentious transgressions of his own licentious rules,—his abuse of the character which he assumed, and of the power which he had acquired, for the purposes of personal and privileged indulgence—his avowed claim of a special permission from heaven of unlimited sensuality, is known to every reader, as it is confessed by every writer, of the modern story.”—*Paley. Evidences of Christianity, Ch. II.*

“In the Bible, there is more that finds me than I have experienced in all other books together : the words of the Bible find me at greater depths of my being : and whatever finds me, brings with it irresistible evidence of having proceeded from the Holy Spirit.”—*Coleridge.*

#### *Improper Conduct of Jesus.*

§ 22. Jesus accepted an invitation to an entertainment at the house of a Pharisee (*Luke, XI, 37*). He had scarcely taken his seat before he broke out in vulgar abuse of the host and his friends. He called them “fools,” and “hypocrites,” said they were full “of ravening and wickedness” and threatened them with “woe,” and charged them with being guilty of all the innocent blood which had been shed from the time of Abel, to the time of Zacharias. “We grant” says Strauss “that Attic urbanity is not to be expected in a Jewish teacher, but even according to the oriental standard, such invectives uttered at table against the host and his guests, would be the grossest dereliction of what is due to hospitality.”

“‘Why asketh thou me? Ask them, which heard me, what I have said unto them : behold, they know what I have said?’ Such a reply on such an occasion, might be accepted without surprise, as the half-petulant, half-sulky evasion of outraged humanity : but would not the sublime simplicity of divine truthfulness—would not

human magnanimity, when about to offer itself up for the very cause in question, have eagerly and earnestly accepted the occasion, fully, freely and fearlessly to have proclaimed that truth, on behalf of which it was actually waiting a voluntary and long preconcerted sacrifice." *Revelation its own Nemesis.*

The author of *Revelation its own Nemesis* says that Socrates on the occasion of his trial and execution showed a "magnanimity more than godlike, if Revelation be the standard."

*Jesus executed for Sedition.*

Suetonius and Dio Cassius (Book IV.) say that the Romans were in the habit, when a person was executed for crime of signifying by a placard what the offense was. If the assumption of the title "King of the Jews" was the offense of Jesus, he must have been executed for sedition.

"That a Roman Judge and Governor, while proclaiming 'I find no fault in him,' should yet, at the very moment, stultify himself, and degrade the Imperial office, in deference to party clamor, by sacrificing a prisoner, whom himself had openly, and unreservedly acquitted seems altogether incredible: and if a crucifixion at all took place, the text itself would warrant the conjecture, that it was the execution of a political demagogue, whose popular agitation might, as the Jews apprehended, provoke 'the Romans to come and take away their nation.' 'It is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.' 'We have no king, but Cesar.' 'If thou let this man go, thou art not Cesar's friend.'" *Revelation its own Nemesis.*

**Character of Paul.—Ch. V.**

§ 29. It is distinctly stated by both Josephus (*Ant. XI. 5*), and Philo (*De Virtut*), that there were many thousands of Jews in Babylon in their time.

"The first fifteen bishops of Jerusalem were all circumcised Jews; and the congregation over which they presided united the law of Moses with the doctrine of Christ."—*Gibbon, XV.*

"All they [the Christian churches] which are in Asia, be turned away from me" (*Paul in 2 Tim. II. 15*). There is a modest declaration: all the apostles and disciples of Jesus have become heretics by turning away from *him*, though their doctrines remained the same as they were while Jesus taught and while Saul persecuted them. The Epistle to *Timothy* was written about 66 A. D., according to the chronology received by the church.

"Scarcely had Paul left Galatia, when enemies of his teaching appeared there, and persuaded the Galatian Christians to be circumcised and observe all the ritual of Moses (*Gal. I. 6; IV. 18*). These enemies of the Apostle were not Galatian Jews, for they had

not disturbed him in either his first or his second visit to that place, but had left his converts for a number of years (from 53 to 57 A. D.), to adopt the new doctrine without trouble. Besides these enemies were not strict Jews, but Jewish Christians (*I.* 7; *V.* 10); for they did not oppose Christianity, as strict Jews would have done; they taught only the necessity of connecting Judaism with Christianity. The circumstances show that these enemies must have been missionaries sent out by the Jewish Christians of Palestine to counteract the anti-Mosaic doctrines of Paul. They exalted John, Peter, and James; they asserted that Paul was no apostle, because he had not been a disciple of Jesus; that it was his duty to obey the other apostles, and to teach as they taught; that he had departed from their teaching merely for the sake of applause; and that he permitted the Gentiles to disregard the Mosaic law for the purpose of gaining them as his partizans. They opposed Paul on precisely the same grounds afterwards taken by other missionaries who appeared at Corinth, and sought to draw away his converts (*2 Cor.* *III.* 1; *XI.* 4, 5; *XII.* 11, 12).—*Eichhorn—Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, § 212.

“The destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple made many of the Palestinian Christians become unsteady in their rigorous Judaism, because they believed that these events must be solemn signs given by God of the abrogation of the Mosaic dispensation. But they did not join the Pauline Christians until the political revolutions of Palestine made it a matter of prudence for them to abandon Judaism. The separation did not take place until the reign of Hadrian, when a persecution was commenced against the unruly Jews, and it became a matter of importance to the Christians in Palestine to separate themselves from the persecuted class, and thus protect themselves from the hostility of the Romans, and obtain permission to settle peaceably in the town of *Ælia*, built upon the site of Jerusalem. But some of the zealous Jewish Christians refused to abandon the rites of their fathers, and these were called Nazarenes [or Ebionites].”—*Eichhorn—Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, § 4.

“Not long after the death of Christ, his followers became gradually divided into two parties. *First*, there were the Jewish Christians: that was the oldest portion, the old school of Christians. They are mentioned in ecclesiastical history as the Ebionites, Nazarenes, and under yet other names. Peter and James were the great men in that division of the early Christians. Matthew and the author of the “Gospel according to the Hebrews” [not our Epistle to the Hebrews], were their evangelists. The church at Jerusalem was their stronghold. They kept the whole Hebrew law,—all its burthensome ritual, its circumcision and its sacrifices, its new-moon days, and its full-moon days, sabbaths, fasts and

feasts. The first fifteen bishops of the church at Jerusalem were circumcised Jews.”—*Parker*.

*Sins of the Apostles.*

“He [Jesus] gave them [the twelve apostles] power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease” *Mat. X. 1.*

“He breathed on them, and saith unto them, ‘Receive ye the Holy Ghost.’” *John. XX. 20.*

Two of the apostles of Jesus desired to destroy a village with fire from heaven, because the villagers would not believe their doctrine. *Luke. IX. 54.*

Peter rebuked Jesus. *Mat. XVI. 22.*

When Peter was asked, after the arrest of Jesus, whether he was a follower of the latter, he *cursed* and *swore*, saying, “I know not the man”, and on three separate occasions denied his master. *Mat. XXVI. 74.*

Peter cut off Malchus’ ear. *Mat. XXVI. 51.*

Peter said Paul was a heretic, and Paul said Peter was a liar and a hypocrite. *Gal. II. 11-14.*

Paul damned Alexander, the coppersmith, with polite phrase : he “did me much *evil* ; the Lord reward him according to his *works*.” *1 Tim. I. 20 ; 2 Tim. IV. 14.* Paul wished to see his friends saved according to their *faith*, and his enemies damned according to their *works*.

Paul cursed those who preached a doctrine different from his own. *Gal. I. 8, 9.*

The apostles disputed, after Christ’s predictions of his death, as to who should be the greatest in the coming kingdom. *Mat. XX. 24 ; Mark. IX. 35 ; Luke. XXII. 25.*

They went so far as to ask for seats at the right hand and at the left. *Mat. XIX. 28, XX. 21 ; Mark. X. 37 ; Luke. XXII. 30.*

They fled when Jesus was arrested. *Mat. XXIV. 36.*

Jesus was buried by a stranger. *Mark XV. 43.*

**Character of David.—Ch. VI.**

§ 29. I have nothing about David to insert here, but some of the sins of Solomon and other inspired prophets are almost too important to be altogether omitted, and yet did not appear important enough to deserve a separate chapter.

*Character of Solomon.*

“In the declining age of David, his eldest surviving son, Adonijah, endeavored to place himself on the throne, by the aid of Joab the chief captain, and Abiathar one of the chief priests, both of whom had been associated with David’s early sufferings under Saul. The aged monarch did not for a moment give way to

the formidable usurpation, but at the remonstrance of his favorite. Bathsheba, resolved forthwith to raise Solomon to the throne. To Joab he was able to oppose the celebrated name of Benaiah; to Abiathar his colleague Zadok, and the aged prophet Nathan. The plot of Adonijah was at once defeated by this decisive measure and Solomon, being anointed by Nathan, was solemnly acknowledged as king.

“The death of David would seem to have followed very quickly upon these transactions. At least, no public measures in the interval are recorded, except Solomon’s verbal forgiveness of Adonijah. But after the removal of David, the first events of which we hear are the destruction of Adonijah, Joab and Shimei the son of Gera, with the degradation of Abiathar. Those who look for Christian perfection in the conduct of Solomon do some violence to the facts, in order to explain these transactions; which are in themselves clear enough. Despotic monarchs are seldom found to forgive unsuccessful competitors for the crown or their assistants; and their first deed is not rarely to put to death their innocent brothers (2 *Ch.* XXI. 4). The promise of Solomon to Adonijah, almost as much as his command to Shimei (*I. K.* II. 37) was but a deferring of vengeance to a more convenient time; and the same absolute power which could interpret into treason the humble suit for the hand of a beautiful but obscure damsel, would have been sure to find, sooner or later, a plausible excuse for effecting the object determined on. In fact Abiathar is declared worthy of death, not for any new offense, but for his participation in Adonijah’s original attempt; and Joab is put to death solely because he is alarmed at the treatment of his associates. For the wicked Joab no pity need be felt; yet the complexion of the whole affair proves that his murder of two chief captains, was rather a convenient excuse than the true ground of his death. As for Shimei, the tyrannical restriction on his innocent liberty, by which a pretense for his death was found, is far less respectable than simple violence; and almost makes David’s public forgiveness of him (2 *S.* XVI. 9—12) and solemn oath (*XIX.* 21—23,) appear like an ostentatious catching at popularity which concealed implacable resentment. It is remarkable that these three executions are all perpetrated by the hand of Benaiah himself, who was head of David’s body guard, and after Joab’s death, chief captain of the army. \* \*

“For the harem of Solomon—consisting of 700 wives and 300 concubines—no other apology can be made than the fact that in countries where polygamy is not disreputable, an unlimited indulgence as to the number of wives, is looked upon as the chief luxury of wealth, and the most appropriate appendage of royalty. Permission once being given, and the taste established, nothing but poverty can set a limit, since an establishment of one hundred or a thousand wives, is perhaps more harmonious than one of two or three. \* \*

“The proceeding of Solomon towards the religion of his wives has been mildly or approvingly regarded by various learned men, as being only what we have learned to name “Toleration.” But such a view of the case seems to imply a want of discrimination between those times and our own; and besides would require us to suppose the statements in the history to be exaggerated, as though they were highly improbable. The religions of antiquity being essentially ceremonial were of a most obtrusive kind. It is one thing to allow men in private to hold their conscientious sentiments, or, indeed, by argument or discussion to aim at propagating them, and quite another to sanction public idolatries which appeal to and allure the senses of the ignorant, and scandalize the minds of the better taught; to say nothing of the impurities and cruelties with which these idolatries were almost always connected. The spirituality and individuality of religion were not as yet so developed as to allow of our ascribing Solomon’s conduct to right and noble views of toleration. Besides he was under no necessity to marry these foreign wives at all. Unless prompted by mere voluptuousness (as in the case of the concubines), he must have taken them from mere political motives, although distinctly knowing that the step would draw after it his public establishment of heathen sin and superstition. This is widely different from allowing foreigners, who for trade resided in the country, to practice their own religious ceremonies at their own prompting and expense; and yet, even this, if permitted at all, would have been permitted only within walled and separated streets, by a king anxious to obey the law of Moses and Jehovah, in ever so liberal and unconfined a spirit. \* \*

“The picture of Solomon, here drawn, is far less favorable than could be wished; yet an endeavor has been made to keep close to the facts. Undoubtedly, the book of *Chronicles*—which (contrary to custom), in this reign adds little or nothing to that of the *Kings*—by omission gives a seriously altered view of this celebrated man: for not only are his numerous marriages, his idolatries, his oppressions, his vexatious enemies, and the grave rebuke of the prophet, Ahijah—left out of the narrative entirely—but his building of an especial palace for his Egyptian queen is ascribed to his pious objection to her dwelling in the house of David, because of the Ark having passed through it (2 *Ch. VIII. 11*). From a mind of so sensitive scrupulosity, no one could have expected the establishment of heathenish worship. This very circumstance will show how tender was the feeling of the Levitical body [which composed the *Chronicles*] towards him, and how little likely it is, that the book of *Kings* has, in any way, given a discolored and unfair view of his lamentable worldliness of spirit.”—*Kitto’s Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature—Article Solomon.*

*Sins Committed by Prophets.*

Jehovah promised to be with Aaron. *Ex. IV. 15.*

Aaron was appointed Jehovah's high priest forever. *Ex. XXVII. 21.*

Aaron was possessed of miraculous power. *Ex. IV. 28, 30*

Aaron rebelled against Moses. *Num. XII. 2.*

Aaron made the golden calf and worshipped it. *Ex. XXXII. 1-6.*

Elisha, a holy man of God, went to Bethel, "and as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him 'Go up thou bald-head: go up, thou bald-head!' And he turned back and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord. And there came forth two she-bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them." *2 K. II. 23, 24.*

The prophet Zedekiah slapped the face of the prophet Micah, in the presence of King Jehoshaphat. *2 Ch. XVIII. 23.*

Jeremiah damned his luck. *Jer. XX. 14-18.*

Jeremiah lied.—*Jer. XXXVIII. 27.*

Isaiah "astonished the natives" of Jerusalem, by walking about that city naked and barefoot for three years, with the sackcloth from off his loins, probably exhibiting "substantial sternworks" as Carlyle says of Abbot Samson.—*Is. XX. 2, 3.*

#### The Chosen People—Ch. VII.

§ 45. "How long will this people provoke me? And how long will it be, ere they believe me for all the signs which I have shown among them? (*Num. XIV. 11*). "It would be easy" says Gibbon, "but it would be unbecoming to justify the complaint of the Deity from the whole tenor of the Mosaic history."

All the miracles and rebellions recorded in the *Pentateuch*, as having occurred during the time of Moses, happened within the space of two years: for there is no record of the events of thirty-eight years. In the Chapter *XII.* of *Numbers* the Israelites were at Kadesh in the second year of the exodus, and in Chapter *XX* they are represented as being at the wilderness of Zin in the fortieth year.

#### Biblical Superstitions—Ch. VIII.

##### *A Material Hell.*

§ 48. "If men, in general, had ever seen a human being broiling in a real fire, writhing and groaning, men, in general, would fall on their knees to implore the quenching of hell-fire, or would disbelieve its existence.—*Leigh Hunt.*

The preaching of Hell, with amplification upon the joy which the saints in Heaven feel, in looking down upon the sinners in the flames, is going out of fashion. The church members are losing their faith in hell, and are beginning to hate the preachers who delight to roll it under their tongues as a sweet morsel. I had a quo-

tation from the *Christian Observer* advising the clergy to be cautious about using threats of damnation in their sermons, but unfortunately the quotation has been mislaid,

The whole theory and practice of "Divine Worship," is superstitious.

"If you do not burn any paper in honor of Fo, and if you do not deposit any offerings on his altar, he will be displeased you think, and send his judgments on your heads. What a miserable creature must your God Fo be then! Let us take the example of the magistrate of your district; should you never go to compliment him, and pay your court to him, if you are honest people, attentive to your duty, he will not the less be well disposed towards you; but if you transgress the law, commit violence, and encroach on the rights of others, he will always be dissatisfied with you, though you should find a thousand ways of flattering him."—*Chinese Philosopher, quoted in Huc's Journey through China. Chap. V.*

"If sighs and tears could purchase the Kingdom of Heaven, and a sad face expiate a wicked life, hardness of heart would, indeed, be weakness of understanding."—*Sydney Smith.*

"The Greek offers meat and wine to his God; the Negro spits his chewed victuals as an offering into the face of his idols: the Ostiak besmears his idols with blood and grease, and stuffs his nose full of snuff; and the Christians and Mohammedeans think to appease their God by personal petitions and prayers."

#### Mosaic Cosmogony.—Ch. IX.

##### *Date of Creation*

§ 53. "I conclude therefore, that the original *fiat* of the Almighty, which called into being the heaven and the earth, was anterior to the first day, at what distance of time it were idle to conjecture."—*Chalmers.*

"No means are to be found for ascertaining the real age of the world" (*Prichard. Phys. Hist. Man. Note on Biblical Chronology.*). He thus denies the truth of the Scriptural chronology, and the genealogy of Jesus.

##### *Formation of the Universe.*

§ 54. "Every event in the universe takes place according to fixed laws."—*Hitchcock.*

"If the organic world be governed by law, we cannot believe that it commenced without law."—*Sedgwick.*

Descartes "makes God contribute nothing more to the fabric of the world, than the turning round of a vortex or whirlpool of matter: from the fortuitous motion of which, according to certain general laws of nature, must proceed all this frame of things that now is, the exact organization and successive generation of animals,



without the guidance of any mind or wisdom.”—*Culworth* (1678).  
*Int. Sys. Ch. I.*

Prof. Nichol, who has published several works on the discoveries made with Lord Rosse's great telescope, adopts the theory of Laplace, not as certainly, but as probably, correct in its explanation of the manner in which the universe was formed.—See his *Architecture of Heavens, Solar System, etc.*

“The celebrated speculation of Laplace, now very generally received as probable by astronomers, concerning the origin of the earth and planets, participates essentially in the strictly inductive character of modern philosophical theory. \* \* \* The known laws of matter authorize us to suppose, that a body, which is constantly giving out so large an amount of heat as the sun is, must be progressively cooling, and by that process of cooling, it must contract: if therefore we endeavor from the present state of that luminary, to infer its state in a time long past, we must necessarily suppose that it extended as far as we can trace those effects which it would naturally leave behind on retiring: and such the planets are. These suppositions being made, it follows from known laws that successive zones of the solar atmosphere would be abandoned: that these would continue to revolve round the sun with the same velocity as when they formed part of his substance: and that they would cool down long before the sun himself, to any given temperature, and consequently to that, the greater part of the vaporous matter, of which the rings consisted, would become liquid or solid. The known law of gravitation would then cause them to agglomerate in masses, which would assume the shape our planets actually exhibit: would acquire, each round its own axis, a rotary motion; and would in that state revolve, as the planets actually do, about the sun, in the same direction with the sun's rotation, but with less velocity, and each of them in the same periodic time which the sun's rotation occupied when his atmosphere extended to that point: and this also, M. Comte has, by the necessary calculations, ascertained to be true, within certain small limits of error. There is thus in Laplace's theory, nothing hypothetical: it is an example of legitimate reasoning from a present effect to its past cause, according to the known laws of that cause: it assumes nothing more than that objects, which really exist, obey the laws which are known to be obeyed by all terrestrial objects resembling them.”—*J. S. Mill. Logic.*

#### *Origin of Life.*

‡ 55. “If there is a point in natural philosophy which may be regarded as finally settled, it is the imperishability of the chemical elements, and the everlasting duration of force.” *Draper.*

"The vital forces are only modifications of the ordinary forces of matter, acting under peculiar conditions."—*Humboldt*.

"The law of progress—unity evolving multiplicity of parts through successive individualizations, proceeding from the more fundamental onward—has been recognized among philosophers."—*J. D. Dana*.

"I have no sympathy with those who say, of this or that physiological problem, 'It is above our reason.' My faith in the power of reason is profound. Far from supposing that there are many things in the structure and functions of the body which we can never comprehend, I believe that there is nothing in it, we shall not at last explain."—*Draper*.

"In the organism of plants, the various compounds wanted by plants are fabricated. Animals destroy these compounds, and in so doing, maintain a high temperature, irrespective of atmospheric conditions, and give rise to the phenomena of motion and intellectuality."—*Draper*.

"The chief materials which a living being receives from the external world are, therefore, combustible matter, water, oxygen-gas; and out of the action of these upon one another, all the physical phenomena of its life arise."—*Draper*.

"The development of every organism, from a primordial cell to its final condition, however elevated that condition may be, is the inevitable consequence of the operation of a universal, invariable, and eternal law."—*Draper*.

Cartilage "in many animals forms the entire structure, and in the early state of the human embryo, it does the same."—*Carpenter*.

"All the forces which are operative in the material world are but different manifestations of the same force."—*Grove*.

"An animal, in this point of view, is an oxydizing machine, into the interior of which atmospheric air is constantly introduced. The active constituent, oxygen, satisfies its chemical affinities at the expense of those parts of the system which are wasting away; and as the act of breathing, that is, the introduction of this gas, takes place day and night, waking and sleeping, so, too, must the production of burned bodies—a part escaping by the lungs, a part by the skin, a part by the urine. To compensate the loss which ensues, nearly 1,000 pounds of combustible matter must be used in the course of a year."—*Draper*.

"It is a singular fact, which will yet lead to singular results, that Cuvier's arrangement of the four classes of vertebrate animals should exhibit the same order as that in which they are found in the strata of the earth. In the *fish* the average proportion of the brain to the spinal cord is only as 2 to 1. In the *reptile* the ratio is  $2\frac{1}{2}$

to 1. In the *bird* it is 3 to 1. In the *mammal* it is 4 to 1. And in man it is 23 to 1. No less remarkable is the foetal progress of the human brain. It first becomes a brain resembling that of a fish; then it grows into the form of that of a reptile; then into that of a bird; then into that of a mammiferous quadruped, and finally it assumes that of a man, thus comprising in its foetal progress an epitome of geological history, as if man were in himself a compendium of all animated nature, and of kin to every creature that lives."—*Agassiz*.

"Nothing can be more gratifying than to trace the close agreement of the general results, derived from the study of the structure of animals with the results derived from the investigation of their embryonic changes, or from their succession in geological times. Let anatomy be the foundation of a classification, and, in the main, the frame, thus divided, will agree with the arrangement introduced from embryological data. And, again, this series will express the chief features of the order of succession in which animals were gradually introduced upon our globe."—*Agassiz—Lake Superior*, p. 197.

"Nature has not formed man totally different from other animals, but rather added to his brain new organs. She has not in this case pulled down the fabric of sentient being and reconstructed it upon a totally different plan. All that she has done, has been to add to the original edifice Corinthian capitals and Doric columns; bestowing reason not to supersede, but to guide, direct, and perfect his animal nature. We may rest assured, therefore, that whatever principles, in the shape of instincts, are given to animals, for their preservation and protection, are also instincts in man; and that what in them is a propensity or a desire, is not in him anything else."—*Sydney Smith*.

"Grades of mind, like forms of matter, are mere stages of development."—*Vestiges of Creation*.

*Prof. Rogt on Development.*

"We have seen that in each of the two great divisions or kingdoms of organic nature, the same general objects are aimed at, and the same general plans are devised for their accomplishment; and also that in the execution of these plans, similar means and agencies are employed. In each division there prevails a remarkable uniformity in the composition and properties of their elementary textures, in the nature of their vital powers, in the arrangement of their organs, and in the laws of their production and development. The same principle of analogy may be traced, amidst endless modifications of detail, in all the subordinate groups into which each kingdom admits of being subdivided, both in respect to the organization and functions of the objects comprehended in each assemblage; whether

we examine the wonders of their mechanical fabric, or study the series of processes by which nutrition, sensation, voluntary motion, and reproduction are effected. \* \* In constructing each of the divisions so established, Nature appears to have kept in view a certain definite type, or ideal standard, to which amidst innumerable modifications, rendered necessary by the varying circumstances and different destinations of each species, she always shows a decided tendency to conform. It would almost seem as if, in laying the foundation of each organized fabric, she had commenced by taking an exact copy of the primitive model: and in building the superstructure, had allowed herself to depart from the original plan only for the purpose of accommodation to certain specific and ulterior objects, conformable with the destination of that particular race of created beings. Such, indeed, is the hypothetical principle which, under the title of *Unity of Composition*, has been adopted and zealously pursued in all its consequences, by many naturalists of the highest eminence on the continent. As the facts on which this hypothesis is supported, and the views which it unfolds are highly deserving of attention, I shall here briefly state them; but in so doing, I shall beg to premise the caution that these views should, for the present, be regarded as hypothetical and as by no means possessing the certainty of philosophical generalization.

“The hypothesis, in question, is countenanced in the first place by the supposed constancy with which, in all the animals belonging to the same natural group, we meet with the same constituent elements of structure, in each respective system of organs, notwithstanding the utmost diversity which may exist in the forms of the organs, and in the uses to which they are applied. This principle has been most strikingly exemplified in the osteology of vertebrated animals; but its truth is also inferred from the examination of the mechanical fabric of insects, *Crustacea* and *Arachnida*; and it appears to extend also to the structures subservient to other functions, and, particularly, those of the nervous system. Thus, Nature has provided for the locomotion of the serpent, not by the creation of new structures, foreign to the type of the vertebrata, but by employing the ribs in this new office; and, in giving wings to the lizard, she has extended these same bones to serve as supports to the extended parts. In arming the elephant with tusks, she has merely caused two of the teeth in the upper jaw to be developed into these formidable weapons; and, in providing it with an instrument of prehension, has only resorted to a greater elongation of the snout.

“The law of gradation, in conformity to which all the living, together with the extinct races of organic nature arrange themselves, more or less into certain regular series, is one of the consequences which have been deduced from the hypothesis we are considering. Every fresh copy taken of the original type, is supposed to receive some additional extension of its faculties and endowments, by the gradua-

ted development of elements which existed in a latent form in the primeval germ, and which are evolved in succession as Nature advances in her course. Thus, we find that each new form which arises, in following the ascending scale of creation, retains a strong affinity to that which had preceded it, and also tends to impress its own features on those which immediately succeed, and thus their specific differences result merely from the different extent and direction given to these organic developments: those of inferior races, proceeding to a certain point only, and there stopping, while in beings of a higher rank, they advance further, and lead to all the observed diversities of conformation and endowments.

“ It is remarked in further corroboration of these views that the animals which occupy the highest stations in each series possess, at the commencement of their existence, forms exhibiting a marked resemblance to those presented in the permanent condition of the lowest animals in the same series; and that, during the progress of their development they assume, in succession, the characters of each tribe, corresponding to their consecutive order in the ascending chain: so that the peculiarities which distinguish the higher animals, on its attaining its ultimate and permanent form, are those which it had received in its last stage of embryonic evolution. Another consequence of this hypothesis is that we may expect, occasionally, to meet in inferior animals, with rudimental organs, which from their imperfect development, may be of little or no use to the individual, but which become available to some superior species, in which they are sufficiently perfected. The following are the most remarkable facts in illustration of these propositions.

“ In the series of Articulated Animals, of which the *Annelida* (ring-animals) constitute the lowest, and winged insects the highest terms, we find that the larvæ of the latter are often, scarcely distinguishable, either in outward form or internal organization from *Vermes* (worms) of the lowest orders; both being equally destitute of, or but imperfectly provided with external instruments of locomotion; distinct vascular circulation, and multiple organs of digestion; and the central filaments of the nervous system in both being studded with numerous pairs of equidistant ganglia. In the worm all these features remain as permanent characters of the order; in the insect they are subsequently modified and altered during its progressive metamorphoses. The embryo of a crab resembles in appearance the permanent forms of the *Myriapoda* and the lower animals of its own class, but acquires in the progress of its growth new parts; while those, already evolved become more and more concentrated; passing in their progress, through all the forms of transition which characterize the intermediate tribes of the *Crustacea*, till the animal attains its last stage, and then exhibits the most developed condition of that particular type.

“ However different the conformations of the Fish, the Reptile,

the Bird, and the warm-blooded Quadruped, may be at the period of their maturity, they are not distinguishable from one another in their embryonic state; and their early development proceeds for some time in the same manner. They all possess at first the characters of aquatic animals; and the frog even retains this form for a considerable period after it has left the egg. The young tadpole is in truth a fish, whether we regard the form and action of its instruments of progressive motion, the arrangement of its organs of circulation and respiration, or the conditions of the central organs of its nervous system. We have seen by what gradual and curious transitions all these aquatic characters are changed for those of a terrestrial quadruped, furnished with limbs for moving on the ground, and with lungs for breathing atmospheric air; and how the plan of circulation is altered from branchial to pulmonary, in proportion as the gills wither and the lungs are developed. If while this change is going on, and while both sets of organs are together executing the function of aeration, all further development were prevented, we should have an amphibious animal, fitted for maintaining life both in air and in water. It is curious that this precise condition is the permanent state of the siren and the proteus; animals which thus exemplify one of the forms of transition in the metamorphosis of the frog.

In the rudimental form of the feet of serpent, which are so imperfectly developed as to be concealed underneath the skin, and to be useless as organs of progressive motion, we have an example of the first stage of that process, which, when carried further in the higher animals, gives rise to the limbs of quadrupeds, and which it would almost seem as if Nature had instituted with a prospective view to these more improved constructions. Another and a still more remarkable instance of the same kind, occurs in the rudimental teeth of the young whale, which are concealed within the lower jaw, and which are afterwards removed to give place to the curious filtering apparatus, which occupies the roof of the mouth, and which Nature has substituted for that of teeth; as if new objects, superseding those at first pursued, had arisen in the progress of development.

“Birds, though destined to a very different sphere of action from either fishes or reptiles, are yet observed to pass in the embryonic stage of their existence, through forms of transition which successively resemble these inferior classes. The brain presents in its earliest formation, a series of tubercles, placed longitudinally, like those of fishes, and only assuming its proper character at a later period. The respiratory organs are at first branchial, placed like those of the fish, in the neck, where there are also found branchial apertures similar to those of the lamprey and the shark; and the heart and great vessels are constructed like those of the tadpole with reference to a branchial circulation: In their conversion

to the purposes of aerial respiration, they undergo a series of changes precisely analogous to those of the tadpole.

“Mammalia, during the early periods of their development, are subjected to all the transformations which have been now described; commencing with an organization corresponding to those of the aquatic tribes exhibiting not only branchiæ, supported on branchial arches, but also branchial apertures in the neck; and thence passing quickly to the conditions of structure adapted to a terrestrial existence. The development of various parts of the system, more especially of the brain, the ear, the mouth, and the extremities is carried still farther than in birds. Nor is the human embryo exempt from the same metamorphoses; possessing at one period, branchiæ and branchial apertures similar to those of the cartilaginous fishes, a heart with a single set of cavities, and a brain consisting of a longitudinal series of tubercles; next losing its branchiæ and acquiring lungs, while the circulation is yet single, and thus imitating the condition of the reptile; then acquiring a double circulation, but an incomplete diaphragm, like birds; afterwards appearing like a quadruped, with a caudal prolongation of the sacrum, and an intermaxillary bone; and lastly changing its structure to one adapted to the erect position accompanied by a great expansion of the cerebral hemispheres, which extend backwards so as completely to cover the cerebellum. Thus does the whole fabric arrive by a gradual process of mutation, at an extent of elaboration and refinement, which has been justly regarded as constituting a climax of organic development unattainable by any other race of terrestrial beings.” *Dr. Roge's Animal and Vegetable Physiology. Bridgewater Treatise*

#### *Antiquity of the Human Race.*

§ 50. Dr. Arnold, in private conversation with F. W. Newman, says the latter “treated all these questions [about the clashing of science with the Scriptural accounts of creation, the flood, etc.] as matters of indifference to religion; and did not hesitate to say that the account of Noah’s deluge was evidently mythical, and the history of Joseph a beautiful poem.”

It is now universally conceded among the learned that the human race has existed on the earth in great numbers for more than five thousand years—much longer than the Biblical chronology will admit us to believe.

There is in the Old Testament no connected chronology prior to Solomon.” *Bunsen—Egypt’s Place in Universal History.* Lepsius (*Chronologie der Ägypter*) says the same. Bunsen carries Egyptian history up to 3,300 B. C. : Lepsius to 3,893 B. C.

“The Egyptian Empire first presents itself to view about 4,000 years before Christ, as that of a mighty nation, in full tide of civili-

zation, and surrounded by other realms and races already emerging from the barbarous stage."—*Types of Mankind*, p. 57.

"The Egyptian monuments and records carry us to the beginning of the third millenium [2,000 years] before the birth of Christ; and the earliest glimpse we gain of the condition of mankind in this country, exhibits them as already far advanced in civilization, and bearing no marks of so recent an origin from a single family as even the Septuagint Chronology supposes." \* \* \* \* \*

"The consequence of the method which has been commonly adopted of making the Jewish Chronology the bed of Procrustes, to which every other must conform its length, has been that credence has been refused to histories, such as that of Egypt, resting upon unquestionable documents; and we have voluntarily deprived ourselves of at least a thousand years, which have been redeemed for us from the darkness of ante-historic times." \* \* \*

"Without going beyond the history itself, it must appear incredible that a little more than four hundred years after the world was dispeopled by the flood, Abraham should have found a Pharaoh reigning over the monarchy of Egypt, and that the East, as far as its condition is disclosed to us, should present no trace of recent desolation, but is already occupied and divided into communities."—*Rev. John Kenrick—Ancient Egypt*.

"The negro, with all his peculiarities of form, color, and hair, appears just the same in the paintings [on the Egyptian monuments] of the age of Thothmes III, fifteen centuries before the Christian era, as he is now seen in the interior of Africa."—*Kenrick—Primeval History*.

Bunsen says the Egyptians practised writing 3,000 B. C.

"No historian who deals honestly and conscientiously with Egyptian Chronology, can evade these questions. We have no hesitation in asserting at once, without entering into any further investigation, that there exist Egyptian monuments, the date of which can be accurately fixed of a higher antiquity than those of any other nation known in history, viz., above 5,000 years [3,150 B. C.]. This fact must be explained; to deny it would be a proof of little skill and still less candor, on the part of any critic who has once undertaken to prosecute the inquiry."—*Bunsen*.

"If we examine, we shall find in Egypt works executed ten thousand years ago (I speak with proper caution and mean all that I say), which are neither better nor worse than those of this age."—*Plato*.

Manetho, a priest at Heliopolis, under the Egyptian hierarchy, in the year 304, B. C., wrote a history of Egypt, in which he gave a list of twenty royal dynasties, with the name of each monarch, and the duration of his reign, reaching back more than 5,000 years before



Jesus. The book of Manetho is lost, but his list of kings is preserved to us in quotations made by other authors. His history, beyond 1,500 B. C., was long supposed to be fabulous, simply because it clashed with the Mosaic Chronology: but the study of the monuments of Egypt, and the translation of the hieroglyphics, have confirmed his report of the names of the monarchs and the duration of their respective reigns up to 2,800 B. C., and no error has yet been shown beyond that time.

Lepsius, in his *Chronologie der Ägypter*, mentions an Egyptian papyrus, entitled *The Book of the Dead* (now in the Museum of Turin), which, in his opinion, was written 1,500 B. C. It describes the fate of a human soul after death, its trial before Osiris, etc.

The astronomical period known to the Egyptians as the Sothic Cycle furnishes a strong presumption that the Egyptian nation existed at least 3,000 years before the time of Jesus. The Egyptian year was composed of 365 days precisely, and, therefore, their New Year's day fell back one day every four years, and in 1,460 years had made its circuit through every day in the year. Sothis was the Egyptian name for the Dog-Star; and the Sothic period extended from the time when the heliacal rising of that star corresponded with the first day of the month Sothis, and the first day of the year, until there was another such a correspondence—1,460 years. This Sothic period, or Great Year was known in the reign of Ramses II. in the fourteenth century before Jesus, according to Lepsius. The discovery of this Great Year could scarcely have been made, before the national astronomers had once observed and recorded its completion, which would carry us back 2,700 B. C.

“It is evident to me, as it must be to all who have thoroughly examined Egypt, or have an accurate knowledge of the Egyptian monuments existing in Europe, that the arts commenced in Greece by a servile imitation of the arts of Egypt, much more advanced than is vulgarly believed, at the period at which the first Egyptian colonies came in contact with the savage inhabitants of Attica or the Peloponnesus. Without Egypt, Greece would probably never have become the classical land of the fine arts. Such is my entire belief on this great problem. I write these lines almost in the presence of bas-reliefs, which the Egyptians executed with the most elegant delicacy of workmanship 1,700 years before the Christian era.”—*Champollion jeune.*

The North China *Herald*, published at Shanghai, in its issue of Oct. 29, 1853, contained an able article on Chinese Chronology, by Dr. Macgowan, a learned man. He says in substance that the literature of China reaches back to the reign of Yaou, who lived 4,000 years ago, or 2,200 years before Jesus. The strongest evidences of the approximate correctness of their Chinese Chronology

are drawn from the Chinese astronomy. The group or Star Maou, one of the 28 constellations known to us under the name of Pleiades, is said in the first chapter of the Shoo-King to have been a criterion for the time of the winter Solstice. This means that the Star would appear in the South at sunset at that time of the year. The Pleiades are now distant a little more than a sign from the summer Solstice, or nearly 150 degrees from the winter Solstice. In order to account for the removal of 90 degrees from this latter point, an interval of 4,000 years must be allowed, for the equinoctial points do not move more than a degree in 71 years.

While the pole of the ecliptic remains unmoved, the north pole, by the slow displacement of the earth's position, revolves round it on a circle whose radius is  $23\frac{1}{2}$  degrees. It happens that on this circle, about 60 degrees in advance of the present pole star, are two stars named respectively T'een-yih, and T'ac-yih, the former being the more distant. These names mean the Heavenly One, and the Great One; and the names, being very ancient, suggests the idea that these stars were the successive pole stars of early observers.

The Chinese calendar Hia-Sia-onching, said by the Chinese writers to be a relic of the time of Yu (B. C. 2,200), says, that among the stars of the Fourth Month (one day of which corresponded to our 21st May), "Maou (Pleiades) is seen at the beginning of evening twilight; Nau-man (Southern door) is on the Meridian." This last star is at the foot of the Centaur and is a very bright one, as those who have seen it in the southern latitudes are aware. It had, through the precession of the equinoxes, long retreated beneath the horizon of Chinese astronomers, and was restored to their maps by the Jesuits.

A census was taken of the taxable inhabitants of China 2,400, B. C., and the number of persons returned was 13,553,923.—*Edward Biot. Journal Asiatique*, 1836.

"Confucius, though his name has in the West become identified with Chinese learning, was by no means its originator. Authentic, though not full records, embodying ethical and political doctrines, extend back to B. C. 2,357, or to about eighteen hundred years before Confucius; while the Chinese philosophy originated with Fuhhe, who lived, according to the tradition, some twenty-three generations before the exact chronological era: which latter took place 2,637 B. C., with the institution of the national cycle of sixty years. Allowing thirty years to a generation, this would place Fuhhe about 3,327 B. C. It was he who substituted writing for the knotted strings that had previously formed the only means of record, and it was he who first established marriages and separate families."—*The Chinese and their Rebellions, by T. J. Meadows. Ch. XVIII.*

Dr. Usher, one of the authors of the *Types of Mankind*, asserts that the plain on which the city of New Orleans is situated, is at least one hundred and fifty thousand years old. In digging down into the earth, there has been found to be a considerable depth of alluvial deposits; and the remains of ten distinct cypress forests have been discovered one above the other. Each of these forests must have required many hundreds of years to grow, and then to sink to become the foundation for another growth. In the remains of the fourth forest from the top, and seven feet below the level of the Gulf of Mexico, were found a human skull and some burned wood, which, according to Usher's estimate, were deposited there 40,000 years ago.

Mr. Bentley, whom J. C. Prichard considers to be the highest authority upon the Hindoo astronomy, says that among the ancient treatises on that science is a "compilation of Parasara, who by the position of the colures recorded by him, is ascertained to have lived about 1,200 years before the Christian era." "By a careful examination of the older systems of chronology, and a comparison of them with the poetical history contained in the Puranas, it has been proved by Mr. Bentley, that the earliest period from which the history of the Hindoos, as deduced entirely from their own literature, may be considered to commence, is about twenty-two centuries before the Christian era."—*Prichard, Natural History of Mankind, Book III, Ch. X.*

#### Contradictions.—Ch. XI.

§ 60. Probably the most extensive contradiction or class of contradictions in the Bible is to be found by a comparison of the history of Jesus as recorded by the three synoptists (as Mathew, Mark and Luke are called) and in *John*. I did not obtain a clear conception of these discrepancies, until too late for insertion into the text: but I shall endeavor to remedy the oversight partially by presenting here abstracts of all the movements of Jesus as recorded by Mark and John. It will be seen that both commence with the baptism and end with the crucifixion of Jesus, but disagree as to nearly all intermediate movements. Besides, neither writes an intelligible story; both omit all dates and details. Eye-witnesses, or persons who had obtained their information from eye-witnesses, must have agreed much better, and written much clearer narratives. Compare the two abstracts:—

#### MARK.

Jesus was baptised by John in the Jordan (I. 9): the Spirit drove him into the wilderness where he was tempted for forty days (12, 13): After John was

#### JOHN.

Jesus was baptised by John at Bethabara (I. 28): three days afterwards, he attended a marriage at Cana in Galilee (II. 1): he went to Capernaum (12): he

put into prison, Jesus came into Galilee preaching the Gospel (I. 14): he walked by the sea of Galilee (16): he entered Capernaum (21): he preached in the "synagogues throughout all Galilee" (39): he went into desert places (45): "again he entered Capernaum after some days" (II. 1): he went forth again by the seaside (13): he went through the cornfields on the Sabbath day (23): he entered into the synagogue (III. 1): he withdrew to the sea of Galilee (7): he crossed the sea in a ship to the country of the Gadarenes (V. 1): he went to the house of Jairus, a ruler in the synagogue (38): he preached in the synagogue on the Sabbath (VI. 2): he went into a desert place privately (32): he went into a mountain to pray (46): he went into the land of Gennesaret (53): he passed through cities, villages and the country (56): he went into the border of Tyre and Sidon (VII. 24): he returned to the sea of Galilee through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis (31): he went in a ship to Dalmanutha (VIII. 10): he recrossed the sea to the other side (13): he went to Bethsaida (22): he went "into the the towns of Cesarea Philippi" (27): after six days he went up into a mountain and was transfigured (IX. 2): he came down (9): he passed through Galilee (30): he came to Capernaum (33): he came into the coasts of Judea by the farther side of Jordan (X. 1): he came to Jericho (16): he came to Bethphage (XI. 1):

went to Jerusalem (13): he drove money-changers out of the Temple (15): he came into the land of Judea before John was cast into prison (22, 24): he went to Galilee by way of Sychar in Samaria (IV. 3, 5): he entered Cana (46): he went up to Jerusalem (V. 1): he went over the sea of Galilee (VI. 1): he went into a mountain (3): he departed into a mountain (15): he crossed the sea to the vicinity of Capernaum (17, 21): he walked in Galilee (VII. 1): he abode still in Galilee (9): during the Feast of the Tabernacles he went up to Jerusalem and taught in the Temple (VII. 14): he went into the Mount of Olives (VIII. 1): "and early in the morning he came again into the Temple" (2): he "hid himself and went out of the Temple" (59): he "passed by" (IX. 1): he was at Jerusalem in the winter, at the Feast of Dedication (X. 22): he walked in the Temple (23): he went to Bethbara and "there he abode" (40): he came to Bethany (XI. 1, 17, 18): he went to the cave where Lazarus was buried (38): he "went thence into a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim" (54): then Jesus, six days before the Passover came to Bethany (XII. 1): he ate supper at the house of Martha (2): he rode on an ass into Jerusalem (12, 14): he ate supper (XIII. 2): "he raiseth from supper and *laid aside his garments*: and took a towel and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples'

he entered Jerusalem (11) : he went out to Bethany (11) : he returned to Jerusalem (15) : he went back to Bethany and returned again to Jerusalem (20, 27) : he went to the Mount of Olives (XIII. 3) : he was in Bethany at the house of Simon, the leper (XIV. 3) : he ate the passover at a house in Jerusalem (17) : he went into the Mount of Olives (26) : where he was arrested, 46.

feet and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded" (4, 5) : he went forth to a garden beyond the brook Cedron (XVIII. 1.) : where he was arrested (12).

### *The Ten Commandments.*

The most important part of the Mosaic Law is the "Ten Commandments." They were written by Jehovah's own "finger" on tables of stone. These tables are first mentioned in *Exodus XXXI. 18*. When Moses descended with them from the Mount, he found the Jews engaged in the worship of the Golden Calf, and his indignation was so great that he smashed Jehovah's tables (*Ex. XXXII. 19*). The Lord pardoned this burst of passion, ordered the prophet to hew two new tables, and when Moses went up the Mount again, Jehovah "took in his hand the two tables of stone" (*Ex. XXXIII. 4*) and wrote upon them "the words that were in the first tables" (*Ex. XXXIII. 2*), or else Moses wrote; for the two statements are made (*Ex. XXXIII. 28*). This writing is expressly called "The Ten Commandments," but on examination we find that these commandments are entirely different from "The Ten Commandments" which are given in *Deuteronomy (V.)*, and which are received by Christians. Compare the two decalogues :

I. "Thou shalt worship no other god than Jehovah." *Ex. XXXIV. 14*.

II. "Thou shalt make thee no molten gods." *v. 17*.

III. "The feast of unleavened bread shalt thou keep. \* \* All that openeth the womb is mine. All the first-born of thy sons shalt thou redeem. And none shall appear before me empty." *v. 18-20*.

IV. "Six days shalt thou work out on the seventh day thou shalt rest." *v. 21*.

V. "Thou shalt observe the Feast of the Weeks, of the First-

I. "Thou shalt have none other gods before me." *Deut. V. 7*.

II. "Thou shalt not make thee any graven image." *v. 8*.

III. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." *v. 11*.

IV. "Keep the Sabbath-day to sanctify it." *v. 12*.

V. "Honor thy father and thy moth . . ." *v. 16*.

fruits of the wine-harvest, and the Feast of In-gathering at the years' end." v. 22.

VI. "Thrice in the year shall all your men-children appear before the Lord God, the God of Israel." v. 23.

VII. "Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven." v. 25.

VIII. "Neither shall the Sacrifice of the Feast of the Passover be left till the morning." v. 25.

IX. "The first of the first-fruits of thy land shalt thou bring unto the house of the Lord thy God." v. 26.

X. "Thou shalt not see the a kid in his mother's milk." v. 26.

The author of Deuteronomy expressly calls his decalogue the "Ten Commandments," and "he [Jehovah] wrote them upon two tables of stone" (*Deut. I. 13*). These ten commandments of *Deuteronomy* are copied from *Exodus XX.*; but there they are mentioned as part of the law, given orally to Moses, and not distinguished in importance from the law generally. The Scribes and Pharisees of Protestantism, as slavish, dishonest, and mean as ever their Jewish prototypes were, are very careful to make no allusion to the genuine decalogue.

"The solution of the objections [brought by freethinkers] to its [the Old Testament's] supposed character, which have been offered by wise and good men, are often such that is difficult to believe them to have been satisfactory to the proposer. They proceed on false principles, or assume facts without foundation. They are often superficial, evasive, or incoherent. They appear to result from a feeling of the necessity of saying something. They are often such as must be regarded by one as admissible only on the ground that there must be some mode of explaining away all such objections, and therefore that there is, in every case, a presumption in favor of a particular explanation when no other can be found so plausible." *Norton.*

#### Bad Morality—Ch. XIII.

§ 71. It is well known that Luther, Melancthon and Bucer declared that polygamy was not forbidden in the Bible. They consented to the marriage of the Landgrave of Hesse to a second wife, while his first wife was alive.

Missionaries of the English Church now recognise the legality of

VI. "Thou shalt not kill." v. 17.

VII. "Neither shalt thou commit adultery." v. 18.

VIII. "Neither shalt thou steal." v. 19.

IX. "Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbor." v. 20.

X. "Neither shalt thou desire \* \* anything that is thy neighbor's." v. 21.

polygamy among converts made by them to Christianity in India and South Africa.

§ 75. “The primitive Christians knew not how to reconcile the defense of their persons and property with the patient doctrine which enjoined an unlimited forgiveness of past injuries and commanded them to invite the repetition of fresh insults.” *Gibbon*.

“The passive and unresisting obedience, which bows under the yoke of authority, or even of oppression, must appear, in the eyes of an absolute monarch, as the most conspicuous and useful of the evangelic virtues. The primitive Christians derived the institution of civil government, not from the consent of the people but from the decrees of Heaven. The reigning potentate, though he had usurped the position by treason and murder, immediately assumed the sacred character of vice-gerent of the Deity. To the Deity alone he was accountable for the abuse of his power; and his subjects were indissolubly bound by their oath of fidelity, to a tyrant who had violated every law of nature and society. The humble Christians were sent into the world as sheep among wolves; and since they were not permitted to employ force, in the defense of their religion, they should be still more criminal if they attempted to shed the blood of their fellow-creatures in disputing the vain privileges or the sordid possessions of this transitory life. Faithful to the doctrine of the apostle, who in the reign of Nero had preached the duty of unconditional submission as of divine command, the Christians of the three first centuries preserved their conscience pure and innocent of the guilt of secret conspiracy or open rebellion. While they experienced the vigor of persecution, they were never provoked either to meet their tyrants in the field, or indignantly to withdraw themselves into some remote and sequestered corner of the globe. The Protestants of France, of Germany, and of Britain who asserted with such intrepid courage their civil and religious freedom, have been insulted by the invidious comparison between the conduct of the primitive and the reformed Christians. Perhaps, instead of censure some applause may be due to the superior sense and spirit of our ancestors, who had convinced themselves that religion cannot abolish the inalienable rights of human nature.” *Gibbon*.

§ 77. In my text, I have omitted one passage in which Jesus recommends celibacy, and I shall insert it here.—“The children of *this* world marry and are given in marriage; but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain *that* world and the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage.”—*Luke, XX. 34, 35.*

“Ambitious to exalt the perfection of the Gospel above the wisdom of philosophy, Jesus carried the duties of self-mortification, of purity, and of patience to a height which it is scarcely possible to attain, and much less to preserve in our present state of weakness

and corruption. A doctrine so extraordinary and so sublime must inevitably command the veneration of the people; but it was ill-calculated to obtain the suffrages of those worldly philosophers, who in the conduct of this transitory life, consult only the feelings of nature and the interests of society."—*Changed from Gibbon.*

Paul considered widows to be dangerous animals—so dangerous, that he wrote as follows, for the guidance of all Christian churches, and for all time:—

“ Let not a widow be taken into the number [of the church members] under three score years old, [and not then, unless] having been the wife of one man, well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children; if she have lodged strangers; if she have washed the saints’ feet; if she have relieved the afflicted; if she have diligently followed every good work. But the younger widows refuse; for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry, having damnation because they have cast off their first faith [the obligation of remaining unmarried after the death of the first husband].”—1. *Tim. V.* 9–12.

“ Let the women learn silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.” 1. *Tim. II.* 11, 12.

#### **Biblical Doctrines not Original.—Ch. XIV.**

##### *Christianity a Revamp of Boodhism.*

§ 81. It is only of late years that the learned men of Europe have become familiar with the doctrines and sacred books of the Boodhists. All the late writers upon Boodhism seem to recognize its remarkable resemblance to Christianity, but I have not encountered any attempt to show that the latter was derived from the earlier system. It is probable, that before many years, further researches will furnish still more evidence to support the correctness of my position that Christianity is a mere revamp of Boodhism.

The students of Oriental Literature, not many years since, differed in opinion on the question whether Boodhism, or Brahminism was the more ancient form of faith, but they are now agreed that the former was introduced as a reform of the latter. At what time this reform was first brought forward is unknown, but it is well settled that Sakya-Muni, the great Boodhist teacher and Redeemer died 543 B. C. The Boodhists recognise many previous Boodhas, and expect others in the future.

“ If we addressed a Mongol or a Thibetan this question, ‘ Who is Boodha,’ he replied instantly, ‘ The Savior of men.’ The marvellous birth of Boodha, his life and his instructions contain a great number of moral truths and dogmas professed in Christianity, and which we need not be surprised to find also among other nations, since these truths are traditional and have always belonged to the



heritage of humanity. There must be among a Pagan people more or less of Christian truth, in proportion as they have been more or less faithful in preserving the deposit of primitive traditions. From the concordant testimony of Indian, Chinese, Thibetan, Mongol and Cingalese books, we may place the birth of Boodha about the year 960 before Christ"—*Huc's Journey through the Chinese Empire. Chap. V.*

"Boodhism is a rationalistic system [as compared with Brahminism]: and the spirit which directs it, and the consequences which follow it, permit us to consider it a species of protestantism as related to the Brahminic creed which it was to reform. \* \* Boodhism insists on the necessity of taking the intellectual faculties for guides in philosophic researches, and thus gives more weight to human individuality. Thence arose a tendency to elevate men in dignity, to protest in the name of liberty and reason against the oppressive rule of the castes and against the degrading worship of the Brahmins."—*Tiberghien, Essai historique sur la generation des Connaissances Humaines.*

"If we consider that Boodhism proclaimed the equality of all men and women in the sight of God, that it denounced the impious pretensions of the most mischievous priesthood the world ever saw, and that it inculcated a pure system of practical morality, can we refuse to allow that the innovation was as advantageous as it was extensively spread and adopted?"—*B. H. Hodgson. Illustrations of the Literature and Religion of the Boodhists. Preface.*

"Sakya himself, especially inculcated the maintenance of these ancient Chaityas [Brahminic rules], and the continuance of the accustomed offerings and worship. But this was doubtless only a political accommodation of his own doctrines to the existing belief of the people, adopted for the purpose of ensuring a more ready assent to his own views. Like as Mohammed recognized the prophetic missions of Moses and Elias, and the divinity of our Savior Christ, so did Sakya Muni acknowledge the holy Munis Kakut-sanda, Kanaka, and Kasyapa, as his immediate predecessors. They were, probably, heroes or saints, who had obtained the respect of their fellow-countrymen during life, and their reverence after death. *Stupas* had been erected over their relics in the neighborhood of Kapila and of Benares, and their worship was too firmly established, to be attacked with any chance of success. Sakya therefore artfully engrafted them in his own system as the *Boodhas of a former age*. In like manner, the farmer who cannot check the mountain stream, turns its course into numerous rivulets for the irrigation of his lands."—*Alexander Cunningham. Pilsa Topes. Introduction.*

"Boodhism is monastic asceticism in morals, philosophic skepticism in religion."—*Hodgson.*

“Boodha [Sakya] honored humanity by his virtues.”—*St. Hilaire. Du Bouddhisme.*

“Boodhism seeks the highest triumph of humanity in the exercise of devotion, self-contemplation and self-denial.”—*Bjornstjerna. Theogony of the Hindoos.*

“If its morality [of Boodhism] be examined, its exhortations to guard the will, to curb the thought, to exercise kindness to others, to abstain from wrong to all, propound to its followers a very high standard of practice.”—*Upham. History and Doctrines of Boodhism.*

“Boodhism has been called ‘The Christianity of the East’, which title, though exaggerated, expresses well enough the important services which it has rendered to humanity.”—*Abel Remusat.*

“The characteristic of the Boodhist religion, which in one respect may be considered (I deprecate misconstruction) the Christianity of the remote East, seems an union of political with religious reformation—its end to substitute purer morality for the wild and multifarious idolatry into which Brahminism had degenerated, and to break down the distinction of castes.”—*Milman—Hist. of Chris. Note to Ch. II., Book II.*

“It is probable that every incident in the life of Gotama [Sakyamuni] is founded in fact, which if separated from surrounding fable, would afford a history that would scarce have an equal in the importance of the lessons it would teach.”—*Hardy’s Manual of Boodhism.*

“The doctrines of Boodhism are not alone in the beauty of many of their sentiments, and the excellence of much of their morality. ‘It is not permitted to you to render evil for evil, was one of the sentiments of Socrates. One of the triads of Druidism was to this effect: ‘The three primary principles of religion are Obedience to the laws of God, Concern for the welfare of mankind, Suffering with fortitude all the accidents of life.’ Confucius taught that men should ‘treat others according to the treatment which they themselves would desire at their hands.’ *Similar extracts might be multiplied to an indefinite extent.*”—*Rev. Henry Spence Hardy—Eastern Monachism.*

To Sakya-Muni “the Indians were indebted for a code of pure and practical morality, which inculcated charity and chastity, performance of good works, and abstinence from evil, and general kindness to all living things.”—*Cunningham.*

“Its [the Boodhists] doctrines and practical piety bear a strong resemblance to those of the Holy Scriptures. There is scarcely a precept or principle in the Badagat which is not found in the Bible. Did but the people act up to its principles of peace and love,

oppression and injury would be known no more within their border. Its deeds of merit are in all cases either really beneficial to mankind or harmless. It has no mythology of obscene and ferocious deities ; no sanguinary or impure observances ; no self-inflicting tortures ; no tyrannizing priesthood ; no confounding of right or wrong by making certain iniquities laudable in worship. In its moral code, its description of the purity and peace of the first ages, of the shortening of man's life because of his sins, etc., it seems to have followed genuine traditions. In almost every respect, it seems to be the best religion which man has ever invented."—*Rev. H. Malcom, Travels in South Eastern Asia.*

"Sakya-Muni undertakes and counsels a constant struggle against the body and its passions ; in his eyes the body is the only enemy of man ; and though he does not say so in those words, his asceticism has no object save to subdue the body, and the burning passions which consume it. He prescribes a strict celibacy to the monks engaged in orders, and recommends to all his believers a not less strict chastity and morality."—*St. Hilaire.*

St. Hilaire says that the whole law of Boodhism consists in renunciation [and so teach Goethe and Carlyle] ; that Sakya requires humility, disregard of worldly wealth, patience and resignation in adversity, love to enemies, religious tolerance [if so, he was in advance of Jesus], horror at falsehood, avoidance of frivolous conversation, consideration and esteem for women, sanctity of the marriage relation, non-resistance to evil, confession of sins, etc. Sakya could receive no more acceptable present than a person fit for conversion.

St. Hilaire gives the following from a Boodhist Gospel :

Boodha teaches him [Pournā] in a few words that the whole law consists in renunciation ; and Pournā, thenceforth deal for the world desires to go and live amidst a neighboring tribe, which he should convert to the religion of Boodha, but whose savage customs might have terrified a less resolute courage. Bhagavat seeks to turn him from this perilous design. He says :

"The men of Cronaparanta, where you are about to go, are passionate, cruel, furious and insolent. When these men, O Pournā, address you to your face with malicious, gross and insulting words—when they are angry at you and about you, what will you think ?

"If the men of Cronaparanta, replied Pournā, address me to my face, with malicious, gross and insulting words—if they get angry at me and abuse me, I will think to myself, 'These Cronaparantakas are certainly good men—these are mild men since they do not strike me either with their hands or with stones.'

"But if the men of Cronaparanta strike you with their hands and with stones, what will you think ?

"I will think that they are good and mild since they do not beat me with sticks, or cut me with swords.

“But if they beat you with sticks, and cut you with swords what will you think?”

“I will think that they are good and mild, since they do not deprive me completely of life.

“But if they take your life, what will you think?”

“I will think that the men of Cronaparanta are good and kind to deliver me with so little pain from this body full of vileness.”

Other extracts might be given from the sacred scriptures of the Boodhist similar in spirit to this : but they cannot be inserted here for want of space.

“The principal characteristics of Boodhism, are the doctrines of mildness, equality, and the universal brotherhood of man, which appear favorably in contrast with the exclusive and arrogant spirit of Brahminism. Boodha and his followers sought to teach all mankind the religious truths which were before considered the sole property of the privileged classes. The Brahmin morality was selfish in its nature : their religion was made for themselves alone. They subjected themselves to severe penance, but it was for the purpose of being admitted to the presence of Brahma in another life. The Asiatic Boodhist was more disinterested. He sought not to elevate himself alone, but he was virtuous and tried to make himself perfect, that he might transfer the merits of his perfection to other men. By the establishment of orders of religious mendicants who increased prodigiously in number in a very short time, Boodha, attracted and furnished consolation to the poor and unfortunate. The Brahmins found fault with him for receiving as disciples, the outcasts of Hindoo society. He replied ‘My law is a law of mercy for all.’ When the Brahmins were scandalized by seeing him receive a Tchandala woman as a true convert and sister in the faith, he said, ‘Between a Brahmin and a man of low caste, there is not the same difference, which there is between light and darkness. The Brahmin was not made out of the ether. He was born of a woman like a Tchandala. Why then should one be noble and the other ignoble? After the Brahmin dies, he is abandoned as an unclean, corrupt thing, just like the corpses of persons of other castes. Why then make a distinction between them?’—*Huc. Voyage dans la Chine.*

Sakya-Muni was born of the virgin wife of a Brahmin king of Magadha. At the moment of his conception, a god left heaven to enter the womb of his mother. Immediately after his birth, he was recognized as a divine person, and it was predicted that he would surpass all previous divine incarnations in holiness. Every one adored him, saluting him as the god of gods. When twenty years of age, he went into a desert and lived there in the austere retirement, poverty, simplicity, and virtue, spending his whole time in religious contemplation. Here he was tempted in various ways,

but his self-denial resisted all the seductive approaches of sin. When questioned as to the source of his virtue, he replied, "I am holy by my own merit. I have made myself my own minister. What have I to do with other teachers? Religion is my essence." At the end of six years, he went to Benares, and taught his doctrines to innumerable followers. He experienced a lively opposition from the priests attached to the ancient creeds, but he triumphed over all his adversaries, after holding a discussion with them; and their chief prostrated himself before him, and acknowledged himself vanquished. Sakya revised the code of moral and social law. He reduced the main principles of morality to four, viz. : mercy, aversion to cruelty, unbounded sympathy for all animated beings, and the strictest adherence to the law. He also gave a decalogue of commandments, viz. ; not to kill, not to steal, to be chaste, not to testify falsely, not to lie, not to swear, to avoid all impure words, to be disinterested, not to take revenge, and not to be superstitious. This code of morals was firmly established in the hearts of a number of his followers, when he left earth, to be reabsorbed in the universal soul, which is himself. At the time of his death, he was eighty-four years of age.

The authorities for this biography are the *Asie Polyglotta* of J. G. Klaproth; the *Manual of Buddhism*, by R. S. Hardy; and Huc's *Journey through the Chinese Empire*.

"In the transcendental and philosophic sense, Boodha means mind, Dharma matter, and Sangha the concretion of the two former, in the sensible, and phenomenal world. In a practical and religious sense, Boodha means the mortal author of this religion [Sakya], Dharma his law, and Sangha the congregation of the faithful."

Schmidt in his *Geschichte der Mongolen* says, that the Boodhistic Trinity is composed of Boodha, the doctrine, and the union of spirituality.

"The Dharma of Sakya-Muni was addressed wholly to the 'intellect', and sought to wean mankind from the pleasures and vanities of this life, by pointing to the transitoriness of all human enjoyment."

Numberless authorities might be cited to show that Pythagoras had adopted many of the Boodhistic doctrines, and that Plato adopted much of the Pythagorean system: and we know that the Christians adopted much of the Platonic. Beer in his *History of the Jewish Sects* says the Essenes were Jews who having fled to Egypt, at the time of the Babylonian captivity, became acquainted there with the philosophy of Pythagoras and Plato, and had engrafted it upon the doctrines of Moses; and Raphael in his *Post-Biblical History of the Jews* adopts that opinion.

"The Samaritans in Aram were Boodhists, (see Johann von Mueller's *Welt-Geschichte*.) as were likewise the Essenes in Palestine;

at least they were so in their esoteric doctrines, though subsequently they conformed externally to the Mosaic and afterwards to the Christian system. The Essenes subsequently joined the Gnostics. \* \*

The Gnostics were divided into two chief sects—the Asiatic and the Egyptian [Therapeutæ?]. The former were properly Boodhists, who for the most part adopted the outward forms of Christianity, because, in accordance with their own tenets, they considered Jesus to be a Boodha, who had appeared on earth. \* \* \* \* \*

The Druids, too, in ancient Britain were Boodhists: they admitted the metempsychosis, the pre-existence of souls, and their return to the realms of universal space. They had a triad of gods, consisting, like that of the Boodhists, of a creator, a sustainer, and a destroyer. The Druids constituted a sacerdotal order, which reserved to itself the exclusive privilege of expounding the mysteries of religion. Their wisdom was so renowned that Lucan says in his epic poem, ‘If ever the knowledge of the gods has come down to earth, it is to the Druids of Britain.’ The Druids must have obtained their doctrine through traffic of the Phœnicians with Britain, the latter people having been of the Boodhist creed. Nay, even in the far North did Boodhism make its way; for it cannot be denied that the doctrine of Odin is an echo of that of Boodha. The Scandinavians had their divine trinity of the creator, sustainer, and destroyer.” *Bjornstjerna*.

“The famous doctrines of Pythagoras are intensely Boodhistical.” *Cunningham*.

“There are three philosophical sects among the Jews—the followers of the first of whom are the Pharisees; of the second, the Sadducees, and the third sect, which pretends to a severer discipline, is called Essenes. These are Jews by birth, and they cherish mutual love beyond other men. They reject pleasure as evil; and they look upon temperance and a conquest over the passions as the greatest virtue. \* \* The Essenes despise riches and are so liberal as to excite our admiration. Nor can any be found amongst them who is more wealthy than the rest; for it is a law with them that those who join their order, should distribute their possessions among the members, the property of each being added to that of the rest, as being all brethren. \* \* As to their piety towards God it is very extraordinary: for before sun-rising they speak not a word about profane matters, but put up certain prayers which they have received from their forefathers, as if they made a supplication for its rising. \* \* Their doctrine is this: That bodies are corruptible, and that the matter they are made of, is not permanent: but that the souls are immortal and continue forever.—*Josephus War. II. 7. Translated in Hennell's Origin of Christianity.*”

“The doctrine of the Essenes is that all things should be ascribed to God. They teach the immortality of souls, and esteem that the

rewards of righteousness are to be earnestly striven for : and when they send what they have dedicated to God into the Temple, they do not offer sacrifices, because they have more pure lustrations of their own.”—*Josephus Antiquities XVIII. 1 in Hennell.*

“Palestine and Syria are not unproductive of honorable and good men, but are occupied by numbers, not inconsiderable, compared even with the very populous nation of the Jews. These, exceeding four thousand, are called Essenes, which name, though not, in my opinion, formed by strict analogy, corresponds in Greek to the word ‘holy.’ For they have attained the highest holiness in the worship of God, and that not by sacrificing animals, but by cultivating purity of heart. They live principally in villages. Some cultivate the ground : others pursue the arts of peace, and such employments as are beneficial to themselves without injury to their neighbors. They are the only people, who though destitute of money and possessions, felicitate themselves as rich, deeming riches to consist in frugality and contentment. \* \* Of their love to God they give innumerable proofs by living a life of continued purity, unstained by oaths and falsehoods, by regarding him as the author of every good, and the cause of no evil. They evince their attachment to virtue by their freedom from avarice, from ambition, from sensual pleasure : by their temperance and patience ; by their frugality, simplicity and contentment : by their humility, their regard to the laws and other similar virtues. Their love to man is evinced by their benignity, their equity and their liberality, of which it is not improper to give a short account, though no language can adequately describe it.

“In the first place there exists among them no house, however private, which is not open to the reception of all the rest, and not only the members of the same society assemble under the same domestic roof, but even strangers of the same persuasion have free admission to join them. There is but one treasure whence all derive subsistence : and not only their provisions, but their clothes are common property.”—*Philo 30, A. D.*

“As early as the priesthood of Jonathan Apphus (B. C. 161.), the Jews were divided into three principal sects of Sadducees, Pharisees and Essenes, of which the latter, consisting chiefly of the lower ranks, presents a remarkable picture of simplicity and moral purity, tinged by the austere spirit of monachism.”—*Hennell.*

The similarity of the characters of the divinities worshipped in early times in Hindostan, Rome, and the Teutonic nations, as well as the certainty that all those nations were descended in blood from one stock, enables us to see that the similar ideas were received among them, though widely separated. The following are the names of the days of the week in Sanscrit, Latin, Teutonic and English.

<i>Sanscrit.</i>	<i>Latin.</i>	<i>Teutonic.</i>	<i>English.</i>
Aditya-var.	Dies Solis.	Son-daeg.	Sunday.
Soma-var.	Dies Lunæ.	Moon-daeg.	Monday.
Mangala-var.	Dies Martis.	Tuis-daeg.	Tuesday.
Boodha-var.	Dies Mercurii.	Wodens-daeg.	Wednesday.
Vrihaspate-var.	Dies Jovis.	Thors-daeg.	Thursday.
Sukra-var.	Dies Veneris.	Frigas-daeg.	Friday.
Sani-var.	Dies Saturnæ.	Seternes-daeg.	Saturday.

Each day has the same name in meaning in the four languages. They are the day of the sun, of the moon, of the God of war, of the God who came down to earth, of the God of Gods, of the Love-Goddess, and of the Time-God. The aboriginal Latins and Teutons came from Hindostan, and brought their Gods and languages along with them.

“The Boodhists of the West, accepting Christianity on its first announcement, at once introduced the rites and observances which for centuries had already existed in India. From that country Christianity derived its monastical institutions, its form of ritual and church service, its councils or convocations to settle schisms on points of faith; its worship of relics, and working of miracles through them; and much of the discipline and dress of the clergy, even to the shaved heads of the monks and friars.”—*Prinsep*.—*Quoted in Poccoke's India in Greece.*

Landresse, in his introduction to the *Foe Kouï Ki*, translated by Abel Remusat from the Chinese, expresses his high admiration of the heroism with which the Boodhist missionaries before Christ crossed streams and seas which had arrested armies, traversed deserts and mountains upon which no caravans dared to venture, and braved dangers and surmounted obstacles which had defied the omnipotence of the emperors.

Bjornstjerna, in 1844, estimated the number of followers of the different creeds as follows: Boodhists, 380,000,000; Christians, 230,000,000; Mohammedans, 160,000,000; Brahmins, 150,000,000; Pagans, 70,000,000; Jews, 10,000,000: in all 1,000,000,000.

“There is not a dress office or ceremony in the church of Rome, to which the devil has not here [among the Boodhists of Cochin China] provided some counterpart” (*Father Boori. Missionary in the XVIIth century.*). “Even when he [Boori] began inveighing against the idols, he was told that these were the images of departed great men, whom they worshipped exactly on the same principle, and in the same manner, as the Catholics did the images of the Apostles and martyrs.”—*Murray's History of Discoveries in Asia.*

Life is a state of probation and misery, according to Boodhism.—*Upham. Ch. VI.*

Boodhism “inculcates benevolence, tenderness, forgiveness of



injuries, and love of enemies", and "forbids sensuality; love of pleasure; and attachments to worldly objects."—*Judson*.

"The doctrine of Gaudma Boodha is a reforming scheme, which was obliged to bend to circumstances, and to incorporate parts of other systems."—*Upham. Ch. XI.*

"At that time all beings lived in an *Assunkaya* of years; no sin was there in the world: the immense duration of their life caused men to forget their birth and to be unmindful of death: they knew not the infirmities of life nor the miseries of the world." *The Mahawanso. Boodhist Scripture.*

"The great schism which divided the Eastern world and made the disunion irreconcilable seems in fact to have originated in the time when the Munis or teachers of the Boodhist doctrine, either from reforming principle or a love of power or a combination of both, proceeded to have their own theories and sacred books, not explanatory of, but in direct opposition to the Vedas; teaching their followers that they alone were the true believers of the saving faith, throwing down the barriers of caste, and elevating the dogmas of their faith, above the sacerdotal class, and admitting every one, who felt an inward desire, to the ministry and preaching of their religion. A system thus associating itself with the habits, feelings and personal advantages of its disciples could not fail to make rapid progress, wherever it was contrasted with the fenced-in privileges, immutable dogmas, and haughty pretensions of the sacerdotal class of the Brahmins." *Upham. History and Doctrines of Boodhism.*

*The Mosaic law a revamp of that of Egypt.*

§ 82. "It is strange that the Egyptian religion, though so absurd, should yet have borne so great a resemblance to the Jewish, that ancient writers, even of the greatest genius, were not able to discover any difference between them. For it is remarkable that both Tacitus and Suetonius, when they mention that decree of the Senate under Tiberius, by which the Egyptian and Jewish proselytes were banished from Rome, expressly treat these religions as the same; and it appears that even the decree itself was founded on that supposition." *Hume. Natural History of Religion.*

My principle authority for the statements in regard to the religious ceremonies of the Egyptians is J. G. Wilkinson, *On the Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*. He has published two series of volumes on the same subject and under the same title, but they are made substantially one work by the consecutive numbering of the chapters.—the second series beginning with Chapter XI as the first ends with Chapter X.

In chapter XII. he says that the Egyptians had sacred books of very ancient date, long prior to the age of Moses; that the Egyptian priests were monotheists: that the priests possessed almost

absolute power ; that the probabilities are that Egypt was ruled by priests before there were any kings ; that they consecrated each day and month to a particular deity ; and that the doctrine of a Trinity was commonly received.

In chap. XI. it is stated that the Egyptians offered the first fruits of the lentils to the God Harpocrates.

In chap. XV. Wilkinson says that private fasting and penance were frequently required by the Egyptian priests ; that incense, libations, and sacrifices of animals and fruits were frequently offered to the Gods ; that red oxen were preferred, and that the sacrificial victims were slain by cutting their throats ; that the Egyptian priests were in the habit of carrying the shrines of their gods in procession as the Jewish priests carried the ark ; that the Jewish kings and priests were anointed ; and that the cross was a common sign on very ancient Egyptian monuments.

In chap. XIII. Wilkinson gives a picture of a breast-plate marked with the figures of Re and Thmei, such as was worn by the Egyptian judges, and each figure has a cross in its hand. In the same chapter he cites the authority of Herodotus to prove the fact that 700,000 pilgrims visited Bubastis annually.

The Egyptian priests "looked upon the divinity as a sole and undivided being" though the people were polythesists.

"The priesthood took a prominent part in every public proceeding ; there was no ceremony in which they did not participate, and even military regulations were subject to the influence of the sacerdotal caste." Ch. XV.

Osiris granted to the Egyptian kings dominion over the whole world. XV.

When about to undertake an expedition against foreign nations, the priests gave the king the falchion of victory, to secure the defeat of the people whose country he was about to invade, saying "Take this weapon, and smite with it the head of the impure Gentiles." XV.

"The oldest [Egyptian] monuments which remain bear ample evidence of its [the trinity's] having been their belief at the earliest periods of which any records exist, and Osiris, the Judge and President of Amenti, is mentioned in tombs belonging to contemporaries of the kings who erected the pyramids, upwards of 2000 before our era." *Wilkinson XII.*

"Indeed, if at any early period the religion of Egypt bore a different character, or if any great change took place in its doctrines, this must have been long before the foundation of the monuments that remain ; and with the exception of some addition to the catalogue of minor deities, and an alteration in the name of Amun, we perceive no change in the religion from the earliest times to the reigns of the Ptolemies and the Cesars." *Same, XII.*

Prichard, in his work on *Egyptian Mythology*, mentions the following resemblances between the ecclesiastical systems of Egypt and Judea.

1. The high-priesthood was hereditary in a particular house : so was the pontificate of each particular god in Egypt.

2. The judicial office belonged to the Levites, as it did in Egypt to the priests.

3. The Shoterim, or Scribes, were generally of the tribe of Levi. Their office corresponds exactly with that of the Hierogrammates in Egypt.

4. Medicine, like other parts of knowledge, seems to have belonged to the priests in Palestine, as in Egypt.

“The Egyptians recognized among their esoteric or philosophical doctrines, the existence of a spiritual and eternal being : but this tenet was carefully concealed from the people, instead of becoming the foundation and most conspicuous part of the popular religion.”—*Prichard*.

“The Egyptian religion is the produce of the country, peculiar to itself, and without any marks of foreign improvement or innovation.”—*Jablonski*.

Plutarch says, that the following sentence was inscribed in the Temple of Sais, near a veiled statue :—“I am all that is, and will be : and my veil hath never yet been raised by any mortal.”

Hengstenberg, one of the most learned and orthodox of the German scholars of the present time, has written a book, entitled *Moses and Egypt*, in which he endeavors to show that the writer of the *Pentateuch* was really acquainted with the customs of Egypt. He adduces in evidence many of these same resemblances between the two ecclesiastical systems which I have mentioned.

*Christian Doctrines known to many Sects before Christ.*

§ 83. “The genius of Plato, informed by his own moderation, or by the traditional knowledge of the priests of Egypt, had ventured to explore the mysterious nature of the Deity. When he had elevated his mind to the sublime contemplation of the first self-existent, necessary cause of the universe, the Athenian sage was incapable of conceiving how the simple unity of his essence could admit the infinite variety of distinct and successive ideas which compose the model of the intellectual world ; how a Being purely incorporeal could execute that perfect model and mould with a plastic hand the rude and independent chaos. The vain hope of extricating himself from these difficulties, which must oppress the feeble powers of the human mind, might induce Plato to consider the divine nature under the three-fold modifications of the First cause, the reason or *Logos*, and the soul or spirit of the universe. His poetical imagination sometimes fixed and animated these metaphysical abstractions ;

the three archical or original principles were represented in the Platonic systems as three Gods united with each other by a mysterious and ineffable generation; and the *Logos* was particularly considered under the more accessible character of the Son of an eternal Father and the Creator and Governor of the World. Such appear to have been the secret doctrines which were cautiously whispered in the gardens of the Academy, and which, according to the more recent disciples of Plato, could not be understood till after an assiduous study for thirty years."—*Gibbon. Chap. XXI.—Decline and Fall.*

In a note affixed to this chapter, Guizot says that, according to the Zend-Avesta, it is by the word more ancient than the world that Ormuzd created the Universe. He also says that Philo personified the *Logos* as the ideal archetype of the world.

"*Logos*" is the Greek term, in the first verse of the Evangel of *John*, translated "Word" in the English Bible. It should have been translated "Reason" or "Wisdom." John says "In the beginning was the Word [*Logos*, Jesus] and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

Hammer-Purgstall in his *Les Mithriâques* says that Mithra was the mediator, and incarnate Redeemer of the Persians, that his worship was introduced into Rome 68 B. C., that Mithra was the son of a virgin, that the initiated were taught the doctrine of the trinity and the immortality of the soul, and that the "resemblance of the ceremonies of the mysteries of Mithra with those of the church of Jesus was confessed by the fathers of the church, such as Justin and Tertullian." Among these ceremonies, there was a eucharist, which consisted in the oblation of bread and the chalice.

The Boodhist books contain many threats of punishment for unbelief.

The name "Brahmin" means "twice-born," regenerated. Jesus says, unless a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.

"Faith and love are not less the fundamental powers of the Platonic than of the Christian soul-life." *Ackermann.*

The Boodhists in Thibet have an infallible head, as the Catholics have in Rome.

To Plato "we owe the first formal development of the doctrine of the spirituality of the soul, and the first attempt towards demonstrating its immortality." *Tennemann.*

"Plato passed among a large portion of his hearers for the actual son of Apollo, and his reputed father. Aristo, was admonished in a dream to respect the person of his wife, Periktione, until after the birth of the child of which she was then pregnant by Apollo." *Hardy, Manual of Boodhism.*

“There is one Indian [Hindoo] legend of considerable importance, the age of which Mr. Bentley endeavors to decide by astronomical computation; this is the story of Krishna, the Indian Apollo. In native legends, he is represented as an avatar, or incarnation of the divinity; at his birth, choirs of devatus [angels] sung hymns of praise, while shepherds surrounded his cradle. It was necessary to conceal his birth from the tyrant Cansa, to whom it had been foretold that the infant should destroy him. The child escaped, with his parents, beyond the coast of Lamouna. For a time he lived in obscurity, but then commenced a public life, distinguished for prowess and beneficence. He washed the feet of the Brahmins, and preached the most excellent doctrines; but at length the power of his enemies prevailed: he was nailed, according to one account, to a tree, by an arrow; and, before dying, foretold the miseries which would take place in the Cali-Yuga, or wicked age of the world, thirty-six years after his death.” *Cardinal Wiseman.*

“That the name of Chrishna, and the general outline of his history, were long anterior to the birth of our Savior, and probably to the time of Homer, we know very certainly.”—*Sir Wm. Jones.*

The last supper, in which the Christians eat bread and drink wine, calling them the flesh and blood of Jesus, is an imitation of the human sacrifices of the heathens, in which they ate the flesh and drank the blood of the victim.

“Ahriman”, in the Zoroastrian mythology [which, it is universally acknowledged—I believe—by Oriental scholars, is not of later date than 450 B. C.], “slew Kayomorts, the first human being, who was both man and woman: from his pieces grew up a plant, which bore, instead of fruit, Meshia and Meshiane, the real ancestors of the human family. Both were in the beginning innocent, and formed for heaven, and honored Ormuzd as their creator: but they were seduced by Ahriman, who brought them fruit which they ate, and lost by transgression their happiness. The woman was the first who sacrificed to the Devs. After fifty years they had children, Siahmak and Veshak, and died one hundred years old: for their sins they were doomed to suffer hell-torments till the resurrection.”—*Prichard. Nat. Hist. Man. B. IV. Ch. X.*

“If I did not know it would be sending coals to Newcastle, I would, with all my dimness of eyes and trembling of fingers, copy in Greek the hymn of Cleanthes [given in Cudworth], and request you to compare it with anything of Moses, of David, or of Solomon. Instead of those ardent oriental figures, which are so difficult to understand, we find that divine simplicity which constitutes the charm of Grecian eloquence in prose and verse.”—*John Adams. Letter to Jefferson. Sept. 22, 1813.*

"Christianity is in Plato's *Phaedo*."—*Emerson*.

"The generality of the Christian Fathers, before and after the Nicene Council, represented the genuine Platonic Trinity as really the same thing with the Christian."—*Cudworth*.

The metaphysics of Lao-tze [Chinese philosopher 500 B. C.] offer many remarkable traits that we are constrained to pass over in silence. How, in fact, could we give an idea of the high abstractions, the inextricable subtleties, in which his Oriental imagination wanders and loses itself? It is sufficient to say that the opinions of the Chinese philosopher on the origin and constitution of the universe present no ridiculous fables or monstrous absurdities: they bear the impress of a noble and elevated mind, and in the sublime reveries that distinguish them, they present a striking and indisputable resemblance to the doctrines professed a little later in the schools of Pythagoras and Plato. Like the Pythagoreans and Platonists our philosopher admits, as a first cause, Reason,—a being ineffable, uncreated, who is the type of the universe, but who has no type but himself. Like Pythagoras, he regards human souls as emanations from this ethereal substance, and supposes that after death they are reunited with it: he also agrees with Plato in refusing to the wicked the faculty of reentering the bosom of this universal soul. Like Pythagoras, he gives to the first principles of things, the names of numbers, and his cosmogony is, in some measure, algebraical. He attaches the chain of being to him whom he call One,—then to Two—then to Three—who he says have made all things. The divine Plato, who had adopted this mysterious dogma seems to fear revealing it to the profane: he envelops it in clouds in his famous letter to three friends: he teaches it to Dionysius of Syracuse, but in enigmas, as he says himself, for fear that his tablets passing over land and sea, should fall into the hands of some unknown person who should read and understand them. Possibly the then recent recollection of the death of Socrates might have contributed to occasion this reserve. Lao-tze does not employ all this circumlocution and it is clearly laid down in his book that it was a three fold being who formed the universe." *Abel Renoussat. Melanges Asiaticques. Quoted in Hue's Journey through the Chinese Empire. Chap. V.*

"Orpheus, Pythagoras and Plato, all of them, asserted a trinity of Divine hypostases." *Cudworth*.

"We cannot but take notice of an admirable correspondency betwixt the Platonic philosophy and Christianity, in that the second hypostasis of both their trinities (called sometimes *Logos* by the Platonists as well as *Nous* [mind]) is said to be the immediate cause of all things." *Cudworth*.

Many of the phrases, used by Jesus, had been used before by the Jews and Platonists. The following sentences from the Old

Testament show that mild morality was known on earth before the time of Christ.

“What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.” *Micah. VI. 8.*

“If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat, and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink. For thou heapeth coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward thee.” *Prov. XXV. 21.*

“Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me.” *Prov. XXX. 8.*

“The meek shall inherit the earth.” *Ps. XLVII. 11.*

“Keep thy tongue from evil.” *Ps. XXXIV. 13.*

“Say not thou, ‘I will recompense, but wait on the Lord.’” *Prov. XX. 22.*

“A lawyer asked him [Jesus] a question, tempting him, and saying ‘Master which is the great commandment of the law? Jesus said unto him ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.’” *Mat. XXII. 35—40.*

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might.” *Deut. VI. 5.*

“Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” *Lev. XIX. 18.*

The works of Plato contain numerous passages similar to phrases used in the New Testament—such as: a rich man shall hardly enter the kingdom of heaven: fear not them who kill the body: obey God rather than man: the kingdom of God is within you: he that is righteous doeth righteousness: no man can serve both God and mammon: set your affections on things above: what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul, &c. St. John speaks of Jesus as the *Logos*, the “word,” and *logos* had been used in the same sense by Plato and Philo long before, and, in fact, the same word was used says Remusat, by Laot-se in China 600 B. C. The greater portion of the sermon on the Mount is a patchwork, made up of phrases from the Talmud, the writings of the Jewish Rabbi’s, the Old Testament and the works of the Platonists.

“The week of seven days was a common measure of time from the earliest ages among the Asiatic nations.” *Lepsius.*

Some one asked Diogenes the way to be revenged on an enemy? The cynic replied: “Become more virtuous.” *Plat. de aul. poet.*  
*Quoted by Barthelemy.*

Socrates said, it was not permitted to return evil for evil. *Plato in Crit.* *Quoted by Barthelemy.*

“However much we may be resolved to charge their predictions with collusions and imposture, there are yet specimens of their moral doctrines preserved which exhibit a purity and wisdom scarcely to be surpassed.” *Dr. Arnold. See Cicero de Officiis, III. 28, 29.*

“Piety, obedience to superiors, resignation in misfortune, charity, hospitality, filial, parental, and conjugal affection, are among the distinguishing characteristics of the Hindoos.”—*Forbes. Oriental Memoirs.*

“The philosophic observers in Greece boasted of the sense of personal dignity as the characteristic of the Greeks as distinguished from barbarians.” *Grote.*

“Where is to be found theology more orthodox, or philosophy more profound, than in the introduction to the Shasta? God is one creator of one universal sphere, without beginning, without end. God governs all the creation by a general providence resulting from his eternal designs. Search not the essence and the nature of the eternal, who is one; your research will be vain and presumptuous. It is enough that day and night you adore his power, his wisdom, and his goodness, in his works. The eternal willed in the fullness of time to communicate of his essence and of his splendor to beings capable of perceiving it. They as yet existed not. The eternal willed and they were. He created Birma, Vistnou, and Siv.’ These doctrines—sublime if ever there were any sublime—Pythagoras learned in India, and taught them to Zaleucus and his other disciples.”—*John Adams—Letter to Thomas Jefferson, Dec. 25, 1813.*

“The primeval religion of Iran [ancient Persia], if we may rely on the authorities adduced by Monsani Fani, was that which Newton calls the oldest (and it may justly be called the noblest) of all religions; a firm belief that one Supreme God made the world by his power, and continually governs it by his providence; a pious fear, love and adoration of him; and due reverence for parents and aged persons; a fraternal affection for the whole human species; and a compassionate tenderness even for the brute creation.” *Sir Wm. Jones.*

“A spirit of sublime devotion, of benevolence to mankind, and of amiable tenderness to all sentient creatures pervades the whole work [The Institutes of Menu]; the style of it has a certain austere majesty, that sounds like the language of legislation and extorts a respectful awe; the sentiments of independence on all beings but God, and the harsh admonition even to kings, are truly noble; and the many panegyries on the Gayatri, the mother, as it is called, of the Veda, proved the author to have adored (not the visible, material sun, but) that divine and incomparably greater light, to use the words of the most venerable text in the Indian Scripture, which illumines all, delights all, from which all proceed, to which all must



return, and which alone can irradiate (not our visual organs merely), but our souls and our intellects.” *Sir Wm. Jones.*

“ It is incontestible that the Brahmins have formed their people to such a degree of gentleness, courtesy, temperance, and chastity, or at least have so far confirmed them in these virtues, that Europeans frequently appear in comparison with them as beastly, drunken, or mad. Their air and language are unrestrainedly elegant, their behavior friendly, their persons clean, their way of life simple and harmless. Their children are educated without severity; yet they are not destitute of knowledge, and still less of quiet industry or nicely imitative art. \* \* \* The leading idea the Brahmins entertain of God is grand and beautiful; their morality is pure and elevated; and even their fables, when scanned by the eye of reason, are refined and charming.”—*J. G. Herder—Philosophy of History.*

“ The morality of the Zend-Avesta is entitled to praise; purity of word, action and thought is repeatedly inculcated. To multiply the human species, increase its happiness, and prevent evil are the general duties inculcated by Zoroaster to his disciples; agriculture and the multiplication of useful arts are particularly recommended to them. ‘ He,’ says Zoroaster, ‘ who sows the ground with diligence, acquires a greater stock of religious merit than he could gain by 10,000 prayers.’ The disciple of Zoroaster is enjoined to pardon injuries, to honor his parents and the king whose rights are derived from Ormuzd, to respect old age, to observe general gentleness of manners, and to practice universal benevolence.”—*Butler—Horæ Biblicæ.*

“ Well-doing,” said Socrates “ is the noblest pursuit of man. The best man and the most beloved by the Gods is he who as a husbandman performs well the duties of husbandry; as a surgeon those of medical art; in political life, his duty towards the commonwealth. But the man who does nothing well, is neither useful or agreeable to the Gods.”

“ The superior man looks at his situation and acts accordingly. He concerns not himself with what is beyond his station. If he possesses riches, he acts as a rich man ought to do. If poor, he acts as a poor man ought to act. To a stranger, he acts the part of a stranger. If a sufferer, he acts as a sufferer ought to do. The superior man enters into no situation where he is not himself. If he hold a superior situation, he does not treat with contempt those below him. If he occupy an inferior station, he does not court the favor of his superiors; he corrects himself and blames not others. He feels no dissatisfaction. He grumbles not with Heaven above; he feels no resentment with man below. Hence, the superior man dwells at ease, calmly awaiting the will of Heaven. But the mean man walks in dangerous paths and covets what he has no right to obtain.”—*Confucius.*

“Alas, I have never seen one love virtue as we love beauty.”—*Confucius*.

“To cultivate virtue with undeviating singleness of intention, without regard to a long or short life, is the way to fulfil the divine decree.”—*Mencius, a Chinese Philosopher, (350 B. C.)*

“Let us vigorously exert ourselves to act towards others, as we wish them to do to us.”—*Mencius*.

There is nothing more elevated in all the New Testament than the following from the *Enchiridion* of Epictetus: “Remember that you must behave at life as at an entertainment. Is anything brought around to you, put out your hand, and take your share with moderation. Doth it pass you, do not stop it. Is it not yet come, do not stretch forth your desire towards it, but wait till it reaches you. Thus do with regard to children, to a wife, to a public office, to riches, and you will some day be a worthy partner of the Feast of the Gods. And if you do not so much as take things which are set before you, but are even able to despise them, then you will not only be a partner of the Feast of Gods, but a sharer in their Empire also.”

“Let your most secret acts be as though you had all the world for witnesses. Do not expect that reprehensible words will be forgotten; you may hide them from others, but never from yourself. Devote your leisure hours to hearing counsel from the wise: alleviate the sufferings of the virtuous poor: the recollection of charity well applied is one of the most precious forms of wealth. If you should be clothed with a high office, let your subordinates be upright men, and when you leave your position, let it be with honor rather than with wealth.”—*Isocrates*.

“Do not allow thyself to be carried away by anger. Angry words and scornful looks are sins. To strike a man, or vex him with words, is a sin. Even the intention to strike another, merits punishment. Opposition to peace is a sin. Reply to thine enemy with gentleness.”—*Zend-Avesta*.

“All virtues are comprised in justice: he who is just, is a good man.”—*Theognis, 500 B. C.*

“Do not be content with being just: prevent injustice.”—*Phocylides, 450 B. C.*

“Do not that, which you would disapprove in others.”—*Thales, 600 B. C.*

“Let your first law be, to respect yourself.”—*Pythagoras, Golden Verse, VIII.*

“What gravity, what constancy, magnanimity, probity, fidelity, ever was so great—what virtue of every kind so excellent in any

people, as to admit them to a comparison with our ancestors?"—*Cicero*.

"Do not abandon your eyes to the pleasures of sleep, without having thrice examined the deeds of your day. What fault have I committed? What have I done? To what duty have I been false? Commence with the first of your actions, and thus go through all the others. Reproach yourself with the evil which you have done: rejoice over the good."—*Pythagoras. Golden Verse. XXIII.*

"Look for pleasure in the pursuit of wisdom, as giving birth to all the virtues. These unite in teaching us, that no man can live happily, who does not live wisely, conscientiously, and justly: nor on the other hand, can he live wisely and justly, without living happily: for as virtue is necessary to a life of happiness, so is a life of happiness necessary to virtue."—*Epictetus*.

"The devout uneducated Chinese, man or woman, habitually adores and supplicates the idol-god in preference to Heaven, just as we see in Bavaria or Italy, the devout but mentally unenlightened Romanist habitually adore and supplicate the images of the Saints in preference to God."—*Meadows*









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