

*PART SECOND*  
*THE*  
*MORAL PROBLEM*

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Hodgman, Stephen Alexander  
1809-1887.

Sh. Moses and the philosophers









MOSES  
AND  
THE PHILOSOPHERS,

IN THREE PARTS:

THE PHYSICAL SYSTEM;  
THE MORAL PROBLEM;  
THE MERCY SEAT.

*THE WHOLE TOGETHER GIVING A VIEW OF THE UNIVERSE, AS WRITTEN  
BY MOSES, THE SERVANT OF GOD.*

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PART SECOND.  
THE MORAL PROBLEM.

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BY  
STEPHEN ALEXANDER HODGMAN.

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## AXIOMS IN MORAL SCIENCE.

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I. Moral law takes cognizance of actions, as morally right or wrong.

II. Actions not morally right or wrong, could not, properly, be rewarded or punished.

III. Human governments are maintained by reward and punishment, which shows a universal consciousness that some actions are morally right, and others morally wrong.

IV. Only such acts can be said to be moral, as have their origin in the existence of an intelligent, free will.

V. Actions that are necessary, are not moral acts.

VI. In denying the existence of a moral law, materialists have to say that there is no such thing as reward or punishment.

VII. Mental acts are not necessarily moral, though there is no moral act without mind, as there is no free will without mind.

VIII. The acts of believing, remembering, thinking, are not moral, since they are involuntary, not voluntary.

IX. If mind or spirit did not exist, there could be no free will, no liberty of choice, and of course no moral government.

X. The nature of moral law, shows that it must have had a divine origin.

XI. Credence, or the mental act of believing, is a necessary, and therefore, not a moral act.

XII. Faith or belief becomes a moral and a heroic principle, when the mind puts forth an effort to obtain the evidence, which is the foundation of the belief. This is voluntary.

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## PREFACE TO PART SECOND.

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**T**HE existence of evil is the Problem of the ages. If God exists, He made the world, and all that is in it. And if God exists, He must be all-wise, all-powerful, and supremely good. How then has it come to pass, that sin exists, and so many evils abound in a world originated by Him, and from which He certainly could have excluded all evil? This is the problem.

Every philosophic mind has labored more or less at this problem, but with no satisfactory result. Some have said, there is no God; for that a God infinite in goodness, wisdom and power, could not be the author of such a state of things as we know to exist in this world. This was the mistake of John Stuart Mill, and

others who, like him, have ignored the teachings of the Bible.

Others have resolved that there is no such thing as sin or moral evil—and no moral government in the world, and no moral accountability—nothing but material law. They reason that all the changes, and all the apparent evils that exist in the world, are the effects of the laws of matter—laws that are essential to matter which work blindly, and without any end or purpose, and to which the gods, if there are any gods, are equally subject as men. This is materialism.

Others, again, have concluded that this is a subject shrouded in impenetrable mystery, which it was not the will of God that man should investigate. But this was certainly a hasty, not to say, a rash conclusion. There is nothing in nature or in Revelation, that man may not, and ought not to investigate. Whatever has been revealed in nature, or Revelation, is for the study of man. To this end he was endowed with the faculty of reason, and created in the image of God.

But the question concerning the Origin of Moral Evil, inexplicable without a Revelation, was long ago solved by Moses the prophet of God. The solution

of it stands out clear enough on the surface of the inspired page, and can be made perfectly intelligible, and transparent to the mind of one who sees in the light of God.

The author of this volume, is not willing to take any credit to himself, as having solved the mystery, but as having simply pointed out how it was solved by God's inspired servant, in the very beginning. And he desires to make it known here, that he has often felt surprise, and as often expressed it, that philosophers and theologians have so long misunderstood, or overlooked the solution of the great problem, which they desired to look into, and which was so manifestly conspicuous, on the very surface of the Mosaic Record. If the author shall succeed, or if he has succeeded, in the attempt to show that Moses explained how Evil came into this world, he will have accomplished all he aimed at, in this part of his work.

The idea developed in this volume, was suggested to his mind over forty years ago, and elaborated in a treatise of 300 twelve mo. pages, which he laid aside, with the purpose of bringing it out in a more perfect form, when he should arrive at a riper age. That period has come, and this volume is sent forth on its

mission. The fact that this Revelation is found in the writings of Moses, is all the proof that any reasonable mind could possibly desire, that he wrote under the immediate inspiration of God.

STEPHEN ALEXANDER HODGMAN.

PHILADELPHIA, *June*, 1881.

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# MOSES AND THE PHILOSOPHERS.

## PART SECOND.

### CHAPTER I.

*Introductory—The Reasoning Faculty—Considered as the Instrument of Knowledge.*

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IT is written, “every house is builded by some man, but He who built all things is God.” The universe is God’s building—God’s temple. In attempting to take a survey of the wondrous structure, it may be well to examine the instrument that has been put into our possession for the purpose of making the survey.

The reasoning faculty in man is the power or capacity, when premises are given, to draw conclusions from them; to trace effects to their causes; and, in general, to discover the relationship which one

thing bears to another. Every such process in the mind, by which conclusions are arrived at, is called *reasoning* or *ratiocination*. The process of thinking that goes on in every individual mind, is nothing else but the linking of things together, and consists of a series of deductions and inferences, in which the mind, whether we are conscious of it or not, endeavors to put things in their natural and proper relations to one another. Thus, if we see an oak tree growing in the forest, we say that, an acorn must have been dropped there, some century or centuries ago. It is a process of the reasoning faculty that enables us to draw this conclusion.

This reasoning faculty is peculiar to man, as no other terrestrial animal has been endowed with this gift. Furthermore, we can say that as the peculiar and distinguishing faculty of man, it is a wonderful endowment, as it is almost impossible to assign limits to the exercise thereof. And we are, perhaps, justified in the conclusion, that it is this which was meant in that characteristic account of the creation of man—*“in the image of God created He him.”*

When we consider that Sir Isaac Newton came into the world like any other infant, without a single idea—that he was destitute of knowledge—that he had to begin as every other child, with the letters of the alphabet, learning one letter, and one simple principle at a time—and then, reflect in what a brief space, he had scaled the heights of knowledge, and even opened up new paths of science for himself, where others had not ventured before him, we find it impossible to assign any limit to this reasoning capacity in man.

But this is all that can be said. It is only a faculty—nothing more, and nothing less. It is the instrument that was given to man for the discovery of truth. It is to the soul what the eye is to the body—the organ of vision, or of perception, through which the light of truth is discerned. If there were no such thing as light, and no eye, there would be no vision. No more could there be any perception of truth, if truth did not exist, or if there were no faculty of reason with which to discover it.

This then is the office of reason, namely: to discover truth, and to trace the relations of things as they really exist. This faculty belongs to man alone, as it can never be certainly known that any other animal on this earth, possesses the same faculty, even in the smallest degree. By this faculty, he is able to discover the relations of things to one another; to reason from effects to their causes, and, *vice versa*, from causes to their effects. We say, this is the office of reason, and this also its limit. It does not contain, within itself, the first principles of knowledge. The elements of knowledge must exist independently of the faculty, or there could be no knowledge. Reason does not, and it cannot originate its own materials of knowledge. It cannot change or alter the relations of things to one another; but it has to take the universe just as it finds it, and to take cognizance of things, as they are, in succession, presented to the eye of the soul. The faculty was given to man to find out the universe—to know himself—to discover how he stands related to the external universe, and how the universe stands related to him. He has not this

knowledge in himself, independently of, or prior to the exercise of reason. There is no such thing as intuitive knowledge, that exists before the reasoning faculty has been developed. The notion that there are certain *innate* ideas in the human mind, is one long since exploded.

To say, for example, that there is, or that there can be in the soul of man, a perfect idea of God—of what He is and how He exists—or a perfect idea of truth, and a perception of its excellence, or any other idea of a kindred nature, before the eye of the soul has been opened to take a survey of the works of nature, or to inspect the volume of Revelation, in order to gather up these thoughts—to say this would be to affirm that reason is a useless gift. Why was the wonderful gift bestowed upon man but to be consecrated to the acquisition of such knowledge? But if he is born with the knowledge—if every man that comes into the world, is born with it, then as the knowledge must come directly from the Creator, it ought to be perfect knowledge, and there would be no necessity of seeking it by the slow and laborious efforts of reason.

We say there could be no idea of light—and no idea of red, or blue, or any other color in the human mind without an organ of sight, and the action of light upon that organ to generate these ideas. Neither would any one affirm that we could have a distinct idea of sound, or of an odor, without the organs of hearing and smell, and the existence of media acting on them, through which alone these sensations are produced.

These simple illustrations show the beautiful fitness of things—and how everything has been adapted to



some end—some wise and glorious purpose; as for example, the light to the eye, and the eye to the light, and the other organs to the media adapted, by sensation, to suggest other ideas. Here is a great law of design that, for aught we can see, extends to the origination of all things. If there appears to be an exception to this law—or if there is one thing that has come under our notice, of which we must say that we cannot see the purpose for which it was designed, let us reverently and in humility ascribe it to the imperfection of our knowledge. In nothing, perhaps, is this universal law of design, and this beautiful adaptation, more conspicuous than in the structure of this wonderful faculty of reason, when considered as the instrument of knowledge.

We are not born with knowledge. No human being ever yet brought an idea into the world with him at his birth. But we are born in the possession of a perfect instrument—originally perfect—for the acquisition of knowledge. The use of it begins even in the cradle. It is continued through the earthly life; and we doubt not that it will be continued in the life to come. When the first infantile thought or idea is awakened in the mind of a babe, even before it is capable of giving expression to its thoughts and feelings—that first dawn of thought is evidence of the existence of a living spirit—and it is the first development of that reasoning faculty, which is itself proof that the stamp of divinity has been impressed on its nature.

The sentiment of the devout Psalmist, "Behold, I am fearfully and wonderfully made," can be appre-

hended, in the extent of its meaning, only by one whose mind has been able to analyze, physically and psychologically, the structure of a human being.

Take the new-born babe—it is the most helpless of all creatures—it can neither crawl, nor walk, nor swim, nor fly; but it is utterly at the mercy of every accident. It has no instincts, like other animals, for self-preservation—but only reason, and that not yet developed. And therefore, in the incipency of its being, the infant is the weakest, the most imperfect and helpless of all animals. But it has the faculty of reason, capable of being developed—a faculty which no other animal possesses, and which can be indefinitely expanded and improved through time, and in all eternity. And now we come to the grandeur of our theme. The instincts of other animals soon come to perfection, and do not increase or advance beyond a certain limit. If their creature life is prolonged from year to year, they pass through the same phases of existence—there is no sign of progress, and there can be none. The bee extracts sweetness from flowers, builds the honey-comb, and stores it with nectar, with the same inimitable skill and artistic perfection the first season that it would do if it should make honey for a hundred seasons. There could be no advance, and no improvement. Its skill does not come by practice or experience. From the first it obeys a law already perfect, and can obey no other. And what is true of the bee is true of every inferior creature. Each one obeys the law originally designed for it, and can know no other. There is no progress, and there can be none. But is it so with the human infant?

Look on the new-born babe—there it lies in its mother's arms, more helpless and powerless than the most insignificant creature on earth—without consciousness—without a thought—and for weeks and months without any capacity for locomotion, or to help itself. What is the law of its being? Who can tell? Wait a few years. There is a law that is to govern the life of that infant. We have never seen that law carried out to perfection, like the laws that govern the lives of other creatures—because it is something that is expansive, progressive—never absolutely perfect, but ever unfolding, and advancing more and more toward perfection. Wait a few years, and that infant that lay so helpless in its mother's arms, without a thought, and apparently without any consciousness even of its own existence, is developed, and becomes the greatest among the sons of men. He may be an Aristotle, a Sir Isaac Newton, or a St. Paul. But irrespective of the name, every infant has the same law written on its soul, and is capable of the same growth and development.

Who would not like to be one of the great master spirits who have sent their names ringing down through the ages? But those master spirits were once—all of them—babes in knowledge. They grew, and became great by the cultivation and expansion of their reasoning faculty. Every babe that is born, has the same mysterious power or faculty in its soul, which gives it a capacity to be developed into more than a Sir Isaac Newton, or even a St. Paul.

There is the same law for every mind. The faculty of reason belongs alike to every one, and under favor-

able circumstances, must expand, and strengthen, and grow, as we believe, indefinitely and forever. There will come a point in the life of the humblest babe, when it will know more—a hundred times more than even the towering intellect of Newton was able to grasp during his mortal existence.

As the young mother looks into the face of her babe of a span long, with an expression of such tenderness and concern, because of its utter helplessness, let her not forget that she folds in her arms, “a man from God,” as Eve said, when a son was born to her, uttering words of which neither she nor any other mother can know the full significance—aye, a “man from God,” and with the image of God stamped upon him, and in the possession of a faculty which insures that he shall grow in knowledge forever. What a gift! qualifying him to hold communion with the Father of spirits, and to soar to those heights in knowledge which mortal intellect has never yet scaled!

Such is the faculty of reason, which has been conferred on every child of Adam. It only wants development. There may be thousands of circumstances growing out of sin, or other causes generated by sin, that hinder or impede the development of reason in the present life. But the divine faculty—the godlike attribute is there—in every infant soul—the very germ of an immortal life—and the causes that hinder or impede its progress, may be removed.

This law that governs the human mind is just as perfect in its kind, as the laws of instinct that were made for the honey bee, the silk worm, the tuneful canary or any other creature, which are all perfect in

their kind—so much so that we could not conceive the possibility of any improvement in those laws of instinct.

There is one and the same law for all individuals of the same species. The honey bee that sipped nectar from flowers in the garden of Eden six thousand years ago, and builded its cell, and stored away the honey, and the bee that does the same thing to-day, obey the same law, and work by the same rule. The law is absolutely perfect—perfect in its kind. There has been no progress in the art of making honey, and there can be none.

In like manner, there is one law for the human mind. Every one has the same divine faculty—the same capacity for growing in knowledge, and progressing towards the standard of intellectual and moral perfection, to which no finite intelligence has yet attained.

There are differences among individuals of the same species, but the same law. The bee could not make honey, if the frost should kill all the flowers, or if its wings were clipped so that it could not fly, but the law of its nature would be unchanged, and let these hindrances be removed, and it would manufacture honey the same as before. So a human soul may be oppressed and weighed down by a load of sin—diseases of mind and body may have been entailed by godless parents—or a thousand other causes, all having their origin in sin, may have conspired to keep down that soul, and prevent the development of its faculties. But the original law remains unchanged. The image of Deity, though greatly marred, has not

been destroyed nor blotted out. And let the power of sin be broken, and the galling fetters be removed, in which that soul had been held, and with a bound, it would spring forward spontaneously, seeking its own, its native sky. "Fearfully, wonderfully" are we made.

And yet, there are those who would persuade us that this wonderful law inscribed on every human soul—this divine faculty of reason which makes man so superior to all other animals—this capacity and quenchless thirst for knowledge—that this law, this capacity, this genius, and this spirit, are all nothing but a little lump of matter—the brain itself! But who can believe in the absurd fiction?

Is the human mind so constituted that it can be seriously persuaded to entertain the proposition, that, in "the immeasurable ranges of time," certain atoms of matter just fell together, by chance, in such a way as to constitute a human brain—a material organ capable of producing thought—having a capacity to pry into the nature of matter itself—to perform acts that have no affinity to any of the properties of matter, of which, they say, it forms a part—a material instrument, having, in itself, a capacity to soar away in thought to the very stars—to speculate about the existence of a God, and to calculate the chances of a future life—a material brain—a little mass of matter evolved, by chance, from a mass of kindred, unintelligent and lifeless matter, endowed with a capacity to perform such wonders! There is no sane mind which can, for a moment, entertain the proposition!

But if we reject it, the alternative conclusion is, that in the constitution of man, there is something besides

his material organization—a soul—a spiritual nature—a reasoning faculty, that, in its essence, partakes of the nature of the Supreme intelligence whence it had its origin. This, we affirm, is the alternative conclusion. There is something besides matter in existence, and that we call spirit. We may not be able to define it, no more than we can tell what matter is. But we know it is something which has the power to reason or think, which matter has not.

The regions of knowledge lie in three spheres—self-knowledge, the knowledge of God, and the knowledge of his works and Providence. These are separate and distinct departments of science, which all, perhaps, equally concern the happiness and well-being of man. And in reference to these departments of knowledge, it may be said that each of them is almost inexhaustible. How deplorable would be the condition of man, if he had not been provided with an instrument—a line and compass to enable him to explore, and to search through these boundless fields, the treasures of which must be as manna to the soul.

But man is provided with such an instrument. We have already seen what it is, and how admirably adapted it is to the purpose it was intended to serve. As the eye of the body is the organ of vision, through which we take in the visible glories of the material universe, so reason is the eye of the soul that can look beyond the visible to the invisible glories; and from nature up to nature's God, and even analyze its own wonderful nature and faculties. This is a work for all time—ample employment for an eternal lifetime—

to explore, investigate, and find out all knowledge. It is a great destiny. This consecration of the reasoning faculty to the pursuit of knowledge, and in following the paths of useful science, is the sublimest occupation, and, indeed, the only one that is congenial to minds of the highest order.

Of course, where there are so many departments of learning, every one is free to choose his own department for investigation. But no matter which department is chosen, reason is the instrument or the faculty, by which every investigation is made, and by which every kind of knowledge is acquired. But if man had been formed like the bee, the silkworm, or any of the inferior creatures, with only one certain instinct, though he might have been perfect in that department, yet he could only have moved in that one particular sphere, and must soon have come to the limits of his capacity. But now he can move in any sphere that pleases him best, and range at will throughout the fields of discovery, without ever meeting any barrier to check his progress in knowledge.

Here it may be proper to consider the method of reason. Every scholar knows what little progress true science had made in the world before the time of Lord Bacon. By his discovery or invention of the *Inductive Method*, which has given lustre to his name, he introduced a new era in philosophy, and overturned old superstitions, and systems of philosophy that had become venerable from antiquity. But he laid a solid foundation for true learning. And though the superstructures built on the foundation which he laid, may be slow and gradual in their growth, yet, we can rest



assured there will be no backward steps. The march of knowledge must be, henceforth, steadily onward. Facts never change. Every system of natural science, or religion built on the foundation of facts, must stand. This is called the *inductive* or the *Baconian Method*.

The method of Lord Bacon is, really, the philosophy of the Bible, summed up in one single, complete, inspired sentence—"prove all things, hold fast that which is good." Paul was no less a philosopher than a theologian in penning these words. And we can readily believe that Lord Bacon borrowed from Paul, the idea—the divine philosophy which he has transmitted to us, and for which we accord him praise.

But how is this "proving all things" to be done? A mathematician has verified to himself, that, when two straight lines intersect, the opposite angles are equal—he has proved it—he has demonstrated it—and he is sure that the proposition is true. But how has he arrived at the conclusion? By the exercise of his reasoning faculty—by a process of logic. It is the very same faculty which every human being possesses in common with the mathematician—only in the case of the mathematician, the faculty has been cultivated and exercised in a higher degree than by others. Yet, every human being has the same faculty, which with equal culture and application, would enable them to prove the same, or any other similar proposition.

As before stated, this faculty belongs to the race of man, as a race, and is the distinguishing faculty, which raises man infinitely above all other races of animals

on this globe. There are animals that excel man in strength: others that excel him in swiftness, and others that excel him in courage, and in beauty. But there is not one among them that has the faculty of Reason.

It is not a supposable case that an ape, a lion, a horse, a dog, or any other animal could ever, under any circumstances, or by any mental process, arrive at the conclusion, for example, that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles. They could no more be taught to reason in this manner, than they could be taught the use of speech. And yet, our materialistic philosophers are unwilling to acknowledge any distinction, except in degree, between animal instinct and the faculty of reason. We have one of them, for example, discoursing as follows, in the "North American Review: "

"In spite of their great differences in mental capacity, it is obvious that the antelope who, on hearing the roar of a lion from the neighboring thicket, infers that it is high time to flee for his life; the bushman who, on seeing the torn carcass of the antelope, infers that a lion has recently been present; and the astronomer who, on witnessing certain unforeseen irregularities in Uranus, infers that an unknown planet is attracting it, perform, one and all, the same kind of mental operation. In the three cases, the processes are, fundamentally, the same."

But are the three mental operations, fundamentally, the same, just because the materialistic philosopher affirms it? All the facts of nature are in opposition to such a conclusion. Let it be proved by any single fact, that any instinctive act of any animal is of the

nature of a mental operation. Every animal and every insect that we are acquainted with seems to have been furnished with its own peculiar instinct for the purpose of self-preservation, and obtaining its food. Without these instincts, to what purpose would their existence have been conferred on any of these weak and tiny creatures? But when the instinct is called into action in one of these inferior creatures, in the avoidance of a threatened danger, or in obtaining its food, must we be told, and by a philosopher too, that this display of animal instinct, is a "mental operation," and a proof that the animal or insect possesses the faculty of reason!

The astronomer, for example, reflects, deliberates, and studies for a long time, weighing and comparing things, and making many figures, before he can infer the existence of another planet. Is it thus that the antelope infers that there is danger, when the roar of a lion is heard in the forest? Is it thus, that, when the mother hen sees a hawk flying overhead, she infers that there is danger to her brood, and instantly utters a sharp cry of alarm—and do the chicks, when they hear that cry for the first time, in the same way, infer that there is danger, and instantly fly to a covert for safety, although they never saw a hawk, and never heard that cry before? Do they reason about the matter? Or is it instinct? Is there no difference in kind, between an instinct and the faculty of reason?

Another of these materialistic philosophers—Prof. Jno. Tyndall—has ventured his opinion as follows:

"Combining such facts with the doctrine of hereditary transmission, we reach a theory of instinct. A

chick, after coming out of the egg, balances itself correctly, runs about, picks up food, thus showing that it possesses a power of directing its movements to definite ends. How did the chick learn this very complex combination of eye, muscles and beak? It has not been individually taught; its personal experience is *nil*; but it has the benefit of *ancestral experience*. In its inherited organization are registered all the powers which it displays at birth. So also, as regards the instinct of the hive-bee, the distances at which the insects stand apart, when they sweep their hemispheres and build their cells, is organically remembered."

What then is instinct? According to this philosopher, it is an organic memory. It is ancestral experience transmitted and registered in the physical organization of the young chicks, the young bees, etc. And the reasoning faculty in man is the same sort of instinct—an organic memory—ancestral experience transmitted and registered in our material organism. For the learned Professor says in the same lecture, "man also carries with him the physical texture of his ancestry, as well as the inherited intellect bound up with it." So then there is no difference in kind, only in degree, between the reasoning faculty in man, and the instinct of the chick, or the bee, or any other insect. Organic memory! ancestral experience transmitted in successive generations and registered in the physical organization! If it were so, we should like to ask the quasi philosopher how the first hive-bees, for example, in sweeping their hemispheres and building their cells, learned to take their places at the right distances apart—whether it was an organic memory

of ancestral experience transmitted to them, when they had no ancestry?

Such fanciful theories might do to be woven into the stories of Monboddo or Robinson Crusoe, but are hardly calculated to set off and dignify works that claim to be of a philosophic or scientific nature. These modern philosophers have many theories, but few facts.

It was to put an end to these interminable and false speculations of the schoolmen and sectarists, that had kept the world in a ferment, that Lord Bacon invented the inductive method—*reasoning from facts*. It was that which swept away the cobwebs of false philosophy and superstition that had been accumulating for ages. But within a less period than the last half century, there have sprung up a certain class of philosophers who seem to think, judging from their works, that Bacon is dead, and that his philosophy has perished out of the world. They will probably discover that it was a mistake.

The most difficult of all questions, as it regards the proper and legitimate functions of reason, is that concerning the extent of its authority as an expounder or interpreter of Revelation. The competency of reason is admitted as an instrument in exploring the realms of physical science. But in the decision of questions that are matters of Revelation, there is a great clashing of opinions. Admitting the possibility of a conflict between reason and Revelation, in which case there must needs be a surrender of one to the other, must we interpret reason by Scripture, or Scripture by reason? Which is the higher authority? Here is

where the rationalist comes in with his dogma, which puts reason above the Scriptures, and requires him in every such case of supposed opposition, to follow his reason instead of following the Scriptures. Or else he puts some new interpretation upon the Scripture, to harmonize with the dictates of reason, and follows that. This is rationalism. The safe rule which wisdom dictates is just the reverse of this. If God is the author both of nature and Revelation, there never can be any real conflict between them. And when, in consequence of our imperfect knowledge, there may be the appearance of such a conflict, it is certainly wisdom in one who knows that his foundation was in the dust, to distrust his own darkened reason, and to say that while he may be wrong, God's Word must be true. But there is a certain pride of intellect, which is natural to man in his lapsed condition, that will not allow him to turn aside from following the ignis fatuus light, or the glimmer of his own torch, to follow any other light, even though it come from the star of Bethlehem. And just here is the point of divergence, from which many begin to go astray, and wander off into everlasting darkness.

One of these learned rationalists—and he may be considered as the representative of others—in a late discourse said:

“An apostle of the early church, writing to one of the members, advises him to ‘prove all things’ and ‘hold fast to that which is good’ in their faith. At that time, the reason of man was supposed to be the docile recipient of the doctrines of faith, and not the independent judge of their beauty, truth, or validity.

To discriminate between the good and the evil, is what Paul—for he is the apostle I have referred to—enjoins upon his hearers. To say that none are good men or women, for instance, who deny that Jesus is an incarnate archangel or God, would be to condemn to the infernal regions of damnation the choicest specimens of humanity. Religion is still generally supposed to be identified with Revelation—something which human reason is unable to *verify*, and is certainly incompetent to judge. If this doctrine is accepted, there must be a divinely inspired church, inspired prophets and priests; and therefore we find throughout Christendom, that reason is assigned a very subordinate place. The office of reason is merely that of a faithful servant, to fill the lamps with oil, to dust the chairs, to guard the temple against pollution. But the rationalist is not satisfied with this. Reasonable religion says—the human mind's first duty is to prove, and test, and verify, not one thing, but all things. Is any thing so high, or so low, that it should not be judged? Nor can we tell, unless you try. Is the mere fact that a system has lived thousands of years, a sufficient proof that it is good, and should continue to live? The oldest things are frequently the worst; as for instance, ignorance, indifference, etc. Reasonable religion claims that the grander a thing is, the more vividly its mysterious beauty should be brought to view."

Here, the issue between rationalists and Christians, is clearly stated. Reason must be, as this public teacher claimed, the independent judge of the beauty, truth and validity of all things, natural and revealed. And he gives an instance—the incarnation of Jesus—reason must sit in judgment on that doctrine, and if it cannot test and verify it, it is not to be considered as

reasonable or rational, and, of course, not to be received.

The mistake here consists in supposing that human reason is competent to sit in judgment on the contents of Revelation. The only question proper for reason to decide, is whether the volume claiming to be a divine Revelation, is, or is not a Revelation of the Divine Will. When once the question is decided that the Bible is the Word of God, reason has nothing more to do with the contents, except to search and find out what they are, and then to act in accordance with the knowledge thus obtained.

When it has been ascertained, according to the established laws of evidence in such cases, that the Bible is of Divine authority, no fallible, mortal man is competent to go through the sacred pages, as it were, with spectrum in hand, judging this passage to be true and reasonable, and that to be contrary to reason, and false; pronouncing one doctrine to be in harmony with the dictates of natural religion, but another doctrine to be utterly repugnant to those dictates. Can human reason be set above the Divine Will, to decide what sort of a revelation God ought to have given to His subordinate creatures?

The question as to the authenticity of the Scriptures, is a proper and legitimate subject of inquiry, which has to be determined by reason, precisely as the credibility or authenticity of any other book is tested—by the examination of evidence. But when this question has been settled in the affirmative, and when the fact has been verified by reason, that the volume we call the Bible offers convincing evidence that it is au-



thentic and inspired, then nothing remains but to read, believe, and obey its teachings.

But the rationalist above quoted seemed to think that, unless reason is allowed to sit in judgment and pass on *the contents* of the sacred volume, it must have, in matters of religion, a very subordinate place assigned to it—and that we must have “a divinely inspired church, and inspired prophets and priests,” to expound the sacred volume. And reason will have nothing to do but to act the part of an humble servant—“to fill the lamps with oil, to dust the chairs and guard the temple.” But this is a perversion of fact. For if the Bible, as we say, is the gift of God to man, then clearly, it is his duty, as well as his privilege, to read and study it. The exhortation that comes, not to inspired prophets, or priests, or any particular or favored class—but to man—to every individual of the race, is, “Search the Scriptures.” This was spoken by Jesus to the masses who heard Him.

Suppose that there are some things in the Bible we do not understand—there are many more that we do understand. And He who gave us the Bible, and commanded us to search and study it, has likewise said, “If any man lack wisdom, let him ask the Lord, who giveth unto all men liberally, and upbraideth not.” There are no sources of knowledge known to us, but the two volumes of nature and Revelation, which are alike inexhaustible. In regard to the first, we have argued that reason is admirably adapted as an instrument to the purpose of searching, exploring, and finding out what nature teaches—what are laws of nature—and, in general, of discovering one by one,

all the occult mysteries of physical science. But reason cannot go beyond this. It does not sit in judgment on the laws or the works of nature, but only discovers what they are. Reason does not pretend to decide that this work, or this law was right and proper for the Almighty to have done or to have ordained, but that here is another law of nature that is so detrimental and destructive in its workings, that it looks more like the product of a demon, than of a merciful and wise God. Reason is not competent to decide such questions. This was the mistake—perhaps, we may say, the sin of John Stuart Mill, when he argued that the material universe is so full of evil, that it never could have been the product of a Deity, who unites in Himself the attributes of infinite wisdom, goodness and power. And this false reasoning landed him in atheism.

The rationalist before quoted has not yet avowed himself an atheist. He lands himself, however, and his hearers in a region of despairing doubts and darkness, as cheerless and full of gloom as that into which Mill was plunged by his philosophy, as witness the following utterance, quoted from the same discourse :

“There is more religion in honest doubt than in a thousand blindly followed creeds. It implies an anxiety to ascertain the truth. I have before said that the greatest provers are the greatest believers. Consider—is it a pleasant thing to be an orphan in the world? To make the past a wilderness, and to plunge into one’s grave forever? It is a heroic thing. A man who does that, shows a confidence in the strength of his convictions. One word as to the common apprehension that this reasonable religion admits of no

repose, and that it renders necessary ceaseless doubts, and ceaseless asking of questions. No; all are not provers—inquirers; this business is left to those who have to bear the awful burden.”

This is an extraordinary confession to come from a learned free thinker, or rationalist. “There is more religion,” he says, “in honest doubt, than in a thousand blindly followed creeds.” And it is “a heroic thing to be an orphan in the world—to make the past a wilderness, and to plunge into one’s grave forever!” Is this all? Then who would not rather wish, a thousand times over, that he had never been born!

But it is modestly suggested that it is only a few who have to bear the awful burden—“the provers, the inquirers” as he speaks of them—that is, the few who do the thinking of the many—the Emersons, the Spencers, the Frothinghams and others—they have to bear the awful burden—he might well say, of trying to prove, what?—why, that we are orphans in the world—that there is no certainty whether we have a God and Father or not—that we must spend our lives in ceaseless doubts and gloom, and plunge, at last, into a grave of everlasting darkness. This is rationalism—the very best phase of it! What a relief to turn away from such a prospect, to the light of hope and joy which Revelation sheds upon the pathway of the sorrow-stricken sons and daughters of men!

The mistake of all free thinkers and rationalists, is, that they have no premises—not a single fact to reason from, and their reasoning is all pure speculation. They pursue precisely the same course that the crazy scholastics did in the dark ages; just as if Lord Bacon

had never lived in the world, and had never found out a better way.

The office of reason is to search, and explore the volumes of nature and Revelation. Let scientists and rationalists do this with the same sincerity and honesty, that Lord Bacon did ; or as Sir Isaac Newton did, or John Locke, Robert Boyle, and others, whose names do honor to humanity—let them do this, and they will never have cause to complain that to reason is assigned “a very subordinate place.”

There are mysteries, of course, both in nature and Revelation, which reason cannot master. But it is not with the mysteries, only with the facts of nature and Revelation that reason has to do. Yet here, as we believe, is the stone of stumbling, and the rock of offence to these rationalists. If they would be content with facts, or with truth itself, and not concern themselves so much about the mysteries of revelation, the difficulties in their pathway, would soon disappear.

If naturalists should decline to investigate the works and the laws of nature, because of the mysteries they meet with, they would, at once, leave off their researches, and there would be an end to all further progress in science. A mystery meets them at the beginning of their researches, which there is not the slightest probability they will ever be able to solve—what is matter? They know that matter is—they know that it is capable of taking on an infinite variety of forms—that a mighty material universe has been, in some mysterious manner, organized and built out of this substance which is called *matter*. These are facts.

But do they question the reality of the facts, or do they cease to investigate them, because they cannot solve the mystery as to the essence of matter? Then why should they disbelieve Revelation, because of some real or fancied mystery or doctrine contained therein, which they cannot comprehend?

There is a book in existence—an extraordinary volume, called the Bible. That is the fact that is brought to the notice of mankind, and of which reason has to take cognizance. It claims to be an inspired volume, and a revelation of God's will to man. Now what is the first duty of every intelligent and rational soul in reference to this book? Obviously, it is to investigate the claims of the book—is it a divine book, as it purports to be? And having settled that question, the next duty is to ascertain its contents, and to order the life in accordance therewith, without a question or a murmur.

If a legate has come to us from the skies, or from any foreign land, bringing his credentials, the first duty is to examine those credentials; and if they are found to be genuine, and in order, there is nothing left us but to accredit the messenger, and proceed to learn the nature and design of his mission. There is nothing unreasonable in the Bible, though there may be many things which are above reason.

It does not fall within our plan here to enter on the proofs of the authenticity or the credibility of the sacred Scriptures. This would require a volume. But we feel perfectly free to lay down this proposition, viz.: that if there be a living man of ordinary education and intelligence, who has honest doubts as

to the truth of the Bible—if he will apply himself patiently and laboriously, and for a reasonable length of time, to the investigation of this question, availing himself of all the helps which are accessible for this purpose, he will, with infallible certainty, arrive at the only conclusion which would be possible in such a contingency. There is a law of evidence that governs belief, which must secure this result. Of this law, it may be said, that it is just as sure and unvarying in its operation, as gravitation or any other law of nature ordained of God.

When conclusive evidence is brought before the mind, it forces conviction or belief, and it is not optional with any mind which has perceived the evidence, to believe or not to believe. It is optional with him, however, whether he shall look at the evidence or not. A man has it in his power to put out his own eyes to keep from seeing the light, but he has it not in his power to keep from seeing the light when he has his eyes open and looks towards the sun, the source of light.

There is many a man who refuses to look at the evidence on which the authority of the Scriptures rests, either because he does not desire to see that evidence, or because he is too indolent to undergo the labor of the investigation necessary to know the truth. This is where responsibility comes in; and this law of belief enacted by Him who created the mind, lays the foundation of a moral accountability, which must annihilate all excuses for unbelief, and render every infidel speechless in the last day. The evidence exists, and the voice of reason cries to every one, look at it—search for it!

When the question concerning the divine origin of the Scriptures has been disposed of, there can be no doubt as to whether they shall be of binding authority in all matters of religion and conscience—but only so binding between each person and his God. No earthly tribunal, either ecclesiastical or civil, may come in, or interpose between the creature and the Creator. Free agency implies perfect liberty on the part of every subject of the divine government, to interpret the will of God for himself. How unfounded, therefore, is the objection of the rationalist, that we should need an inspired church, and inspired prophets and priests to expound the word of God, and that to reason would be assigned “a very subordinate place.”

It is true, the time has been, when this liberty was denied. According to prophecy, “the man of sin” had to be “revealed.” The night of “the dark ages” came on the world. “The mystery of iniquity” was permitted to work during that reign of sin and darkness. The key of knowledge was taken from the people, and a spiritual despotism such as the world had never before known, lorded it over the bodies and souls of men. But the prophetic period of 1,260 days (years) has expired; the mysterious words of prophecy have been accomplished, and the power of the “man of sin” has been broken forever.

The voice of reason itself vindicates, and asserts the right of every man to read and interpret the Divine will for himself. To his own master every man must stand or fall. The command to “search the Scriptures” is addressed equally to all. Who then will dare to snatch this priceless boon from the humblest

individual, or to interdict the reading thereof? Shall the pope, who is himself but a mortal man, do this? The "King of kings" hath said, "Call no man master, for One is your Master who is in heaven, and all ye are brethren."

To a soul created originally in the likeness of God, and having a capacity for communion with him, the Bible opens up themes of contemplation and knowledge, which are not to be found outside of its inspired pages. This Book tells us whence we came—that we have a Father, and we are not orphans. This Book tells us also whither we are going—brings life and immortality to light, and we do not plunge into our graves, shrouded in darkness forever. This Book gives us information concerning the origin of sin, and the remedy for sin. Countless millions have been willing to endure all manner of tortures, and death itself, to obtain this knowledge, but in vain. It is found nowhere but in the Bible. And with all other science, without this, the human race would be most wretched. And he would be the worst enemy of his kind, who would seek to put out the light of Revelation, or to suppress the Bible.



## CHAPTER II.

### *Moral Government, an Existing Fact.*

Nature of moral law—The materialistic philosophy—An extract from Robt. Owen—Proofs of moral government—Four admitted facts—The experience of all men—Courts and jails originated by moral law—What a rationalist said—Religion cannot die out—Society could not exist without it—What the Bible teaches—The first sin and the penalty—The law of Mount Sinai—Moral law is liberty—How and why judgments come—Memorial of the Passover—Of Babylon the great—Natural elements contrary to man—The apostacy caused the change—Man originally blest—A vast penitentiary—Harmonies of nature disturbed—How a materialist views things—Words of Mr. Beecher—Reading the volume of nature—No escape from penalty—The voice of conscience—Conscience a judge, not a guide—Must be educated—This faculty makes man superior—He works out his own destiny—In this sense like God and next to God—Why God ordained moral law.

**M**ORAL LAW concerns actions, as considered morally right or wrong, and is administered on the principle of reward and punishment.

Actions that are necessary, resulting from the operation of physical laws alone, are not regarded as good or bad—as right or wrong, in a moral sense, and therefore, they cannot be said to be either rewarded or punished.

Christians believe and admit that man, as to his physical nature, is controlled and governed by physical law as absolutely as any other material creature. But they differ from materialists in believing that man has a moral and a spiritual nature as well as a corporeal

existence; and that, as to his spiritual and moral nature, he is under the government of moral law. Materialists deny that man has any moral nature. They deny that he differs, in anything from other animals, except in the superiority of his physical structure. We observe that one animal differs from another in size, figure, color, and instinct. Some animals are much superior to others in these respects. And so man may be superior to every other animal known; but still, as they believe, he is but an animal, under the absolute control of the same physical laws that govern other animals.

Materialistic philosophers occupy the outer court of the temple of the universe. They view only the exterior of the building. They have never beheld the inner glories of the temple.

They know what matter is—at least, they imagine that they know. They are able to take cognizance of it by their bodily senses, and by the help of instruments. They can handle it—see it—measure it. It is something that has parts—that has color, figure and weight. And therefore, they know that matter exists—and they can find out something about the laws or conditions under which it exists.

But what can they know of the existence of spirit or mind? They are not able with their five bodily senses, and the help of instruments, to take cognizance of that. They cannot handle it—they cannot see it—they cannot measure or weigh it. It has no parts—no figure, no color: and therefore, they do not believe in it.

Looking at the human form, they see nothing but a material shape—it may be a more exquisite and beau-

tiful structure than any other—but they see only materialism in it. It has all the organs—perhaps more—perhaps less than any other body possesses. And why, they ask, should a man be superior to a dog, a monkey, or any other animal, except that his physical structure may be a more exquisite piece of mechanism, or that he may be the possessor of a finer set of animal instincts?

This is the style of their reasoning. And the laws that govern all matter—animate or inanimate, are the laws that govern man. This is what they believe.

If we adopt their theory, we should have to say that man has no soul—no moral nature. Then he would be under the law of necessity, and just as much the sport of chance and every accident, as the least atom of matter that is blown about in the winds. Can we believe that man is thus governed by the laws of matter—by gravitation? These laws are unvarying. It was Robert Owen, a noted materialist, who asked:

“Can these laws be rendered variable and uncertain for man, an insect upon an atom, as he exists upon the earth, compared to the infinity of space, with its endless system of suns and planets, revolving sphere beyond sphere, unchanged, and probably unchangeable? No! the composition and decomposition upon the earth, when viewed without the vanity and presumption arising from ignorance of the laws of nature, will be found to differ not in man from any other vegetable or animal compound. He is composed of the same materials, and he is again decomposed, and becomes part of the general mass from which every earthly compound continues to be formed.

“The worm and the insect are his kinsfolk—they are from the same original stock of materials, and in the next decomposition, will unite again as children of the same origin, proceeding from the universal mass from whence all come, and unto which all return.”

This is materialism. The worm, the insect, and man are brethren—children of the same stock, destined in the next decomposition to unite again in one common putrid mass in the grave. That is the end of all alike. This is their philosophy.

Now let us consider whether there is not a higher destiny in store for man—or whether, indeed, he is made up of the same matter, and only the same matter as maggots and worms, and the elements that make sport of his brief life. This is an important question, involving the destiny and the happiness of every human being.

I shall advance no vague theories, nor indulge in any idle speculations, for the purpose of demonstrating the existence of God's moral government over man. This great problem is just as susceptible of proof by inductive reasoning, as any other problem in natural or moral science. I shall state four universal and admitted facts as the proof, on which I rely in maintaining the doctrine of God's moral Dispensation over man, in opposition to the ethics of materialists.

I. The first fact is, the universal experience and practice of mankind. For it is a fact that all the governments known among men are *moral governments*—that is, governments that recognize the distinction of right and wrong in human actions, and that are main-

tained on the principle of reward and punishment. It is not presumed that there is any sceptic, who, for the sake of a theory, would seriously undertake to controvert or deny this fact.

Family government is moral government, appealing to the sense of right and wrong in the governed, and holding out reward and punishment, approbation or disapprobation, as the means of securing obedience. Every civil constitution, in every country, no matter what form of government may prevail, whether a monarchy, a despotism, or a republic, has been framed, and can only be maintained in accordance with the universal prevalence of this moral sentiment, that there is a difference in the actions of men—that some actions are to be punished, while others are to be rewarded. It may be further remarked, that this universal sentiment is the very principle or bond that holds human societies together.

Every intelligent and reflecting person, will accord in the truth and the beauty of the sentiments, uttered by a New York preacher, in one of his Sunday discourses, who is reported to have said :

“Government is based upon obedience; and if there is such a thing as pardon, except under certain conditions in the executive, then, brethren, it is not government. You could not carry on the government of New York for twenty-four hours, if the Governor of the State, or the Mayor of the city, had the right to say, should the whim take him, that the prison-house of Auburn shall be emptied of its offenders, and the Toombs' door shall be opened, and the inmates go free. The only reason why you are secure in your house is in the fact that the crime and

the punishment go together. Weakness in Him who sits aloft, is weakness all through; and if in his softer moments, he has the power to sign pardons—brethren, your courts are good for nothing—your judges might as well descend from the bench; for government is only the caprice of a mob, and not the protection of a people. I think I can safely say, that, except under given conditions, and those strict ones, there is no such thing as pardon for guilt that has been committed."

This is not mere sentiment nor idle declamation. The words quoted express a fundamental truth. What is it which has filled Sing-Sing and the Toombs with their inmates? It is moral government that has done it—the doctrine of reward and punishment—the doctrine of moral right and wrong in human actions. Could that law be repealed without, at the same time, disorganizing our courts, breaking up our legislatures, and opening the doors of every jail and penitentiary in the land? None of these institutions could exist, if the moral sentiment were blotted out.

Who can subscribe to what was said by another New York preacher—that eccentric man, Mr. O. B. Frothingham, possessed of vast erudition and a great genius, but a very perverted judgment, when he said in a Sunday discourse, as reported in the papers:

"For the great mass of believers in reasonable religion (rationalism), there remains trust in honor, in purity, justice, sense, self-respect, kindness, patience, forgiveness, in faith between man and woman. These are all reverent. Systems of religion may die out, but as long as man remains man, these always will be

the clamps of society; they will always be the same bonds that bind man to man."

This is poetry—it is a fancy sketch—a picture of human nature as it has never existed since the original apostacy. "Systems of religion may die out," he says, "but the clamps of society," as he speaks of them, "that will always be the same bonds that unite man to man," are "honor, purity, justice, sense, self-respect, kindness, patience, forgiveness, faith between man and woman."

These would do, if man had a sinless nature. But man is a fallen being, and it takes the civil law with its penalties, and religion with its awful anathemas, and magistrates, and courts of justice, and prisons and bolts and bars to keep society together. And these are *the clamps*, the bonds that scarcely, and with the greatest difficulty, bind man to man. Systems of religion cannot die out. Society could not exist without some sort of religion. Even a false system is better than no religion. If there ever was a time when systems of religion died out, it was when, in France, towards the close of the last century, there was a decree enacted that "there is no God, and death is an eternal sleep." But that death of religion did not continue very long. And it is quite certain that there is no class of men—not the veriest sceptics, who would be willing to witness such another death of religion.

Let our materialistic philosophers continue to teach, that the actions of men proceed from their instincts, and that these instincts are natural to them, as the

instincts of inferior animals, and that, therefore, their actions are necessary and natural, and not moral—their teaching, and their believing it, will not make it so, nor alter the state of the case in the minutest degree.

All the communities and societies of men on earth, are united and held together by the principle of moral association, accountable to their head and to one another, for the maintenance of good order, and the public welfare. Not even a voluntary association, such as a Christian Church, could exist without some moral principles of this kind, to bind them together. A church will punish a refractory or unruly member, by expulsion or otherwise. A good and wise parent will correct and punish a disobedient child with a rod, or by manifesting in some other way his displeasure against disobedience and wrong-doing; and he knows that if he should fail in this, he might bring up his son to shame and sorrow.

II. A second fact by which I prove the existence of a moral constitution, is the admitted fact, that it is taught in Revelation, from the very beginning to the end of the Bible. I am aware this mode of proof is not admitted by sceptics. But I only want to show that the voice of Revelation, on this question, is in harmony with all the voices of nature. We could not understand our Bible, except on the supposition that it teaches, that man is a moral and accountable agent. Every page of the inspired volume affords evidence that God reigns and rules by law, and that the government over man is based on the distinction that obtains between sin and holiness. Every command,



every threatening, every warning, and every promise contained in the Bible implies that man is a moral and accountable agent. In the very beginning of the history of man is contained this record:

“And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.”

Here, in the very infancy of man, we find the supreme Creator dealing with man as a rational and moral being, capable of recognizing the obligation of law, and of rendering obedience or disobedience to that law. And when man had broken the law by a voluntary act of disobedience, the record goes on to say, that, the Lord God said unto the man:

“Because thou hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, thou shalt not eat of it, 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 unto 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.”

From this sentence, that was pronounced on man because of sin, we learn that the Lord our God is a holy God, who, when He made the world, and made man, determined to establish *the law of holiness*.

How clearly is this truth set forth in the promulgation of the moral law amid the thunderings and

lightnings of Sinai, where the Lord is represented as saying :

“I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.”

When the Lord was about to bring His ancient people of Israel into the land of promise, He distinctly set before them the terms and conditions on which they were to expect His favor, or to fall under His displeasure, and forfeit their inheritance :

“See, I have set before thee, this day, life and good, and death and evil; in that I command thee, this day, to love the Lord thy God; to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes, and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply; and the Lord thy God shall bless thy land, whither thou goest to possess it. But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou goest over Jordan to possess it. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore, choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.”

Here is liberty of choice—an exhortation to choose between life and death—between blessing and cursing. Do not such passages indicate that the glorious Father condescends to treat with man; not as if he were a puppet or an insect, but a rational being, hav-

ing knowledge to discern between good and evil, between life and death; and having liberty and power to choose between them? The law over man is a *law of liberty*, under which he chooses his own destiny, and works it out by a life of obedience or disobedience to the Divine will.

This distinction between liberty and necessity—between physical and moral law, is recognized in every chapter of the Bible. If it were otherwise, there could be no institutions of a social or moral nature. The marriage relation itself would be ignored, and men and women would herd together in the manner of the inferior animals. And, indeed, this is the very kind of reform, advocated by some of their philosophers. They are impatient of the restraints imposed on their natural liberty, by the strict rules of conventional society.

The doctrine so clearly set forth in the Bible, that the Lord is a God of judgment, who sends famine, and fire, and sword, and pestilence to punish the guilty inhabitants of the earth, is exceedingly repugnant to the notions of all these Liberalists and free-thinkers. But the fact that the Bible is full of this doctrine, is one of the strongest proofs of its divine inspiration. If God did not send judgments on the wicked, as a sign of His displeasure against their crimes, we should have no proof that He is a God of holiness, and a God of justice. Almost every page of the Bible, is a full vindication of the character of God in this respect.

“The Lord is a God of judgment.” “Justice and judgment are the habitation of His throne.” It is equally true that God is a God of *judgment*, as that

He is a God of love, and this idea is much more frequently insisted on in the Scriptures. Here is a passage, for example, which even shocks the refined feelings of these would-be philosophers :

“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, because of the wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me.”

This passage sets forth the general principle on which God deals not with one nation only, but with all nations. For there is no nation that is not judged, in fact, by cursing, vexation, and rebuke sent on them by heaven, because of the “wickedness of their doings.” This is the Bible solution of the question, as to all the natural evils with which this world abounds. But in what ways do the cursings, the vexations and the rebukes come? How does God execute His judgments on the guilty nations? Let us quote again :

“The Lord shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee, until He have consumed thee from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. The Lord shall smite thee with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish. And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass; and the earth that is under thee shall be iron. The Lord shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust; from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed.”

These judgments—consumption, fevers, wars, mil-

dew, drouths, and other similar calamities, are natural evils, as materialists say, which come in obedience to natural law, without any reference to a moral cause. And we regret to say, that some who profess to believe the Scriptures, take the same view. But there is no mistaking the import of the Divine Word, that these cursings, vexations and rebukes, which come in the forms mentioned, are special judgments upon the people, because of the wickedness of their doings. As this was the case formerly, or under the old dispensation, so all these natural calamities must be considered in the light of judgments now and under the new dispensation, having reference to the prevalence of national sins, and sent as rebukes and judgments because of the same.

In the history of the Jewish people, there is a perpetual memorial to remind them that God is a God of judgment—it is the ordinance of the Passover. Every year, when they observe the ordinance, they are commanded to say to their children, who ask what is meant by this service: “It is the sacrifice of the Lord’s Passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when He smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses.”

To this day the Jews observe this ordinance, and, annually, when they celebrate the Passover, they teach their children, that God is a God of judgment—that it was the Lord who smote the Egyptians, when He slew all their first-born in one night, and delivered their houses. Modern rationalists and philosophizing Christians have to treat this Mosaic record as altogether fabulous, as they have no faith in a God who

is, as they express it, a "*Vindictive Being*," or a God of judgment.

If we study the history of God's dealings with His ancient covenant people, from the date of their redemption from the house of bondage in Egypt, through all their checkered career, till we come on down to their present dispersed condition, we find it only one continued record of their varied acts of rebellion, and of His varied judgments upon them on account of those acts of sin and rebellion.

If the beautiful temple and the once glorious city are reduced to a heap of ashes, and the inhabitants are carried as captives to Babylon, the inspired historian is careful to record the fact, that God gave the city and the inhabitants over into the hand of the king of Babylon, because of their wickedness, and because they had forsaken the law of the Lord their God.

We can scarcely read a chapter in the Old or New Testament, without being impressed with this great and leading thought, that seems to pervade the whole sacred volume, to-wit: that God is a God of judgment—that God is the Moral Governor among the nations—and that God does, and that He will avenge the insults to His holy law.

In the language of the prophets and all the inspired writers, God is the One Supreme Agent—all the great revolutions in the world—all judgments are ascribed to Him, as if He were the sole actor. Other agents or agencies are simply His ministers. As when it is said of Nebuchadnezzar, who was sent by God to chastise the nations of the earth:

“O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, the staff in

their hand is mine indignation. I will send him against a hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets."

There is rare sublimity in these words of the prophet. Nebuchadnezzar was, in his day, the proudest and the richest monarch who had ever occupied a kingly throne. He ruled over one hundred and twenty provinces, and he was the scourge of nations. He built Babylon the great, whose fame will never pass from history. But the modern traveller can hardly identify the spot where that great city once stood, celebrated for its palaces and hanging gardens that were the wonder of the world. It is, literally, the habitation of dragons and every doleful creature, according to the written decree of God:

"Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldee's excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their folds there. But wild beasts of the desert shall dwell there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces; and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged."

That was the decree of God against Babylon, in the day when He tells His prophet to write:

"I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked

for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible."

The decree against Babylon, that was entered upon record in the minuteness of its details, while yet the city was at the zenith of her pride and glory, is one of the strangest things ever made a matter of record. But the exact and literal execution of the decree is something, if possible, yet more strange. This is a part of "the strange work of God." Hence we understand why it is that materialists have no use for the Bible. They do not believe that there is any God in the history of nations. They do not believe that Jehovah ever had anything to do with the downfall of Babylon—with the overthrow of Jerusalem, the holy city—with the destruction of Egypt's first-born—nor with any of the judgments and wars, and other material events, mentioned in the history of nations. All the great conflagrations that have ever taken place, even to the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah; and all the famines, pestilences and earthquakes that have ever occurred since time began, as these philosophers reason, were only "*material disasters*," effected by the physical laws of the universe without the agency of God, and with no reference to the moral character of the inhabitants—no more than if there were no inhabitants, and no God! These rationalists shut God out of the universe! But, unmistakably, His voice is heard in the Revelation which He has given us. They will never be able to silence that.

III. The third universal fact, which shows the existence of a Moral Government, is the fact that the



natural elements and all the laws of nature are in exact accord with what we have seen to be the voice of Revelation, as if they were all in opposition to man because he is a sinner, and had been ordained as so many instrumentalities, or agencies to punish him for his rebellions. The existing state of things is certainly anomalous.

If there were no sin, and no moral government in the world, we could not reason that an Omnipotent and perfectly benevolent Creator would have been the author of a world so full of evil as this. It does not comport with our ideas of the wisdom and goodness of God. John Stuart Mill did not reason illogically, when he said:

“Those who admit an omnipotent, as well as perfectly just and benevolent Maker and Ruler of such a world as this, can say nothing against the doctrines of Christianity.”

The charge of Mill would be just and true, on his theory that there is no such thing as sin, or moral agency, or a moral government—on the theory that man is nothing more than a puppet or a football in the scale of creation. A just and benevolent Creator could not, and would not give needless pain to the meanest worm. But on the Bible view that man is a moral agent, made originally in the likeness of God, and that man is a rebel against the government of God, and that this world is nothing else but a habitation of rebels, it ought not to seem a strange or anomalous thing, that there should be a change in the abode of man, and that the natural elements which are only

God's servants, should be in opposition to man. But however it may seem to our imagination, there is no denying the fact.

A popular rationalistic preacher said more than he meant, when, speaking of the physical and moral condition of our world, he called it "*a vast penitentiary.*" For, viewed as a habitation of criminals and insurgents against the rightful authority of the Lord of the universe, what else is it—or what else ought it to be but a prison-house, or a vast penitentiary?

The state of the world is not what it was originally. Everything has been changed. Revelation and natural science both furnish the amplest evidence as to the fact of such a change. If there is a God who is omnipotent, and just, and benevolent, He certainly could, as He would have excluded all natural evil, on the supposition that it was the abode of innocence and purity. He could have made the whole earth a garden—a paradise, as He made Eden, causing to grow out of the ground, spontaneously, "every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food." And this is just what He did, when there was no sin. He made abundant provision for His two first children, Adam and Eve, while they were in a state of innocence. There was no curse on the ground till after they had sinned. And this must have been a fair and beautiful world, as we know from the numberless traces of beauty and perfection still visible, notwithstanding the all-pervading and withering blight that has come upon it, because of the apostacy.

How the change was effected, atheists cannot say—

rationalists can give no account concerning it. We go to the Bible for a solution of the problem. It may be well here to repeat the passage which has already been quoted, because it is the only solution of the great problem involving the introduction of evil into this world:

“And unto Adam He said, because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, thou shalt not eat of it; 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.”

This is the explanation. It was sin. Man had been constituted the lord of this lower creation, and when he became an apostate, the malediction fell not on him alone, but on all that was his. The ground was cursed, and all things for man's sake, and the once fair and beautiful earth was changed to a desert—“*a vast penitentiary,*” as it is this day.

The physical change or derangement that took place in the earth, corresponds exactly to the change in the moral character of the inhabitants; as indeed what else could be expected, under the administration of a perfect moral government? Even the natural elements and the laws of nature, originally designed to minister to the pleasure of man, became ministers of wrath. The ground brings forth, spontaneously, thorns and thistles, and noxious weeds everywhere,

and in the greatest abundance. They grow without culture, even choking out the plants and grains that are useful to man, so that he has to give all diligence, and with great painstaking and toil, overcome these natural enemies, to extort from the reluctant earth, a scanty subsistence. No reason can be given why the ground should produce briars, and thistles, and all sorts of noxious weeds spontaneously, and without any culture, instead of yielding every grain, and fruit, and plant that is useful to man. The principal employment of every one who tills the land, is to fight down the noxious weeds, to keep them from rooting and crowding out the useful grains and plants which he would cultivate. It could not have been so in the beginning. All things indicate a change. There is a voice of nature that seems to issue from the very ground—that is heard in the angry storm, the tempest, the whirlwind, and the earthquake—a voice that seems but the echo of the voice of Revelation—"God is angry with the wicked." What is the meaning of these unseemly fissures and yawning chasms in the earth—these barren desert wastes of sand—these dismal swamps—these precipitous, rocky cliffs—these burning mountains here and there, affording unmistakable evidence that fire, and flood, and earthquake have at different periods been arrayed against man, as if the very earth abhorred the sinner, and were ready to spue out or to swallow up the guilty inhabitants? Can we believe these signs of wrath could have been visible in the physical structure and configuration of this globe, if there had been no defacement by sin, of God's perfect work?

The very atmosphere that we breathe, so transparent and ethereal, and so well adapted to the purposes of a joyous existence, and which should come to us like the soft breezes of Araby, laden with health and the aroma of spices and flowers, is not unfrequently freighted with disease and death. Cholera, yellow-fever and other epidemics are borne to us on the wings of the wind. How is it that the clear and serene atmosphere, that from its very nature we would say, must have been created only for benevolent purposes, has been made the medium, and messenger of death, instead of life?

Is it not clear that there is something wrong—that the harmonies of the universe have been disturbed? Can any cause of the disturbance be assigned? Yes, even natural science, as it has been shown in the former part of this work, comes to our aid, vindicating the Mosaic record, and assuring us that this state of things is abnormal—that it was not original—that there has been a mighty revolution on the earth's surface—that there was a time when there could not have been a storm or a tornado—a swamp or a sickly marsh—a burning mountain or an earthquake known to the inhabitants of this earth. But a revolution has come. And with the Bible in our hand, we know how it came, and why it came.\*

There is judgment in the earth, because there is rebellion—there is natural evil, because there is moral evil—there is punishment by fire, and famine, and earthquake, because towns, and cities, and nations are

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\* See supplement.

filled with violence, and have corrupted their way before God. If we drop from our creed the idea of moral government and the doctrine of "the fall of man," we must either conclude against the being of a God, or we must say, that He created men and helpless babes, and other creatures, for the pleasure of witnessing their tortures.

But how do our philosophers solve this problem of evil? They do not deny the existing evil. They cannot deny it. The fact is world-wide, photographed on the broad surface of an earth that has felt the throes of a convulsion from centre to circumference—and photographed in the writhing features of every helpless dying infant, and in the anxious careworn face of every sorrowing child of Adam. They cannot deny the existence of evil. But the philosophers do not see in it, evidence of the mournful fact, that the world is in a state of revolt from God, and that as a God of holiness, He has to execute judgment and justice.

How then do the philosophers solve the problem? For they must, necessarily, have something to say on the subject. But of course, and of necessity, they must talk very much at random on such a theme. For example, we have one of them, in attempting to account for a recent, widespread distress in Asia, saying:

"Philosophers will tell us, and, undoubtedly, they are right, that the famines and pestilences, and wild beasts, and venomous reptiles, which are particularly destructive of human life in the south of Asia, are an essential and humane part of the great economy of the

universe; that nature but relieves herself of her superfluous life; and the weakest perish that the fittest may live. The line in the cable news that has just told us, that but for the aid furnished by the government, three quarters of a million of natives in the presidency of Bengal, would have perished ere now of starvation, is sufficiently startling; but it does not begin to describe the extent of the famine in India, and the probable results."

What a theory to put forward in this enlightened 19th. century! in which there is no thought of a great moral governor, who presides over the destinies of the universe!

Another of these self-constituted priests, commenting on the Boston fire several years ago, treated it as altogether a material event, and lying wholly out of and beyond the province of moral government. His words are:

"It is a noteworthy and encouraging sign of the times that this *material disaster* is not expounded as a judgment of heaven upon the sins of the sufferers. State street is not assumed to have been a dividing line between the goats on one sidewalk, whose houses were burned, and the sheep on the other sidewalk, whose houses were spared."

It was the God-man, who used the terms, "*sheep*," and "*goats*," to designate the righteous from the wicked. To employ these terms as the rationalist did, in the above quotation, looks like a deliberate attempt to cast a sneer on the words of the God-man. But to say nothing of that, if the Boston fire was nothing more than a "*material disaster*," and in no sense

a providential dispensation, what follows, as a necessary and logical inference, from this assumption? There is no material event or disaster, that can be expounded as a judgment of heaven upon the sins of men. All the fires that ever occurred, from the fire of Sodom and Gomorrah to the great Boston fire—all the plagues and famines, and earthquakes, and floods, and explosions—and all the nameless natural evils that fill up the calendar of human woe, are only "material disasters," that happen like the changes of summer and winter, and are not to be expounded "as judgments of heaven upon the sins of the sufferers." That is the logic. And there is no God. Or, if there be a God, He has retired from the world, and left it, with all its vast interests and helpless creatures, to take care for itself! This is Mr. Beecher's God!

If we could read the volume of nature, as clearly as we can that of Revelation, doubtless, we should understand that the connection between transgression and penalty, is a law of the universe, belonging to the physical system no less than the moral. For there is one God over all. Transgression must be followed by penalty. Could one take fire into his bosom, and not be burned? Could a man take arsenic into his system, without being poisoned? Could one throw himself across a railroad track before a passing train, without being crushed? Could a man attempt to gaze steadily, at noonday, at the sun, with naked eye, without injury to his sight? Could one be a drunkard, a glutton, a debauchee, without injury to his health, and filling his system with the seeds of disease that may be transmitted to his children?



They who can raise no objection to the system of nature on account of this immutable connection between transgression and penalty, ought to bring no charge against the system of Revelation. Both systems speak the same language, proclaiming that God *rules by law*, and that He is a God of holiness.

IV. I come now to the statement of a fourth fact—an admitted and universal fact—in confirmation of the theory of a Moral Constitution—and that is, that there is found in the heart or the conscience of every human being, a conscious sense of right and wrong. This conscience is an essential part of our being. And if God made man, He must have endowed him with this faculty. And if this conscience testifies truly, and if it does not deceive us, then there is a right and a wrong in human actions; and the three voices of nature, Revelation and conscience, are in perfect accord with the universal practice of mankind, on this great question.

It is the universal consciousness of sin that has given rise to the various expiatory rites, and the many systems of false worship, which abound all over the world. What are these sacrificial rites and forms of worship, but so many methods or devices by which the devotees hope to offer satisfaction for their sins, and propitiate their offended deities. As surely as sin exists, there must be a consciousness of it in every human breast, with a desire to escape the consequences thereof. There is not an adult, rational human being, who can say, in truth, that he is without sin. Now, this universal sense of sin, is proof equal to a demonstration, not only that all have sinned, but

that man exists under a moral dispensation. And what the inner voice, or the conscience of every man born into the world, proclaims in the very depths of his soul, must be regarded as a universal truth.

Conscience is not, in itself, a sufficient light or guide independently of the light of Scripture, to direct us in the journey of life. If conscience were a light—and a sufficient light, then, there would be no need of another light. We must, indeed, obey the dictates of conscience—and to refuse to do so would be sin. But those dictates of conscience are not original and innate ideas, or principles that spring up in the conscience; but they come from education. Conscience has to be educated, and it is more frequently under a bias to evil than to good, in consequence of a false or a wrong education. The Hindoo mother had a conscience which told her that she should cast her babe into the sacred Ganges, to feed the hungry crocodiles. It was conscience—but still it was a false or wrong education. Conscience is not a book of knowledge, except as written on its blank pages by the finger of education. Conscience is not a light in or by itself, but it must be enlightened by the Word of God.

The office of conscience is not to give light in the understanding of any, but to sit as a judge on our moral actions, accusing or else excusing every one, as those actions may be either good or bad. And we know—every man knows, whose conscience has not become seared by being long resisted, that it does perform its office most faithfully—that it does condemn the guilty as well as acquit the guiltless. And we

know equally well, that, by the verdict of this sleepless sentinel, every soul stands a condemned sinner in the sight of heaven. And the apostle logically reasons, that, "If our conscience condemn us, God is greater than our conscience, and will condemn us also."

What, then, is the conclusion? If the whole world is condemned—self-condemned, or convicted of sin, sin must exist, and there must be a moral government.

In bestowing on man this endowment or faculty, which we have named *Conscience*, which with the gift of reason elevates man infinitely above all other terrestrial creatures, and constitutes him a moral and accountable agent—in doing this, God has lifted man to a higher plane in the scale of existence than any other order of beings. He is not controlled by any law of necessity or fate. But for anything we can know to the contrary, man is the noblest being in his nature and destiny, next to God, that has a conscious existence in any portion of the boundless dominion of God. For he was made in the image of God. Was that nothing? What more could be said for the dignity and honor of any created intelligence? And having been formed in the image of God, he is free—he is under the law of liberty—having the choice of his own actions, and his own destiny. In this sense, he is god-like.

What if some pervert the gift conferred on them, and, by a free but wicked choice, forfeit their birth-right, and the favor of the Holy One. He was not bound to withhold the inestimable boon of liberty from the race; He foresaw that He could over-rule the evil

for good. It was under the bearing down and pressure of this great thought that the apostle said, "O, the death, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and His ways past finding out!"

Moral law is the law of liberty. Physical law is necessity. Who can draw any comparison between the two? If blessing and cursing, and life and death are set before me, and if I am free to choose between them, and to work out my own destiny, am I not next to God? Can a finite creature be invested with any higher prerogative than this? Would it be any glory to God to reign over suns, and planets, and starry worlds without number, that revolve with ceaseless regularity, having no free-will, and that can be nothing but what they are? Would it be any glory to him to reign over plants, and insects, and animals that know no law but that of necessity—that have no free-will—no knowledge of good and evil—no knowledge of the Creator, and therefore, can never be deserving either of reward or punishment? These could never render intelligent praise to the Holy One on account of his excellent glory. One free, intelligent and immortal spirit, made in the likeness of God, must be of more value in His sight, than all the material globes in existence.

This may suggest the reason, and perhaps this ought to suggest to our minds the reason, why God purposed to ordain and set up a moral dispensation. It could not have existed, if God had not ordained it. It is a higher system than the physical system. There can be no comparison instituted between them. Ma-

terialists have no conception of it. That the Infinite and Holy One should have purposed in the counsels of His wisdom to make a display of "the beauty of holiness" to the minds of any of His creatures—that is a thought that never entered the conceptions of a materialistic philosopher. They stand in the outer court of the temple of the universe. They do not behold the inner court. And they persist in the belief that there is no moral system of government—no knowledge of moral good or evil—no sin nor holiness as qualities of action or conduct.

The attentive reader who has followed carefully the line of argument pursued in this chapter, must see that the proofs in favor of the reality of a divine moral constitution, are such as no sophistry or false reasoning can ever invalidate. The proofs are the four universal and admitted facts, which have been enumerated, viz. :

1. The practice and experience of all nations.
2. The teachings of Revelation.
3. The inseparable connection between transgression and penalty.
4. The voice of conscience in universal mankind.

The manner of the introduction of this moral system into the world will be the theme of the next chapter. This subject has not hitherto been understood. It has not been explained. Moses, the servant of God, has written a plain and full account of it. But theologians and philosophers, by some mysterious and remarkable oversight, have failed to comprehend his simple and plain record. Jesus, Master, breathe upon Thy servant, that he may receive the

Holy Ghost, that he may understand the mystery, and may cause others to understand it.

### A SUPPLEMENT.

Just before handing this chapter, on Moral Government an existing fact, into the hands of the printer, the author was so fortunate as to have his eye light on the following newspaper article, headed, "A Popular Delusion," by W. H. Van Doran, D. D. He never met with that name before, and he don't know who the writer is, but the sentiments are so just and beautiful, and so exactly coincide with his own as expressed in this chapter, and especially in the chapter on the antediluvian earth, in PART FIRST, that he desires to transfer the article entire into this volume, for the edification of all God's children, into whose hands it may fall. The thoughts are worthy to be stereotyped not only on paper, but on the hearts and minds of all who desire to know the truth: Here is the article:

"A scholar of high standing seems to sanction the idea that the earth is as originally created. In his 'studies,' Trench implies that the 'deserts,' those scars on our globe, were all there at the beginning, while we find an entirely different state from the record. For the true condition of our world, the Holy Spirit actually goes out of His way to let us know what a vast Eden covered it from pole to pole. What relation has the '*mist* that watered the whole face of the earth,' to do with no man being found to till it?

"If we discover the fact that originally no clouds were needed for irrigation, here is a substitute. If

we answer rightly the sceptic's query, where was the rainbow before the flood, and how could it then be a sign? we reply that the laws of light must have been the same before as after that miracle. But if there was no need of showers before, then the Creator adopted another mode of watering the earth. If so mighty a change in the physical relations of our system thus took place, there must be some hints as to the fact. Our earth now groaning under the curse, is not that Paradise which the Creator made for His first-born of human kind.

" 1. The grand miracle of the deluge completed the curse pronounced in Eden. Now, we are living on a wreck, which is doomed to the flames. Did not God, Jehovah, clearly affirm that 'He saw everything, and behold, it was very good?' The writer once stood on the deserts of Sahara and Arabia, and asked the question: are these fearful scars of eternal barrenness and desolation, the furniture of our first parents' home, 'very good?' Are the malarial swamps, the volcanoes, the millions of acres sown with poisonous minerals, and other millions covered with rocks, the Eden earth described as well pleasing to the eye of Him whose very city streets of His palace home are of 'pure gold, as it were transparent glass?'

" If the curse fell on

" 'Unsinning earth, but not in vengeance,'

as Bryant sang, then we are floating on a ruined world; then we can measure somewhat the height and depth of that terrible imprecation whose word never fails; 'Cursed is the ground for thy sake.' When such an awful word goes forth from the lips of Him whose name and nature is LOVE, rest assured they mean what they express. Then we understand why such fearful tempests, whirlwinds, siroccos and cyclones now blast the health, the homes and

harvests of men. We learn why the sun and moon did not then smite the dwellers below, by day or by night. The spasms which convulse the human frame are, so far from being signs of strength, proofs of weakness. Thus the earthquake, tornado and thunder are not evidence of that perfection in our world when coming fresh from the Creator's hand, but of the fearful shock of the curse. 'The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain until now.'

"We find a solution for all those mysterious Cambrian, Silurian, Devonian strata and contortions that geology reveals in the depths of our globe. We learn that the attempts of rationalists to belittle the miracle of the deluge, or lessen the awful ruin the fall hath wrought both in the moral and natural world, are the vain efforts of men to rid themselves of the rising alarms of conscience. As the undevout La Place and his confreres trace the origin of the heavenly orbs to star-dust or nebulous material lying all around space in any quantity, to be used by winds and laws when needed, so the men, wiser than their Creator, trace our moral and natural states to natural causes—any thing to get rid of their heart fears.

"2. This renders the Old Testament to F. W. Bauer quite distasteful. He disguises his hate under such terms as 'the dark shadow of the Hebrew God.' Prof. Smith, with the flowing figures of a splendid rhetoric, presumes to wipe out many of the grandest prophecies of the Messiah, or reduce them to the minimum claim to inspiration. This dashing youth, like young Arius, has lifted his hammer on the carved rock of the Sanctuary. Others still bolder rage fiercely, and hold up to infinite scorn the holy martyrs and Christians for their faith in the record of the fall; while the sacred penmen trace the source of all our woes as calmly as the evening stars look down on the carnage and wailings of thousands on the battle-fields of a Borodino or a Waterloo.



“Man, now full of sin and misery, was ‘created a little lower than the angels;’ yet we find that reverend professors in colleges founded by Christian philanthropists, teach that our Heavenly Father failed to show the universal kindness seen in parents even among heathen; that He sent forth his children abroad in the world without teaching them even to speak! So widespread has this poison of rationalism gone, that over two hundred ministers and elders of the Free Church of Scotland tell the world, that such of the Divine volume as Hebrew scholars decide to be human is not from God—as though we could by scholarship or science prove that a ray of the sunlight was not made for the eye, nor the air for the lungs.

“The very rocks of our thousand mountains, the storms that convulse our climate, the earth’s cemeteries so filled with the dead as though ploughed by living thunderbolts—all testify that ‘the ground is cursed for our sin.’ The earth on which we live, labor, groan, sicken and die, is not that beautiful world that the Creator Himself ‘saw, and behold, all things were VERY GOOD.’ A world that the infinite God pronounces such, had nothing to offend the eye or taste of an angel. Its climate, as well as man’s make, would have secured immortal bliss, as surely as its scenery pleased the seraphim or cherubim in their visitations to our world, then a universal Eden.”

So Dr. Van Doran had the idea that, when there was no sin in this world—when the inhabitants were sinless, their habitation could not have been a vast penitentiary as now, scarred and marred by the curse, but a beautiful abode, such as the angels might visit with delight—a “*universal Eden.*” This idea is in harmony with the theory of moral government. It vindicates the Heavenly Father against the charge of

cruelty and the want of benevolence when He sent forth His first children to be driven and tossed on this wide sea of sorrows and tribulation, as the opposers of moral law would say.

We thank the author for the just and appropriate thoughts contained in the article which we have copied, and also we thank the Editor of the *Presbyterian Journal*, whose sound judgment and taste led him to copy the article for the edification of his readers, as otherwise we might never have seen it. The author wants to say that outside the sacred volume, he scarcely knows of a scrap of writing of more significance, of more importance

We have to believe—the nature of moral government not less than the language of Inspiration, compels us to believe that the original nature of man was sinless, and that the nature of his abode must have been adapted to his sinless nature. The curse did not smite the earth till after sin entered. This great idea is further insisted on in Chapter VIII.

### CHAPTER III.

#### *The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil; or, The Ordination of the Moral System.*

The origin of evil—The different theories—Name of the mystic tree—No prohibition at first—The Divine purpose—No sin without positive law—Physical law would have prevailed—Negative holiness—All creatures negatively holy—Nothing moral in created goodness—This state could have been perpetuated—God could have ruled by absolute laws—The moral constitution not necessary—This raised man above the level of puppets and footballs—Who can complain?—The god of the geologists—The deity of rationalists—A god of three attributes—The world as it is—Fourth attribute of God—Expressiveness of Scripture names—“*Have become as one of us*”—Effects of the first sin—Three different sensations—Alienation from God—The original judicial sentence—Transgression and penalty—Paraphrase of the curse—The gold in the rough ore—Working out a glorious destiny—John’s apocalyptic vision—Beautiful saying of Pascal.

NO question has been more discussed than that concerning the origin of moral evil. Philosophers and theologians in every age and country, have devoted a large share of their time to the investigation of this subject. But they have to confess that the problem is still unsolved, and they are about as far as ever from having attained the end of their laborious researches and speculations.

The clue that would have led them out of the labyrinth of errors in which they have been groping, was within reach; but they did not notice it at all, or if they observed it, they have been too confident in their own wisdom to make any use of it. And when they

were not able to unwind the mystic thread, they have been rash enough, some of them, to end their doubts and their perplexity, by resolving that there is no such thing as *moral evil*, or *moral government*. They are our materialistic philosophers.

Others have said, that, the mystery is inexplicable—and that finite intellect can never solve it. Others again have concluded that evil is a principle inherent in matter alone, and that souls, if there are any such things as souls, contract all their moral defilement from their connection with material bodies. They profess to believe that when this union shall terminate, and the soul shall leave this body of infirmities, it will enter into a state of perfect and everlasting freedom from all moral impurity.

Others again believe in the existence of two opposite and eternal principles, the one good and the other evil, which they call the principles of light and darkness; or a good and an evil divinity, between whom there has been a perpetual conflict which has been going on from the beginning, and which shall continue to the end of time. To the strife between these opposing principles, they attribute all the good and evil that are found in this world.

Others, more wise, have said, that there can be but one eternal principle or supreme first cause; and that all things, and the universe as it now stands, must have emanated from that one eternal source. And while they argue that the evils which appear, were wisely permitted, and that they will be overruled for good, they do not undertake to explain why they were permitted, nor how they were introduced. They have

resolved that this is a subject beyond the grasp of finite minds, and that God has made no revelation regarding the mystery. This is the point which we are now to consider.

In the midst of the earthly paradise, ordained as the abode of innocence, there grew a fair tree, bearing beautiful fruit. It was named "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." The name is significant. It was so called, because, in its mysterious branches there was suspended the wondrous key, that was to open to the first man and to his children the temple of knowledge—not the knowledge of material things, or physical science—but the knowledge of moral good and evil—of sin and holiness—of the moral perfections of God as the moral governor of the universe. For that knowledge came by eating the fruit of that forbidden tree.

This statement may seem to some minds as a paradox, but to our mind it is a self-evident proposition, and it can be made clear to all. I don't know that there is a more important truth contained in the sacred volume, and as it is a fundamental truth, forming the very foundation of Christianity, and of God's moral government, I shall endeavor to place it in such a light as to leave no room for doubt.

The argument takes us back to the very beginning of the natural history of man—to the first chapter of Genesis:

"So God created man in His own image; in the image of God created He him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them; and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply and replenish

the earth; and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree, yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat; and it was so. And God saw every thing that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day."

Everything was absolutely perfect as it came direct from the creative hand of God. As yet there was no prohibitory law—no restraint laid on man. There is nothing yet said about the tree of life, nor about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, in the midst of the garden. But he has absolute permission to eat of every tree by reason of the grant—"I have given you every herb bearing seed which is upon the face of the earth, and every tree in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat." And the same absolute, unlimited permission was granted to every other living creature—"and 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."

There was one law for all—and that was physical law. All living things which God had formed, man included, were under the same law, and free to seek their pleasure and gratify their appetites and tastes with whatever had been made to grow, and there was

no limit to this freedom farther than that imposed by their limited faculties. Man had no pre-eminence, except in the nobler faculties and instincts which had been conferred on him. There was one law for all.

Now, if the revelation had closed here, and Moses had not written a word about the tree of knowledge of good and evil—nor about the prohibition—the temptation—the fall—the curse—we should believe that the order of things instituted, as recorded in the first chapter, might have been perpetuated. What necessity was there for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, afterward introduced, as related in the second chapter of Genesis? What necessity was there for that stern and peremptory prohibition? Did the all-wise and benevolent Father have some special use for the fruit of that one tree, which influenced Him to withhold it from the favorite among all his creatures, whom he had appointed as the lord over this new and fair creation? Or was the Supreme Creator moved by a disposition to subject man to a test—to prove him, whether he would be faithful in his allegiance to Heaven—as if, being omniscient, he did not know beforehand what the result would be?

Or was there a purpose on the part of Deity to tantalize His children, by placing beautiful fruits in their view, merely to excite their desires and their curiosity, and then refusing to gratify those desires after they had been excited? We can only suppose it possible for an arbitrary and cruel Deity, to have been actuated by such a purpose. But we must believe that there was a motive, and that God had a purpose in what He did.

Many very good Christians, and even some learned commentators, have looked on the whole narrative pertaining to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, as a mere incident or circumstance, without meaning or significance, woven into the sacred narrative, perhaps, for the sake of embellishment. While others have regarded it as only a myth or a fiction, that was never intended to convey any great and important truth, although the relation of it takes up about as much space in the Divine record, as the whole account of the work of creation!

Is there no meaning to be attached to such a passage? Must we not believe that God had a purpose, when He inspired Moses to write it? There is not a more wonderful passage, nor one pregnant with sublimer truth, than this narrative which details, so minutely, the whole transaction connected with that mysterious tree in the midst of Eden—the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. It is the solution of the great mystery, which so many earnest, anxious minds, in different ages, have longed to have solved—the mystery involving the existence of evil and sin. It is a most extraordinary writing. Such a passage could never have been found in the Bible, if it were not inspired. The fact that this account has been inserted in the very beginning of the natural history of our race, is susceptible of being improved into a demonstrative argument, for the truth and inspiration of the Holy Book. For why should Moses in that beginning of the ages, have been able to solve a problem, which no philosophers nor scholars have been able to solve since his day, nor even to understand the plain and easy solution which he wrote out?



We have seen that the original grant to man, contained an unlimited permission to eat of the fruit of every tree that grew in the garden. There was no law or command that imposed any restraint on his will, or his appetites. And this state of things, we have supposed, might have been perpetuated. And if this order of things had been continued, man could not have fallen. How could he have sinned or violated any law, when he was under no law but the law of absolute liberty? The definition of sin is, that, it is a "transgression of law," and "where there is no law, there is no sin." Some such positive command or enactment, as that which related to the tree of knowledge of good and evil, was necessary to make it even possible for Adam to sin. And if he could not sin, that implies, of course, that he could not be holy; that is to say, his freedom from sin was a physical necessity—was a created and constitutional holiness, not having anything in it of a meritorious or moral character. In this respect, he would have been on a level with every creature in the garden—under physical law—controlled and governed alone by his instincts. He could have ranged at pleasure through the blissful bowers of Paradise—could have gratified freely all his appetites with the fruits that hung from the branches of all the trees in the garden and scented the odors of flowers that perfumed all the air. And there would have been the tree of life to which he would have had free access, to keep his youth ever fresh and fair. And there would have been no death, because no sin. There would have been no curse on the ground, for that came because of the trans-

gression. There would have been no thorns and thistles—no sickness, no sorrow, no suffering and tears. The earth would have been all one Paradise. It was sin that made the change. And there could have been no sin without the positive law—the prohibitory command. It was the violation of that law which introduced the change. What could have been the purpose of the Almighty in bringing about the change, for He must have known what He was doing, and must have known what the result would be.

Has man lost by the change? Rather, has not his gain been infinite? We think that time, and the ages to come will show that. For God must have known what He was doing. We have seen what man was before the change. He was a *materialist*, in the sense that he was under the control of the material laws, as much so as animals, or plants, or planets. He had his instincts, the same as insects, or birds, or other creatures had their instincts. Of course, his instincts were of a higher order, because he possessed a nobler form, and nobler faculties than other creatures. He had the reasoning faculty, and he could know more than other creatures. He could know God, and commune, or converse face to face with God. But his love to God was an instinct implanted or created within him, when he was made, and he loved God necessarily, and for the same reason that he loved the beautiful Eve, and for the same reason that he loved the fruits and flowers that grew in Eden. It was his nature, and he could not have done otherwise. If he was wiser than other animals, it was because a higher nature had been conferred on him, and he was wiser

just in the degree that the gifts or the faculties conferred on him, excelled those of other animals. That was the only difference. But there could have been no more merit in the exercise of his gifts, than in the exercise of the gifts of the inferior animals.

Adam had been formed with certain faculties, appetites and instincts, to adapt him to, and qualify him for, the state or condition for which he was made—to relish the felicities of Eden—to enjoy the society of that fair being given to him as a companion, and above all, to walk in the light of His countenance who was the glorious author of all these gifts.

In all this, Adam was under the government of physical law. In all this, he only acted according to the impulses of his nature—the physical nature, or constitution which he had no hand in shaping. All his impulses flowed in a channel that had been marked out, and he could no more have guided them into a new channel, than a stream can leap over the banks of the channel which confine it, or make for itself a new channel. He was as passive in acting out the impulses of his nature, so far as any independent act of his own will, or freedom of choice was concerned, as the stream of water is passive in flowing through its channel, or as the bee is passive in building its honey-comb in obedience to the law of instinct. These all obey the physical laws which govern their being, and certainly can obey no other.

Could Adam have done otherwise than obey the laws of his physical life and being? Could he have changed his own nature? And if not, then there was no more holiness—no more morality—no more merit

that deserved a reward, pertaining to his conduct or his actions, than we should suppose would attach to the bee for making honey, by extracting sweet from flowers, or to the beautiful canary for pouring forth its involuntary music, in the general song of creation.

This original state of man, or the state that preceded the enactment of *positive law*, as before stated, might have been perpetuated indefinitely. There was nothing in the nature of things that imperatively required a change. God was under no necessity of any kind, to ordain the existence of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and to issue that stern decree, "in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die," when He foreknew absolutely what the consequence would be. It will certainly be conceded that God could have refrained from this course, and that He could have confirmed man in his original state. And then there would have been no moral evil, and no natural evil in the world. But would this have secured a higher and more glorious destiny for man, than that which has been wrought out? An affirmative answer would be, virtually, an impeachment of the infinite wisdom, as well as the goodness of God.

God could have ruled man a thousand or a million of ages, as well as for a single day, by physical laws. God could have done this. There is no law of necessity or fate, that binds God. He "worketh all things according to the good pleasure of His will." It was a voluntary and arbitrary measure on His part, that He placed man under the positive law—not cruel, tyrannical or unjust—but arbitrary, as being the result

of His own most wise and holy will. The wisdom and the goodness are to be seen in the final consequences.

The Supreme Lord of the universe, we admit, could have ordained a system exclusively material, controlling men and angels by physical law, and placing them on a level with puppets and footballs. He could have done this. And if the materialistic philosophers are right in their conclusions, this is just what He has done.

But it may be, that, to the Divine mind, it seemed good to ordain a system far more for the honor of man, and the glory of God—a system allowing a certain degree of liberty to the governed, by suspending their destiny, in part, at least on their own choice, and their own voluntary acts, as being worthy of reward or punishment. Whether God purposed this result or not, it was the effect of that arrangement, or combination of circumstances, of which that mysterious tree of the knowledge of good and evil was the central figure.

The narrative concerning that tree is not a myth nor an allegory. It is not a fiction, nor a poetic fancy thrown into the narrative, to adorn a tale, as not a few have presumptuously imagined. But, in fact, the passage conveys, as it was designed to convey, one of the most profound and grand conceptions that ever engaged the thoughts or the attention of finite minds. It explains *The Origin of Moral Evil*. The fact that this singular narrative is found in the writings of Moses, and the further fact that Moses gave to the world the only perfect code of morals, the world has ever had,

is all the proof we want, that he wrote under the immediate inspiration of God.

Now, let us look at the narrative, and examine it critically, but seriously, as in the sight of God.

“And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden, thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.”

There is set forth, or embodied in these words, the idea or thought of a predestinated connection between good and evil—between life and death, as suspended on personal merit or demerit—on *obedience or disobedience to moral law*. “Thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” This is moral law—obey and live, disobey and die. And this also was the beginning, and the origin of moral government, as distinguished from physical government. Life and blessing are offered on the condition of obedience—death and cursing are threatened as the penalty of disobedience. This is the form of government which, as it was shown in the preceding chapter, now obtains throughout the world. This great conception or thought of a moral government, in contradistinction to the law of physical necessity, originated, we say, in the mind of God, and the beginning thereof is made known in this second chapter of Genesis.

If God had not ordained the law, the material sys-

tem would have prevailed, and the temple of the universe would have contained only one court—“*the Outer Court*”—or “the Court of the Gentiles.” And there would have been no worship in the temple, except, as a great rationalist says, that rendered to the “Beautiful Necessity.” Materialists have no use for the tree of knowledge of good and evil, nor for the inspired record that contains that wonderful tradition. But as it solves the problem of evil, we are thankful that it has come down to us.

We have seen, in the first chapter of Genesis, that, when man was appointed to the headship and lordship over this world, nothing was said of a tree of knowledge of good and evil, but that he was granted absolute liberty to eat of the fruit of every tree. And we have supposed that this original order of things might have been perpetuated. It may be there are some, yea, doubtless, it is true, that there are very many, who have said: O, that it had been so! O, that the fatal tree had never flourished in Paradise, from the fruit of which death and all our woes have sprung! But do such persons know whereof they speak? Are they wiser or more benevolent than God, that they thus venture, in thought or word, to impugn His goodness and wisdom, or think that if they had only been in the place of God, they would have averted or turned aside that black tide that flowed out of Eden down through all time, and has made this earth a charnel house—a vast penitentiary?

But let such grumblers remember that “His ways are as high as heaven above our ways, and his thoughts above our thoughts.” Human reason is too finite to

take in the height and the depth of the wisdom and knowledge, yet to be manifested to angels and men, of that glorious scheme of government and grace, introduced by the incident connected with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

In the production of a material system, we could not suppose a single attribute of Deity concerned, besides, His omnipotence. A physical government might exist without either wisdom or benevolence. Some of our Christian geologists have even supposed, that for "chiliads of centuries," God has had such a government, brought into existence and maintained by his power alone, when the great megatheria, saurians, miso-sauroids and other frightful monsters of the deep, without reason or intellect, held undisputed sway, for untold ages, on this globe!

Suppose that, for a moment, we admit the truth of their theory, we ask, Where was the divine wisdom, and where was the infinite benevolence, or the holiness displayed in the creation and the long-continued reign of those horrid and frightful sea-monsters, without reason or intellect? Could they glorify God? Or could God be glorified in their existence? There was almighty power displayed—there was brute force put forth in bringing them into existence—nothing more. But of what avail was that display of power when, as they gravely tell us, there was not a man—not a created intelligence, that could have had any perception of that display of omnipotent brute force, and to render praise? What glory or honor did the Infinite One achieve to himself, by such a reign of omnipotent force, though it may have continued for a thousand generations, as they pretend to believe?



Let us, once more, protest against such an infidel theory as being any part of a Christian's creed! It is impossible for one who puts any faith in the divine word, to believe that God is a God of a single attribute, and that he reigned for millions of years over such a horrible abode, as they say this world must have been!

But, suppose that to omnipotence they add omniscience, as an attribute of the Deity, they have gained something; but still, they fall infinitely below the standard of perfections, that concentrate and combine in the character of the God of revelation. This union of two attributes would give us the god of the rationalist; and the god of the rationalist could only reign over a world of mixed good and evil, such as our world is at present, in which good and evil abound in about equal proportions, but in which, perhaps, there is a preponderance of evil—a world of alternate lights and shadows, storm and sunshine, joy and anguish—where in one dwelling is heard the sound of mirth and revelry, and in the next lamentation and dying groans—a world of weeping and death, covered with scenes of carnage and battle-fields—in which, in short, famine, pestilence, fire, sword and earthquake hold perpetual carnival.

In such a world as this, there are abundant signs of almighty power. And the rationalist can also point to proofs of infinite wisdom, displayed in the structure of the numberless planetary worlds in existence, and the beautiful harmony and regularity of their motions in infinite space. But if we ask him for the proofs of infinite benevolence, he has either to be silent, or to

say that his god is going to manifest his goodness and his loving kindness, in the world to come. When we ask him how he knows that his god is going to manifest his infinite goodness, to every one in the next life, when he is so parsimonious in the displays of his loving kindness in the present world, of course he can give no reason.

Therefore we must take another step, and ascribe the possession of a third attribute to God, namely, that of benevolence, and then we shall have a God reigning over a sinless world, and free from all evil, such as we have supposed this earth was, and such as the Bible describes it in the morn of creation, when man was crowned the lord of this lower world—at the date, when there was no curse on the ground, before the thorns and the thistles had' begun to grow—before death had invaded this new and fair province of creation, and man was without a tear—when the Infinite Father had crowned his life, with all that was necessary to render his bliss in the present state complete. The Eden of the first man, doubtless, surpassed anything dreamed of in Mahomet's paradise, promised as a reward to his faithful followers.

If that paradisaic state had been perpetuated—and if there had been no tree of the knowledge of good and evil in Eden, no sin, no death, and no sentence of expulsion from Paradise, here, indeed, we should have had a dispensation of wisdom, power, and benevolence—three attributes—but where would have been the holiness? Or how would the intellect of man ever have been able to grasp the idea, that God is holy?

Man might have been intelligent as to all things revealed—might have been able to understand all physical science. But as to things unrevealed, he could have known nothing. He could never have had the feeblest glimmer or dawning of an idea in his soul that God is holy. If God had been willing to reign and rule over such a world as this, He would have reigned as a God of three attributes. The brighter perfections of His character would have been unrevealed, and therefore, unknown and unknowable. But how it would have been possible to secure His own highest glory, and the highest happiness of His creatures, while He remained unknown, or concealed the brighter glories of His nature, is something that we can have no conception of.

This brings us to the institution of positive law—to the command in Eden—"Thou shalt not eat of it; for, in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." If the holiness of God could have been revealed to the external senses of man, as were His natural attributes, that fearful threatening of death as the penalty of transgression, would have been unnecessary, and there is no probability that the writings of Moses, would have contained this wonderful record. But there is no philosophy, and the mind of man could not frame a system of philosophy, by which he could obtain any conception of a moral quality, such as holiness, justice, etc., under the absolute rule of physical law, and in the entire absence of any such experimental process, as that which had its connection with "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." A metaphysical argument can hardly be necessary to elaborate this

thought or to make it plain. But as this question is fundamental, lying at the foundation of the whole system of moral and Christian science, we shall endeavor to make it plain in the light of philosophy.

But first, let us look at the scriptural statement of the argument, before attempting to give the philosophy of the subject, or the laws that govern mind in the acquisition of knowledge.

1. And first, the name of the tree, on which grew the forbidden fruit, is both significant and suggestive—“*the tree of the knowledge of good and evil*”—why was it so named? What is the reason that this significant fact, has never received even a cursory notice on the part of critics and divines, in their speculations on this subject? Everything else mentioned, received a name expressive of some property or quality belonging to it.

Thus, we know why “the tree of life” was so called—God himself testifies, saying, “And now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever.” From this, it is clear that the tree of life possessed some mysterious property, we know not what, by which its fruit would renew the youth, and prevent decay and death to those having access thereto. In the same way, we learn the significance of the names given to Adam and to Eve, to Cain and Abel. The names were intended to be descriptive of some trait, or circumstance peculiar to the persons to whom they were given. And this rule in assigning names, is one that seems to run through the Scriptures of the Old Testament. Does the name given to the tree of knowledge of good and evil, form

any exception? If not, then it was so called, because from the fruit of that tree was to be gained a knowledge which grew on no other tree—and what knowledge? What other can we suppose, but that which was in the name—“the *knowledge of good and evil?*”—the knowledge of moral right and wrong—of holiness and sin as principles of action—of moral government? This was the knowledge preordained to elevate man to the sphere of moral government, and to initiate him into mysteries sublime and profound, of which he must otherwise have remained forever ignorant.

2. Again, the motive suggested by the tempter to the mind of our first parents, the highest that possibly could have been presented in the circumstances, to eat of the fruit of that tree, was drawn from this fact—“Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.” And this was the inducement that influenced their minds to the commission of that act—“And when Eve saw that it was a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also to her husband with her, and he did eat.”

3. There is, in the third place, the direct testimony of God Himself, after they had eaten of the fruit of that tree, saying:

“BEHOLD, THE MAN IS BECOME AS ONE OF US, TO KNOW GOOD AND EVIL.”

This language is too plain and definite to be misunderstood, except wilfully—“as one of us, to know good and evil.” Had the man this knowledge before? It is one of the Persons speaking to the other Persons in the adorable Trinity—what does He mean by the words—“the man is become as one of us, to know

good and evil," if he had this knowledge before? We know not by what unaccountable and singular inattention to the plain etymology of language, this sentence that proceeded from the lips of Jehovah, has been made to teach that it was the temporal condition of man, as to suffering or happiness in this world, and not the state of his knowledge, that was affected by eating the fruit of that forbidden tree. This is clearly a perversion of words—"like one of us, to know"—that does not mean *to suffer*—and it cannot be so construed as to mean that. It means, and it can only mean, that man began *to know*—or to have some sort of knowledge which God had, and which he was not in possession of before he ate the fruit of that tree.

We must regard it as a strange oversight on the part of learned commentators and divines, that they have failed to discover the sense of one of the plainest passages in God's word; as if it contained an enigma, or as if it were void of any meaning. How has this happened? And why has the mistake been perpetuated and transmitted from one generation to another?

No satisfactory explanation of this can be given, unless it be, that, as our knowledge of moral good and evil seems natural to us, or comes to us in the same way that all our secular knowledge does, Adam and Eve must have possessed this knowledge naturally, or from the moment when they began to know anything, independently of any experience, and that they must have had this knowledge even more perfectly than we have it. But they forget that neither Adam nor any

of his children could have any knowledge of any kind without experience, and without a teacher.

As this question is one that is worthy the thoughtful consideration of every rational and devout mind, it will constitute the theme of the next chapter, in which we will show what are the elements of thought, and how all our knowledge is acquired. The problem, as we shall see, is not so very intricate or abstruse, but that it can be worked out, and even reduced so nearly to a demonstration as to remove all doubt.

Let us now contemplate the immediate effects of the fall, as experienced by Adam, personally, in the garden, as minutely detailed in the inspired narrative. The effect was almost electrical, as if he had received a shock from a battery. The change was instantaneous and total. We are not now in a condition to appreciate that change, nor even to comprehend it. With our natural understanding, it is certain, we shall never be able to have any adequate conception of that change, in its bearings on the whole destiny of man, and on the entire universe of created intelligences. We may know hereafter, that, from that seemingly unimportant circumstance of tasting the fruit of that forbidden tree, there went forth an influence that will be felt throughout time, and in eternity, and by every created intelligence on earth, and in all the heavenly places in the universe of God.

But we will now only consider the immediate effect on Adam personally. As already stated, it was instantaneous—almost electrical. The sacred historian, whose pen was guided by inspiration, and who wrote

probably, what he did not himself fully comprehend, says :

“And the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.”

Do we comprehend this? They had been translated, so to speak, out of one state into another—had been taken from a state of nature—the state that we suppose to be the primitive and simple state of nature, and had been suddenly introduced into a higher sphere of existence—a *high moral state*. At once, they began to feel a slight flush of shame mantling their cheeks—a sensation they had not known before, because of their nakedness.

Savages and barbarians in a state of nature have to be educated for some time, before they become sufficiently refined in their feelings, to desire garments for the purpose of concealing their nakedness from one another. But this change was instantaneous in our first parents, as they were neither savages nor barbarians. They were perfect in their organization, and had all their senses and faculties complete. But there was one faculty, of which they had not known themselves to be in possession. It was the moral faculty, or conscience. It had never accused them—had never been called into exercise till that moment. When they had eaten of that tree, of which God had said, “Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die”—when they had done this, conscience, which had been put in their bosoms for this very purpose, smote them—at once, there was a sense of



shame, and a sense of fear, and also a sense of guilt—three different sensations, which they had not experienced or felt before.

The action of conscience was instantaneous, and as it was perfect, never having been blunted, we may believe that the voice it uttered was distinct and sharp. It dealt a stunning blow. At once they felt guilty, and were overwhelmed with a sense of fear. There is certainly nothing remarkable in the fact, that they had never before experienced the action of conscience.

Conscience is a faculty that exists in every bosom; but how many there are who know not its use or its power. There are some who will never know the full force of conscience, till, it is to be feared, they shall have experience of it in another world, as the never-dying worm. And there is nothing strange in this.

Judas, the traitor, was in possession of this faculty when he was bartering his Lord for thirty pieces of silver; but he was not so conscious of its presence, as he was a few hours after, when he went out and hanged himself. It had not opened its batteries upon him, and like many others, he may have been almost unconscious of the fact that he had such a faculty.

Can we, therefore, look upon it as a mysterious thing, that the first man may have been ignorant of the existence of such a power in his own heart, especially when there had not been an occasion or an opportunity for it to act! But when he put forth his hand and plucked, and ate of the fruit of that tree, concerning which God had said unto him, "Thou shalt not eat of it," there was an instantaneous effect—the door of

conscience flew open, and there flew out, as from Pandora's box, not altogether a pack of evils, but of evils and of good mixed with the evil—and perhaps more good than evil, as we have yet to learn. But it was “the knowledge of good and evil.”

As before stated, the first and the immediate effect was, the sense of shame, the sense of fear, and the consciousness of guilt. Thus, their eyes were opened. It was in fact, the opening of the door of conscience. For the conscience is the eye of the soul. The eyes of them both were opened.

The first thing they did, was to make aprons of fig leaves to cover themselves—a loose and insubstantial covering at the best. But they wanted to cover up—they wanted to put on a disguise. And this has been the feeling of sinners from that day to the present hour. There is not one who would be willing to appear in their own real character and likeness. They wear disguises as thin and rotten as aprons of fig leaves, to cover the deformities of their souls, as much as they do to conceal the nakedness of their bodies.

The next thing—they “heard the voice of the Lord God, walking in the garden in the cool of the day; and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God, amongst the trees of the garden.” The sting of sin had blighted all the joys of paradise, so that its beautiful flowers, its delicious fruits, its delightful odors, and charming music had no more any power to please; and they were now miserable in the midst of that lovely paradise.

If one little sin—the merest peccadillo, as some would say, could produce such a change, can we sup-

pose that a sinful soul would be happy, if it were suddenly translated to the upper Paradise, into the immediate presence of God and of the holy angels? No, Eden was now any thing else but a paradise to the guilty pair. Trembling, pale, and affrighted, see them endeavoring, in vain, to conceal themselves from the all-seeing eye, among the trees of the garden! Only a few moments before, at the sound of His voice, they would have flown on the wings of love, to meet that Father and to hold blissful communion with Him. But now they are troubled at His presence, and vainly seek to hide from Him! This was what conscience did.

This shows not only the power of conscience, but also the nature and the power of sin. It separates the soul from God, and this is spiritual death. "The eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked." Why were they afraid of God? Let us try to analyze this emotion. An hour before, they were strangers to this fear. He was the fountain and the source of their sweetest joy. Why did they now feel so overwhelmed with terror and alarm, and try to escape from His presence? This is what sinners would do if they were in heaven itself. They would leap over its shining sapphire battlements, if they could, to get away from the consuming and intolerable brightness of His holiness, who is the light of that world. Sin raises up an insurmountable wall of separation between the soul and God.

But the first guilty pair could not be hid. They had to hear the voice of the Judge—"Adam, where art thou?"—and "What is this that thou hast done?" Ah, Eve! when that stern interrogation from the lips

of the Divine Father fell on thine ear, and wrung thy heart, what a relief it would have been, couldst thou have bid the earth open beneath thy feet, to hide thee from His sight ! Here sin stood abashed in the presence of holiness ! And here was the beginning of the knowledge of sin and holiness. The tree was beginning to bear fruit.

And now, in the last place, let us look at the sentence pronounced against sin. The penalty threatened was death—"In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." As we have seen, they were already *spiritually dead*. They were separated from God in such a sense, that they could no longer be happy in His presence, nor in Eden, the blissful residence which He had prepared for them. It is altogether likely, that if they had not been forcibly ejected from paradise, they would have sought a voluntary banishment from all that could remind them of what they had been, and of what they had lost. As much then in condescension to their feelings, as shown in their effort to avoid the presence of God, as to enforce the penalty of the law against sin, God said :

"Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, thou shalt not eat of it ; 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 unto 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."

This judicial sentence contains, in itself, a prophetic

description of what is, and what has been the natural history of all mankind, and of the whole material creation as well. It shows the connection between transgression and penalty, and indicates the establishment of a moral constitution. It also marks the beginning of the dispensation based on the distinction of a right and a wrong in human actions. This is not materialism.

Here was the beginning of a law of liberty, making man free or independent in the sense, and resembling God in such a manner, that he chooses his own acts, and his own destiny as suspended on his acts. In knowing good and evil, and having liberty to choose between them, he becomes, in a sense, the arbiter of his own destiny. Therefore, he is not a machine nor a puppet. Whether more was gained or lost by this change, remains to be seen.

The language of the judicial sentence pronounced on the race, when analyzed, is indicative of a struggle—the great struggle or battle of life, which was then to begin. It is as if God had said to man :

*“Go forth now, and weave the web of thine own destiny: go forth, and conquer and win, if thou canst. Thou must stand on thine own merit, and gain thine own subsistence. A warfare is before thee—a perpetual struggle in thy path which will make it necessary to strain every nerve, and to put forth all thine energies, in order to win. Even the ground is cursed for thy sake. Thorns also, and thistles it shall bring forth to thee. But by the sweat of thy brow, and by persevering toil, thou shalt gain thy bread. Idleness shall be followed with want and starvation. Go forth now, and make a character for thyself.”*

In substance, this was the sentence pronounced, and the decree that was contained in the sentence. Here was pure gold in the rough ore, taken from the mine, and cast down into the furnace, to be melted and purified in the fire—man, endowed with the knowledge of good and evil, cast forth on a life-long battle, and upon a stormy sea of troubles, to buffet the waves of adversity, passing through great tribulation, and a fiery furnace of affliction, that he might become a moral hero, and achieve for himself a character for perseverance, faith, hope, fortitude, patience, humility, meekness, charity—the only character which a holy God can view with complacency, and which, we are assured, He will, in the last day, reward with the plaudit of “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

Of course this is not materialism—nor does it come under the operation of physical law, but under a moral dispensation, and a state involving a constant struggle. Has man lost or gained by being cast down, from his original carnal state of sluggish and idle ease—from the control of physical law, and the laws of blind instinct, that governed him as absolutely as the irrational creatures—has he lost or gained by the change to a moral state, in which he is thrown upon a conflict, severe and long-continued, it may be, but of such a nature as to bring out the lustre and perfection of the virtues already enumerated, which are now esteemed among men as the highest adornments of character, and which we believe that God will view with complacency in heaven above?

John, in his apocalyptic visions, had a view of the glories of heaven. And the company that seemed

highest in glory, and higher even than sinless angels, were those described as having palms in their hands, and as having come out of great tribulations. Moral heroes are God's heroes. Jesus Himself overcame, and became a moral hero, that He might be at the head of that illustrious company which John saw. And He it is, who says, speaking from His throne, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit down with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne." There is no affectation in our saying, that, we believe God would be more glorified, and would be better pleased with the worship and homage of one such noble spirit, as that of him who could say, "I have fought a good fight—I have kept the faith;" and, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ"—would be more glorified thereby, than to reign over even such a boundless material universe, as that seen in the pantheist's wonderful dream; consisting of "mighty worlds, and blazing suns, and rushing planets without number, rolling in cycles, and through eternities without beginning or end," because they have no voice of praise.

As Pascal sublimely said: "Man is yet nobler than the universe, because, though he is feebler than a reed, he can think; and though the universe prevail against him, yet he knows that he dies; but the universe in prevailing against him, knows not its power." The event in the garden of Eden which has been the theme of this chapter, was the event which taught man *to think*—and by this it is not intended to say that it gave man the power of thought—but the capacity to

think on themes worthy of man—themes higher and nobler than any contained in the philosophy of a materialist, and which can never enter into the conceptions of one who has, or imagines he has no soul or spirit.

Though man can pervert the liberty of will, which he gained by the change from a physical to a moral state of existence, yet that wilful perversion would not make liberty, any the less the highest boon ever conferred on man—the liberty and right to have a personal agency in the formation of his own moral character and destiny. This will be shown in a subsequent chapter. The closing sentence of this chapter is, that the event in Eden, which let sin and death into this world, is the event which gives to every child of Adam, the opportunity no sinless angel ever enjoyed, to become one of God's moral, conquering heroes.



## CHAPTER IV.

### *The Elements of Thought; or, The Origin of Ideas Explained.*

Moral law not written on the heart—The word *Moral*—How moral government was introduced—How ideas are acquired—Illustrations—Reason a builder—The five corporeal senses—A moral sense necessary—Conscience—Why animals cannot have moral ideas—No ideas except under two conditions—Infancy and sleep—How thought begins—Ideas of light and color—Of sound and music—Of sin and holiness—The moral sense and positive law—Experience defined—The experience of a child—Experience of Adam—The three primary sensations—Holiness of Adam prior to the fall—Standard theology—Doctrine of innate ideas—Is there an innate idea of God?—Of the sixth commandment?—Of the seventh?—What the Bible teaches—How the idea of God is obtained—“*Work of the Law*”—Three ways to know—Extract from the *Edinburgh Review*—Locke’s philosophy—Influence of education—Illumination and inspiration—How the Scriptures are understood—Human philosophers cannot understand Revelation.

THE theory of a moral law originally “written on the heart,” as many have believed, is wholly untenable, as it contravenes all the laws of mind as now understood by us.

We say that God could have done whatever it is possible for omnipotent power to do. But there are some things which God cannot do. He can do nothing which involves a contradiction. For example, God could not create a Christian or a saint, by miraculous power, in the same way that He could create a sun, a star, or a sinless angel, by simply

speaking the word. For if God could have created saints so easily, it would not have been necessary for Jesus to die and to consume ages, in order to fill the firmament of the moral heavens with stars of a higher order, than those which gem the natural heavens. A saint is one who has been sanctified. A Christian is one who believes in Christ, and professes to be saved through the blood of Christ. And it would be a contradiction to say, that that God could create such a character by an act of His miraculous power. In like manner and for the same reason, it would be a contradiction to affirm, that God could have a moral government in operation by an act of His miraculous power. *Moral* is a word that, in its origin and derivation, relates to manners, morals, experience. Therefore, there must be a positive institution—as positive law—and subjects having a positive or revealed knowledge of that law—in a word, there must be some such positive arrangement, as we have seen was brought about in Eden, in connection with the tree of knowledge of good and evil, or there could be no moral government, and no moral accountability.

The most approved systems of mental philosophy teach that we acquire ideas only by the exercise of some one or more of the organs or faculties given us for the acquisition of knowledge. We know, for example, that no one could ever have a notion of sound—without the organ of hearing; nor a notion of color, or light, without the organ of sight; nor any idea of odors without the organ of smell. It is easy to comprehend this, for it is an elementary principle in all our systems of mental philosophy.

We have been furnished with five of these corporeal senses, through which we obtain all our ideas of the material world which surrounds us, and of which we are a part. These natural organs are the inlets of our knowledge of the physical universe, and are the sole medium of our intercourse with that universe.

It is the office of reason to work up these materials of knowledge, thus furnished to us by the five bodily senses—to arrange and rearrange them, and out of them to construct its own infinitely diversified theories and systems. This is all that reason can do. It cannot originate a single idea, that does not come to us from the sensations that reach us through these five natural senses.

Reason is a good builder, ever busily at work like any good architect, constructing its edifices—some of them true, and beautiful, and grand—but more, perhaps, ludicrous, grotesque and unshapely in form and appearance. But as a master builder cannot construct a house without material, and also is compelled to use such material as he has, as wood, brick, or stone, so with the builders of theories, and systems, and air-castles, and stories—their structures must always be as the materials in which they have wrought, or the original ideas with which they have been familiar.

It must follow from the premises now laid down, that ideas of a moral nature, are not, and cannot be suggested to us by any, or all of the five corporeal senses, through which we are made acquainted with the visible and material world alone. To our mind this proposition seems a self-evident truth, and to deny it would involve a contradiction. But as there are

minds to whom it may not appear equally clear, because of the prevalence of the absurd and false notion respecting certain *innate ideas* in the mind, or the *moral law written on the heart*, we shall elaborate the proposition, as the principle involved is fundamental, affecting every system of truth in philosophy and religion.

There are many other animals besides man, in possession of the five natural senses. Perhaps all quadrupeds, as the horse, the ox, the elephant, the dog, and the monkey, have these material organs—and some, in even a higher state of perfection than man has them. But there is not one of these creatures that we believe to be possessed of a moral and accountable nature.

These lower animals can not have such ideas as are indicated to us, or expressed by the words, truth, justice, virtue, temperance, patience, holiness, and their contraries. Nor do we reckon them to be destitute of this class of ideas, for want of the faculty of reason; for our materialistic philosophers seem not to know, where to draw the line of distinction between reason and instinct. They believe, indeed, that there is no difference, only in degree; that reason is nothing else but developed instinct; and that many dogs and monkeys are in possession of more rationality than many human beings. And on their theory, that human beings have sprung from dogs and monkeys, the philosophy is plausible enough. The truth, however, is that neither man nor any other animal could reason or philosophize on subjects of a moral nature, with only a reasoning faculty and the five corporeal senses.

It would be possible, with a vigorous intellect, and the natural senses all perfect, to acquire a vast amount of natural science, and even to explore the material universe as far as Sir Isaac Newton explored it, without being able to obtain the slightest glimpse of the glories of the Inner Court of the Temple, or to have any conception of the meaning of that phrase, found nowhere but in the Book of books—"the *beauty* of Holiness."

Reason is an internal faculty—a faculty of the soul—but it is what we call the thinking faculty. We never think about any thing, and we have not the power to think about any thing that has no existence, or that has never been suggested to our minds, through the medium of one or more of our senses. The thing or object, whatever it may be, is brought into contact with one of our senses—that contact produces a sensation—an electric wire or a nerve conveys intelligence of the fact to the seat of thought in the brain, and thus an idea is awakened in the soul.

The ideas, thus generated, are the elements of thought, and constitute the materials of all our knowledge. Reason is the faculty that takes possession of the materials, and works them up into the countless systems of science, philosophy and religion, whether true or false.

The materials of our knowledge, or the first principles of all science, may be classed under six heads, or into six different departments of knowledge.

One of these departments or branches of knowledge, consists of that class of ideas suggested to the mind, alone, by the organ of sight. It is thus we are made

familiar with the science of Optics. We know—every person knows—it is not necessary to be a scholar to know it—that if a man had been blind from his birth, he could never have any proper notion of color, nor of any of the properties of light. He could not know one color from another. All colors would be the same to him ; and no idea of color at all, nor of the nature of light could enter his mind. It would not be possible, by any words or signs that could be used, to communicate to him, any such notion. And if we should tell him that red, or blue, or violet, or any other color resembles thunder, that would be about as intelligible an idea of color, as it would be possible to convey to his mind. Such a man, blind from his birth, might be thoroughly educated—might be a theologian, or a philosopher, and able to reason well on other subjects. But he could never employ his reasoning faculty on theories involving the nature of light, as that field of knowledge would be as completely shut out from his mind, as if there had never been any such thing as light or color.

Now take another person, who had been deaf from his birth—could he ever have a notion of sound? Would he ever be able to appreciate the charms of music? He would be as totally destitute of all ideas of this nature, as the blind man would be deficient in ability to appreciate the beauties of color, or to admire the splendors of the rainbow.

It is clear, therefore, that there must be an appropriate organ, for the reception of each particular class of ideas. And when either of the organs is wanting, the class of ideas, or the elements of knowledge, which

it is the province of that organ to furnish, will be wanting.

If we could imagine a human being, born a monster—a *lusus naturæ*, without any of the bodily senses, which are the medium of communication with the external world, it is certain that soul would be able to receive no information—no ideas concerning the world without. Though there would be life, and the possession of a reasoning faculty, yet there would be nothing to call them into action, and they could only remain in a dormant state. That soul would be in a sound sleep, and could have no ideas of any thing. There might be the signs of life. The lungs might heave with breath. But the avenues to the outer world being closed, or the senses suspended, all means of intercourse with the external world would be cut off. And what else, in fact, is natural sleep but a state, in which there is, at least, a partial suspension of the action of these organs, when the chain of thought is interrupted, and a state of unconsciousness ensues?

This is a phenomenon that happens every night, to every living mortal who is in good health. There is life—animal and spiritual life; but the corporeal senses are all closed—locked up. And while this state continues, there being no sensations, and the electric wires conveying no dispatches to the seat of thought, the chain of ideas is suspended, and there is a state of unconsciousness.

Analogous to this, doubtless, is the state of an infant, just previous to its birth. It has life; yea, and it has all its organs complete. But these organs have not yet been called into action by contact with the outer

world, and, therefore, it has no ideas. The process of thought has not begun—it is yet asleep. And this state of unconsciousness will only be interrupted by actual contact of some of its new-born faculties with the outer world. This contact gives rise to sensations—the sensations originate ideas, and thus the infant begins to think. This is the origin of thought.

This process of thought could never have a beginning in the infant mind, if it had not previously been furnished with these organs of mind and body, which bring the soul into connection with the external world, thus enabling it to receive those sensations which generate ideas—which ideas are the elements of all thought and all knowledge. This matter, it is presumed, will be readily understood by any one in the possession of an average share of common sense.

These premises being admitted, we next inquire, through the medium of which of the five bodily senses, could such moral ideas as are expressed by the words, *sin*, *holiness*, etc., be suggested to any human mind? It must be apparent, on a moment's reflection, that no such idea could ever enter the soul, through any of the physical organs.

The eye would be the medium through which to convey, only, ideas pertaining to the phenomenon of light and colors. And if that were the only organ the soul possessed, it is certain that it could never reason, think, or reflect on any other class of ideas, except those which relate, in some way, directly or indirectly, to light. But the ideas of sin and holiness—or of moral good and evil as qualities of action, in no way relate to the phenomenon of material light. They



are not suggested, or generated by impressions on the optic nerve. We do not obtain through the medium of the eye, any notion or any perception of what sin, or holiness is. We obtain no such ideas through the organ of hearing. That can only make us acquainted with the science of *acoustics*. Nor can we, through the organs of smell and touch, receive any impressions of a moral nature. And if we were not in possession of another faculty—the internal faculty—the moral sense, or conscience, it is absolutely certain that we should never have had any notion, of either sin or holiness, or even the slightest conception of what is implied by those terms.

The same course of reasoning will show, that, with no other means of knowledge but the five corporeal senses, the world of moral science would have been totally and forever excluded from our thoughts. And by the phrase, the *world of moral science*, we mean, simply, *moral government*—moral accountability—the doctrine of reward and punishment, as based on the distinction of right and wrong as moral properties of human action. There is no idea in the whole field of moral science, that could enter the mind, or be suggested by any of the bodily senses, considered simply as the inlets of our knowledge. Therefore, materialists ignore this whole field of science. The existence of a moral faculty is absolutely necessary.

But there is another condition equally indispensable, in order to become acquainted with moral science. We know that to produce vision, two things are necessary, viz.: the existence of light, and the possession of the organ of vision, adapted to the light.

If either of these existed without the other, there would be no vision. No matter how perfect the eye might be, if light did not exist, the soul would be just as much in darkness, as if it had no organ of vision. The two things must co-exist—the light and the organ of sight; and then, from the adaptation of one to the other, when brought into contact, vision results.

Now, applying this principle to the acquisition of moral science, we see that these two conditions are necessary: first, the possession of a moral faculty; and secondly, an object adapted to impress that faculty. Conscience, as we have said, is the moral faculty. And now, what is the object, from without, adapted to impress that faculty, so as to originate ideas of a moral nature? That could be nothing else but a positive rule of conduct—a positive law, constituting certain actions right, and others wrong, like the positive enactment in the garden of Eden. If there had been no prohibited fruit—no tree of the knowledge of good and evil—no positive law of any kind, disobedience, in the case of Adam, would have been impossible. Of course, obedience in this moral sense, would have been just as impossible. For, obeying the instincts of his nature, he would only have been on a level with other creatures that followed the instincts of their natures.

But the possession of a positive law or rule of conduct, in the absence of a moral faculty, would not have been sufficient to originate ideas of a moral nature. The two conditions were absolutely necessary. For, if Adam had been as destitute of a moral sense—a conscience, as we suppose the irrational creatures

were, he would have experienced no sense of guilt—no remorse, even though he had plucked and ate the fruit of that forbidden tree, and there would have been nothing morally wrong in the act. To punish a dumb brute which has no reason, or to punish idiots who have no moral sense, for any act they might commit, would be nothing but an exhibition of wanton cruelty.

We are then brought to the conclusion, by a course of reasoning founded on our knowledge of the essential principles of mental science, that man has no idea, and can have no idea on any subject, whether material or moral, that has not been obtained by actual experience. As essential to this experience, there is necessary, in the first place, a faculty or organ adapted to the class of ideas, of which he is to be the recipient; and in the next place, an external object or medium, of a nature to impress that faculty, and originate the ideas. All knowledge except that which is obtained supernaturally, is acquired by *experience*. Every principle in moral science, no less than in natural science, becomes known through the action of some external object, making impressions on the mind, through the medium of those faculties with which we have been endowed, thus giving rise to all the ideas or thoughts we can ever have on any subject. This constant series of impressions of things from without us, and affecting our minds, is all that we mean by the word, *experience*.

When Adam transgressed the positive law, his moral sense was acted on, and he gained an *experience* not less real than a child acquires, who thrusts its hand, for the first time, into the flame of a candle.

The sensations are different, and the ideas awakened are different; but in both cases, they come by experience. It is experimental knowledge.

When Adam transgressed the positive law, he experienced three distinct sensations, viz.: a sense of shame; a sense of fear; and a sense of guilt. This was the beginning of his knowledge on subjects of a religious and moral nature. To these three sensations can be traced all the elementary ideas, or first principles, that constitute the whole system of moral and religious science. These ideas may be classed as follows:

1. The sensation of shame is suggestive of ideas of propriety, and impropriety—a very numerous class, lying at the foundation of the government, manners, and regulation of all social and domestic relations, founded on the basis of morality.

2. The sensation of fear would, naturally, suggest the ideas of enmity, favor, punishment, reward, alienation, friendship, revenge, forgiveness and other kindred ideas.

3. The sense of guilt would originate such ideas; as those expressed by the words, sin, holiness, obedience, disobedience, duty, accountability, moral law, etc., etc.

It was thus that the reign of moral law began, and was inaugurated on earth. This moral dispensation was not the original and normal state of things. It was devised and planned by the Omniscient One, and ingrafted on the original order of things, for what wise and glorious reasons, we shall learn in the further prosecution of these studies.

We have said that God could not make a Christian

or a saint in the same way that He created the world, because it would involve a contradiction. Christ had to be born, and Christ had to die in order to make it possible for God to make up His jewels, as He is now doing. And so, it would be a contradiction to affirm that God could create by a miracle, a holy man, in the sense that holiness is perfect obedience or perfect conformity to a perfect law. Obedience or disobedience to law is a thing of *actual experience*—and it would be a manifest contradiction to say that there can be either obedience or disobedience to law, where there is no law. In the garden of Eden, Adam was under no moral law, but the command that related to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

But here an objection is raised. Was not Adam holy, it is asked, before he ate the fruit of that forbidden tree? To this there is but one answer—he was holy, in the sense that he was innocent or without sin—in the sense that he was good, as God had pronounced everything good or perfect which he had made. He was holy in the sense that his holiness was a created holiness—something that was implanted in his heart like all the rest of his instincts. He was holy even in the sense that he loved his Maker supremely; but it was a spontaneous and natural affection, like his love for Eve, and all his other natural appetites and affections. They were constitutional, and without any moral property whatever. In this sense, unless he could change his own nature, he might have continued forever, negatively holy or good, as he had been created, without the possibility of being morally sinful or holy, if he had never received a moral rule of conduct.

But there are many who say that Adam had the moral law written on his heart. This theory is a mere figment of imagination, without any foundation in reason or Scripture. But as it is an opinion that has been advocated even by some learned divines, it may be proper to examine it carefully and critically. Thus, we have one, whose work is used as a text-book among a large and influential body of Christians, saying :

“Although we have no explicit account of Adam’s having the written law, yet, from the very relation in which he stood to his Creator, we may clearly infer, that, he was bound to love and obey Him. If the law is written on the hearts of the heathen, we may with propriety infer, that, it was written on Adam’s heart. But if we advert to the definition Christ has given of the moral law, we are bound to admit that Adam was under it; and if under it, it must have been, in some way, known to him; and if known, he was subjected to its awful penalty. It may easily be proved that Adam violated the spirit of both tables of the law, before he actually violated the positive law.

“Thus, we see, that Adam did, mentally and really, transgress both tables of the moral law, before, or while he was preparing to violate the positive precept; and this appears to be his principal crime.”

The above is only a fair specimen of a vast amount of theology that has been written on the same subject. Let us notice, in order, several of the mistakes and false inferences in the above passage.

1. The author admits that we have no explicit account of Adam’s having the written law.

2. He affirms that the moral law is written on the hearts of the heathen.

3. He infers from his own affirmation on the subject, that it was written on Adam's heart.

4. He affirms that Adam "did, mentally and really, transgress both tables of the moral law, before he violated the positive precept," and that "this was his principal guilt."

It is hardly necessary to offer any comment on this specimen of standard theology. But we may certainly inquire, if all the above inferences and affirmations be true, what becomes of the truth of the record given by Moses? If the moral law was known to Adam, before he violated the positive precept, what becomes of the truth of the Divine declaration, "the man is become as one of us to know good and evil?" Was God mistaken, or could man know the whole moral law, and yet *not know good and evil*? Or again, if the violation of that moral law "was his principal crime," and if he fell under its awful sanction before he broke the positive law, why was not that awful sanction inflicted upon him? or why is it not referred to, in the curse that was actually pronounced?

Yet all this is standard theology; and it has passed current as standard theology in many churches, and for a series of centuries. Surely, it is time to learn, that when men attempt to be wise above what is written, and to draw inferences, they not only stray from the truth themselves, but become "blind leaders of the blind."

And now let us examine the theory. In what sense do the theologians of this school, hold that Adam had the moral law written on his heart? What do they mean by the moral law, in this connection? Accord-

ing to the quotation above given, they mean the ten commandments, and, of course, this is all they can mean. It is generally believed, and rightly too, that the moral law is summed up, and perfectly expressed in these ten commandments.

Are we then to understand that Adam, and all his children, and even the heathen had, or have the knowledge of the ten commandments, each and every one, written in their hearts at their creation, or from their very birth? For if they have the law, as a whole, written on their hearts, it is only a fair and logical inference that they have it in detail, or in the several precepts that make up the moral law, thus written on their hearts.

Does any one believe, or would it be possible for any one to believe, that all who are born into the world, have this perfect law written in their hearts?

The first commandment in the Decalogue, enjoins the worship of the one and only true God. This precept, if written on the heart, implies, certainly, that there is in the heart, a clear and distinct idea—an innate idea of God. This idea is essential. There could be no moral law that does not include the idea of a God, and no inscription of that law on the heart without the idea of a God written thereon. But this old theory of innate ideas is exploded, or certainly it should have been, since the days of John Locke. There is not a man of learning in the world, whether philosopher or divine, who can subscribe to this absurd notion as it was once held.

If the idea of God is innate—if it has been written on the heart by God himself, every one who is born,



ought to be in possession of this idea. Not only so, but the idea ought to be perfect. For it would be an impeachment of the wisdom of God, to say that He would imprint on any heart a wrong or a false idea of Himself.

If we take any young child in any country, pagan or Christian, we shall find that it does not evince any sign in infancy, childhood, or at any period, that it was born with a clear and accurate notion of God in its mind. Every parent, every educator in the world knows, that if a very young person ever manifests, in its earliest expressions of thought, that it has any notion of a Deity, it is some such absurd and ludicrous notion, as an ignorant and heathen nurse may have instilled into its infantile heart.

If we select any single precept in the Decalogue, or every one of the ten commandments in order, a very little careful reflection will show the absurdity of supposing that any, or all of them were written by God on the human heart.

Let us select the sixth commandment as a test—"Thou shalt not kill"—if any portion of the moral law were ever written on the heart, one would suppose that it should be that relating to the sacredness of human life, and the sin of taking away life. But if we look at mankind in a state of nature, do we find that they naturally apprehend the sinfulness of murder? On the contrary, is not every crime forbidden in the Decalogue, approved, practised, and even consecrated as a part of religion, in certain conditions of society? Do we not know that the lawfulness of human sacrifices in the practice of religion, has been

held among many nations, from time immemorial? Of course such a practice would tend, in itself, to obliterate from the natural mind, any idea of the sacredness of human life. Infanticide at one time or another, has prevailed, perhaps, in every country. There was a period in the history of the holy people, when they made their children pass through the fire to idols.

Even in Greece and Rome, in their palmyest days, when the fine arts, and civilization, and philosophy had attained the highest degree of perfection, masters had the power of life and death over their slaves, and fathers over their children, and often exercised this power with absolute impunity. The Spartans were accustomed to put their slaves to death in large numbers, whenever they became so numerous as to give rise to fears of an insurrection. It was the custom of all the nations of antiquity, to put to death the prisoners taken in war.

If we search the records of all time, we discover no proof of the existence of any such idea of the sacredness of human life, as that the taking of it under any circumstances was considered a crime to be punished with death.

Aristotle, the prince among all the philosophers who have lived in any age, as some believe, taught that the larger part of mankind, "are born slaves"—that they are "natural slaves"—and that if they refuse to submit voluntarily to this law of their being, the other part, or those "born to rule," have a natural right to hunt, and capture and slay them, in the same way that they hunt, and slay wild beasts in the wood. This was the opinion of Aristotle.

Therefore, we have to conclude, that, if the portion of the moral law contained in the sixth commandment, was ever inscribed on the human heart, it has proved a dead letter, and was written in vain.

What shall we say of the precept contained in the seventh commandment, against adultery, and uncleanness? Was that also written originally on every heart? But what is the proof? Naturalists tell us, that the law of nature rather favors a repeal of that law—that the law of nature is a law of liberty, and a law of *free love*, like the law that governs all animals living in a state of nature. The truth is, that mankind have never been able, in any age of the world, in their natural state, to apprehend the sinfulness of uncleanness.

If the Senate of Rome, composed of their wisest and best men, in an age when the world had reached its most advanced state, could decree that all the women belonged to Cæsar, no other argument is needed to prove that they could not, naturally, apprehend the sinfulness of uncleanness. In the present age, there are none except those thoroughly imbued with the Christian religion, who have any such apprehension.

There is nothing in nature, nor in the law governing other animals as to sexual relations, from which any thing may be inferred as to the sinfulness of uncleanness. And when we know that there are so many educated and philosophic minds, ready to avow their belief that the marriage institution is a conventional arrangement, in contravention of the natural liberty of man—when we know that there are communists and socialists everywhere, who, notwithstanding the amount

of Christian light enjoyed, aim to break down the marriage altar, how is it that any who believe in the moral law at all, can teach that all men have this law written in their hearts, and that all must, therefore, be able, naturally, to perceive the sinfulness of uncleanness.

No, there is nothing to serve as a guard to the sacredness of the marriage institution, but *the Revealed Law* of Him who ordained it in the garden of Eden. That law has come down to us in the oldest Book in the world. And in addition to the *Edenic Law*, there has come down the double enactment issued from the flaming Mount Sinai—“*Thou shalt not commit adultery*”—“*Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife.*” That law is all that makes marriage a sacred or a holy institution. Blot it out, and men and women would herd together like the beasts of the field, or as the fowls of the air.

It is as unphilosophical as it is absurd, to talk about laws written on the heart. God has given us minds, as He has given us bodies. And the body has its organs, and the mind has its faculties. And these have been adapted, as instruments, to the present state of our being, and if we use them properly, we shall acquire all the knowledge necessary to our present state of being.

God has not only given us the faculties, but He has spread out before us the fields of knowledge, and bids us, with the instruments He has given us, to explore them for ourselves. It would have been as easy for God to have implanted in our minds, innate ideas of light, color, sound, and innate ideas of a thousand

other things, to save us from the labor of study and research, in order to gain this knowledge, as to have implanted ideas of a moral nature, instead of giving us a moral faculty and a positive law adapted to the faculty, thus enabling us to acquire moral science, by experience, as we obtain all our knowledge of physical nature.

The Bible certainly lends no support to the theory of innate ideas, or a law written on the heart. Paul teaches that there is no innate idea of God, when he makes known, as in his letter to the Romans, how all nations may, and how they do come in possession of this idea of God, saying :

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness ; because that which may be known of God is manifest in them ; for God hath revealed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and godhead ; so that they are without excuse.”

God has manifested Himself in the works of creation—and that is the way they get the idea of His existence—of His “power and godhead.” And if that is the way, we cannot conclude that there is another way. It is the way that we acquire all our knowledge, viz. : by the exercise of our faculties as rational beings.

The passage in the Bible usually quoted, and relied on in support of this theory, is the following :

“For when the Gentiles which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these hav-

ing not the law, are a law unto themselves, which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another."

"Which show the work of the law"—the effect of the law—the sense of condemnation or the contrary—that is what is "written in the heart," not the law itself. They have a conscience that accuses or else excuses them. This is the interpretation the apostle himself gives of the expression, "work of the law written in their hearts." They had a law of their own—the light of nature had instructed them, and their teachers had instructed them, and having violated that law of their own, they have a conscience that accuses them—and that sense of condemnation, is the work of the law written in their hearts. This reasoning is very clear. It is certainly Scriptural, for the apostle knew the Scriptures; and we say, it is philosophical and sound.

There are only three ways we can have any conception of, by which knowledge of any kind, or on any subject, may be acquired. 1. We are born with it—there are innate ideas—necessary and intuitive beliefs—or a law written on the heart; or, 2. we acquire all our knowledge by the exercise of our faculties—by experience; or, 3. we must receive it supernaturally, by special illumination or by inspiration. If there is any way to obtain an idea on any subject, except in one of these three ways, we know not what it is.

We have dwelt at some length on the acquisition

of knowledge by experience, or by the use of our faculties upon the materials of knowledge within our reach. We have seen that Adam must have obtained his first impressions of moral good and evil in the same way that he obtained his knowledge of the material world, viz.: by the contact of his faculties with their appropriate objects without. The possession of the faculties, and the existence of the external objects, are the two conditions which, as we have shown, are essential to the origination of any ideas in the mind. We obtain our knowledge of the material world in this way.

The philosophy we have advanced may be criticised, but it cannot be refuted. We are glad to notice that the later philosophers are coming into this view. We have seen, in the *Edinburgh Review*, an able article, long after we had prepared this chapter, in which the writer shows an exact concurrence with the philosophy we have advanced, on the origin of ideas. We quote a passage from the article:

“That there are two distinct sets of conditions essential to the genesis and formation of ideas, is now admitted with tolerable unanimity by philosophers. They for the most part, alike, maintain that the mind is originally constituted with its own fundamental laws of thought, which will, inevitably, cause it to develop only to certain effects—that is, by which it will develop thus and thus, and not otherwise: and that, at the same time, a certain external influence, a contact with the outward world, is absolutely necessary, without which it would never develop at all.”

The writer sustains this view by the argument from analogy, as we have done. Thus, he says:

“The external world presents us with abundant illustrations of an analogous union of seemingly diverse conditions of development. Thus, the internal structure of the flower, is such that it will develop only to a certain color, form, fragrance, and no other: yet, without the sun, the dew, the rain, the soil, it will remain in the germ. In like manner, the eye, were it otherwise constructed than it is, would not see, whatever the abundance of light; and were it constructed as it is, could see just as little, if there were no light at all.”

And referring to the distinction between contingent and necessary truths, the writer says:

“How came the mind to make any distinction between them? In all those cases in which the mind says, ‘this is a necessary truth—it cannot be otherwise—and this is a generalization of an equally uniform experience, but it might have been otherwise’—how is it that the mind comes to make this distinction at all, and to feel it yet more strongly than it can express it? The very classification of truths into such divisions (experience in either case being the same), is, we think, proof that the mind has the power, of acquiring from experience, what experience alone could never give. To us it seems most rational that the suggestions of experience, and the innate capacities of the mind, itself, alike, conspire to render our thoughts such as we find them; the outward world ministering those materials, without which the mind would be without any thought at all—wrapped in a perpetual slumber.”

We endorse every word in these extracts. There can be no knowledge without experience. Two sets of conditions are essential to the genesis or formation



of ideas, the inward and the outward conditions; or, in other words, the internal faculty, the eye to see, and the outward condition—the light adapted to the eye, to generate vision. This is the true Philosophy. And the writer says that the philosophers “with tolerable unanimity,” are coming into these views.

The essay of Dr. John Locke, on the “Human Understanding,” is the ablest treatise on the subject in the English language. The defect in his essay was, that he did not go far enough. He stopped short at the five corporeal senses, and the external conditions answering to those senses. Thus, he provided the means for acquiring a knowledge of the material universe. But he had no sixth sense—no moral sense; and he had no positive law, like that given to Adam in the garden. His philosophy was defective alone in this, that he did not go far enough. His system is perfect in its application to material knowledge, but he did not carry it out as he should have done, in its application to the acquisition of moral science. But he exploded the doctrine of “*innate ideas*,” with which some of the scholastics before his time, had made themselves ridiculous, and on the whole, he rendered a grand service to philosophy and religion, for which the world owes him a debt of gratitude.

With regard to the almost universal belief of a law written on the heart, we have seen that it is but a theory, without any foundation in Scripture or reason. The history of the race shows that,

“’Tis education forms the common mind,  
Just as the twig is bent, the tree’s inclined.”

The poet who wrote these lines was not inspired, but

in writing them, he but photographed an inspired sentiment from the sunlight of truth. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he shall not depart from it." That is inspiration, and that is true. Therefore, a child must be trained, to insure his going in the right way. And if he is not trained in the way he should go, any law written on his heart before he was born will not insure his walking in the right way.

We notice universally that if a child is brought up by Jewish parents, strictly, in the principles of Judaism, he is always a Jew in his religious faith. But if a child is carefully educated in the Mohammedan faith, we are sure that he will be a Moslem—a Turk in his religious belief and character. On the other hand, let him be strictly trained up in India, by Hindoo parents and teachers, and he would be a worshipper of Brahma. If he is trained up in the Catholic faith by Jesuitical teachers, he becomes a Catholic; and if by pious Protestant parents, he is a Protestant Christian.

Here is a law of education. It appears to be a divine law. And so far as we know, there is, and there can be no departure from it. In view of it, how great is parental responsibility! They who can leave the care of their little ones in the hands of ignorant nurses, at the tender age when their young faculties are just beginning to unfold, and the seeds of thought which are let fall into that susceptible soil, are to give the bias and turn to the character of that child, here and hereafter, either know not their responsibility, or they are devoid of natural affection.

I alluded to a third method of acquiring knowledge,

namely, by inspiration or by a special illumination of the Spirit. Such knowledge, however, is only partial, and we receive it by faith. It is in this way we receive the doctrines of Revelation. If our Bible is worthy of belief, it is because holy men of old, wrote and spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Wherefore, every communication from them is to be received, not as their own communication, but as a communication or message from God. As the message came to them by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and as without that supernatural assistance, the prophets and apostles could not have written the Scriptures, so, it is certain that to understand the Scriptures, the illuminating influence of the same Divine Spirit is necessary in the heart. As no natural man could, by his own unaided powers, have conceived the sublime and wonderful revelations and doctrines contained in the Bible, so no natural man is able, by his own unaided reason, to understand and to expound those doctrines.

I am not stating simply a religious, but a necessary logical truth, which stands in the way, and has always stood in the way, and must always stand in the way of the general or universal reception of the Bible as the revealed Will of God. It is impossible for a carnal and natural man, to have a right perception of spiritual truths. This is fully brought out in the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus.

Jesus advanced a doctrine—a truth which is fundamental in Christianity—a doctrine which every one, who has experienced the new birth, readily comprehends and believes. But Nicodemus, being only a

natural man, and having no experience of this new birth, could not comprehend what the Saviour was talking about; hence his apparent amazement, and his unbelief.

We do not, and we can not feel surprise at the rejection of the Bible on the part of rationalists of every name. It is a philosophical fact that they neither do, nor can comprehend its teachings. When they shall be willing to ask God to take the scales from their eyes, that they may see and understand, then they will believe. The fact now stated, is abundantly insisted on, in the Scriptures of truth themselves. Paul says :

“The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”

And again :

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so, the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.”

Of the like import is that profound passage in Peter, which has been so miserably perverted by the pretended successors of Peter, saying :

“We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, till the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

Here we are told that, as the prophecy came not in old time, only through holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, so no prophecy is of any "*private* or *personal*" interpretation. But the same Holy Ghost—not a priest—must be the interpreter. The illuminating influence of the Spirit is here called "*the day*" and "*the day star*" arising in our hearts. That is the way we come to understand the prophecy.

Even the apostles of our Lord were in utter ignorance of the nature of His spiritual kingdom, and of all the great and fundamental doctrines of His kingdom, till after His resurrection, and they had received the promise of the Spirit, which He gave them, saying:

"It is expedient for you that I go away; for, if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you; but ye cannot hear them now. Howbeit, when He the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth; for He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak; and He shall show you things to come."

So then, the wise of this world, the philosophers and scientists, are not those who understand the Scriptures of eternal truth. For it is written, saith God:

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and I will

bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the Scribe? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For, after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness."

These brief texts furnish themes for thought and meditation, that will, doubtless, form the study of pure and holy minds through endless ages. And yet, these infinite themes are, to the learned and wise of this world, foolishness. The reason is, that they see only through these eyes of the flesh. They occupy a little sand-hill on the surface of this earth, and their vision is bounded by a few feet of space around them. They cannot take their station on the summit of the universe, to take in a survey of the whole, so as to comprehend the scheme of creation.

Let angels preach, as Paul did on Mars Hill, to the philosophers on such themes as "God manifest in the flesh," "Christ crucified," "the resurrection of the dead," and they would be regarded as crazy fanatics and dreamers, giving utterance to the vagaries of a disordered mind. For why, as they reason, should God be so concerned about this atom of earth, as to vacate His throne, assume a human shape, and stoop to the shameful death of the cross to save a worm? Thus, like the philosophers of old, they treat the story of the cross as foolishness.

The truth of the Old and New Testaments is attested by such an array of miraculous evidence as

will make every unbeliever stand speechless in the presence of the final Judge of the quick and dead. When we consider the nature of belief as resting on evidence, as shown in the chapter on "The Law of Belief" and the philosophy of truth, we are compelled to say that a total disbelief of the Bible is a far greater marvel, than is the Christian's implicit and humble faith in that Book of books.

## CHAPTER V.

### *Transgression and Penalty; or, The Connection Between Sin and Death, Explained.*

Problems which materialists cannot solve—Life and death opposite principles—Not properties of matter—Tyndal's proposition—What is death?—The materialist's idea of death—The scriptural view—Spiritual death—Death a judicial sentence—When Adam began to die—The body the instrument of the soul—Why it must wear out—Last words of a statesman—Effects of sensual indulgence—This is *moral law*—Moral law is Justice—The pillars of the Throne—Sin brings its own punishment—Why sinless babes die—Original sin—The test act—The race existed in Adam and fell with him—A perfect representative—"In Adam's fall, we sinned all"—The doctrine of Imputation in the Decalogue—In representative governments—Adam truly represented his race—The law of descent—A consideration for parents—Why offspring degenerate—"In his own likeness"—The Gnostic philosophy—Objections to the heresy of Creationism—What is a man?—Christ died for Adam's race.

THERE are two problems that materialists will never be able to solve, no matter how long or industriously they shall work at the solution; that connected with the mystery of life, and that connected with the equally great mystery of death. Why inert matter should assume such different forms, passing through successive mutations—now instinct with life and beauty, and now, anon, a mass of putrefying corruption—and then again, springing from the ashes of the grave into other forms of life—this is a mystery they can never solve from their materialistic standpoint.



Death reigns. We cannot deny the fact. Sceptics say, this is in obedience to a law of matter—and a law of nature. This is all they know. But is this a solution of the difficulty? Do they throw any light on the question as to how, and when, this law came into operation? Did old dame Nature enact the law herself, in mere wanton sport, and for the purpose of clothing her children with the weeds of mourning, through all days?

Is death a law of matter? Is death a property of matter? If either a law or a property, it must be as old as matter, and they say that matter is eternal. If matter is eternal, all its properties are eternal. Is this a solution of the problem of death?

But how about life? Is that, too, a law or a property of matter? Well, if we are to believe these philosophers, it has "*the potency*" of life in itself. One of them, with great pomp of diction, has said:

"The confession that I feel bound to make, is, that I prolong the vision backward across the boundary of the experimental evidence, and discern in that matter, which we, in our ignorance, and notwithstanding our professed reverence for its Creator, have hitherto covered with opprobrium, the promise and potency of every form and quality of life."

This reads almost like an oracle. But if life is a quality or a *potency* of all matter, how can it be true that death is a law or a property of matter? Life and death are opposite and antagonistic principles. They cannot be inherent, as essential properties in the same substance. If life is the law or the condition of all matter, why does not the lump of matter that is

once instinct with life, live forever? The law of inertia would require this. Or if death is the law of matter, why does a single particle of matter, once dead, ever assume a living form, and then, after a little return to its normal state of death? Why these alternations—these incessant changes?

Ah! they must know that neither life nor death are essential properties of matter, but only adjuncts, or accidents; and that these accidents are from a cause that is quite above, and out of the matter itself.

All the accompanying signs and circumstances of death, show plainly enough that it has come as a judgment—that it is a judicial sentence which has been sent on the children of men, by the Maker of the universe, because He had a controversy with them.

Here, perhaps, is the place for the question, What is death? The believer in Revelation says, there are three kinds of death—spiritual, temporal, and eternal death. The materialist would say, there is but one form of death, and that is the dissolution of the body. As he does not believe in the existence of spirit, he denies that there is any such state as spiritual death, either here or hereafter. Physical death is the only form of death of which he has any conception. It is something that he can see—something that is tangible to the bodily senses. He admits that it does really exist. But if you inquire about its origin, he has to say that he knows of no cause, except that it is a law of matter. But if you ask for the cause of life, which is the opposite of death, he has to say the same thing; that it is a quality, a *potency*, or a law of matter.

This is one of the anomalies in the creed of a materialist, that he has effects, which are unlike and contrary, to proceed from one and the same cause.

Can opposite qualities, or conditions that are contrary, and that destroy one another, belong to the same substance? Can life and death have one common source, any more than light and darkness can dwell together, or fresh and salt water flow from the same fountain? This is a difficulty, which I have never seen explained by any materialistic writer. It is self-evident that, if matter is eternal, all its laws or qualities are likewise eternal. Yet they must admit that life had a beginning, and that death had a beginning, whether matter be eternal or not.

The cause of death is moral, not physical. The Scriptures teach in unmistakeable terms, that sin is the cause—"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." In another place, it is said, "Lust, when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." For "the wages of sin is death."

If we look at this matter from the standpoint of philosophy, we shall not fail to see that death is only a natural and necessary fruit, or consequence of sin. In Chapter III. we have seen that spiritual death is a state in which the soul is alienated from God by sin. In that chapter, we contemplated the condition of the first sinning pair in the garden, and the change that was wrought in them by transgression. We meditated, mournfully, on the manner of their alienation from God, and their banishment from His presence, and

from the place of His holiness. If we analyze the change that took place in their minds, we shall find that certain feelings or passions were engendered, to which they had previously been strangers, among which, as principal, were shame, fear, and remorse. From these first principles of depravity, the whole brood of evil passions would naturally spring, as jealousy, hatred, anger, revenge, cupidity, lust, etc. Could such evil principles spring up in a human soul, without causing spiritual death, and inducing, ultimately, the death of the body also?

In whatever sense we understand the word death, it was the infliction of a judicial sentence on account of sin; and also, it is the fruit or product of sin, naturally and necessarily resulting from it, just as a tree bears its own natural fruit. This proposition can be made intelligible to any ordinary mind.

The first man had all the knowledge, necessary to constitute him a moral agent, and to render the duty of obedience to the Divine command, obligatory on him. He knew God as his Father and Maker. He knew which tree it was, the fruit of which had been prohibited to him. And he knew what would be the penalty of disobedience. He did not know the exact import of the word—death. That was impossible in the nature of things—but he knew that it was some evil that would be inflicted as a punishment, and that was all it was necessary to know. Now, supposing for a moment, that the fruit which grew on the forbidden tree, had been a poisonous fruit, causing gripings and pain, and bodily dissolution immediately, on the same day when he ate the fruit; we should say

that the threatened sentence had been literally fulfilled, and that he had brought it on himself. And we could not have censured the Divine Being harshly, and unjustly. For man knew what the consequence would be, as the fatal tree had been pointed out, and he had been told that in the day he eat thereof, he should surely die. On this supposition, we can understand that his death would have been the result of his own rash act, having been duly forewarned. And we could not have blamed God as unjust or cruel.

This simple illustration, if understood, shows how death was introduced into our world, as the effect, and the legitimate fruit of sin. For there was death in that forbidden fruit, and Adam died as really and literally on the day he ate of it, as if his death had been attended by the pains and gripings of a deadly poison, causing immediate bodily death. Let us consider how the virus worked in the system to produce the result.

We have said that spiritual death, is death in sin, or alienation from God, and that this effect followed immediately the act of transgression. At once, they were afraid. They fled from the presence of God, and tried to conceal themselves from his all-seeing eye. They were now alienated from God, and in this sense they were dead. This is spiritual death. The elements of that alienation consisted, mainly, in a sense of guilt—remorse, and a sense of fear. Knowing that God was angry with them, they justly apprehended that He would visit on them, the penalty which had been threatened, whatever that might be. This filled them with terror and alarm, and caused them to fly from His presence.

There is in the heart of every sinner, the same sense of guilt and of alienation from God. Wherever there is this sense of guilt, there will be also a conviction, that God is angry with the wicked. For no mind can conceive of God except as infinitely holy, and opposed to sin. And as long as this conviction shall remain in the conscience, man will be an alien from God. This spiritual death results at last in the dissolution of the mortal body. Let us consider how this is brought about.

The body is the tenement of the soul. In the Scriptures it is called a "Tabernacle"—and it is called the "earthly house." We know not the nature of the mysterious bond that unites soul and body. But the relationship between them, may be likened to that between a house and its occupant. If the house has been substantially built, of good material, and is inhabited by careful occupants, it may endure for a generation. But if it is badly constructed, and from indifferent materials; if it is exposed to the action of the elements, and to careless usage; it will decay and fall into ruins in a few years, or even a few months. And this is true of our mortal body—the tabernacle of the soul. It was absolutely perfect, as originally constructed by the hand of the Divine Architect. No mortal man ever had so perfect a body as Adam; for as it was new and perfect, directly from the hand of the Creator, there could have been no defect in it. And this is the reason it lasted for 950 years. If he had not forfeited his right of access to the tree of life, his youth would have been renewed perpetually, and he would have been living now. But he began to die—and he was dying during

the whole of that period, intervening between the day of his fall and the day of his death. He was already spiritually dead, and his body was gradually wearing out, and tending to dissolution during all those years.

In the first place, sin affects the soul immediately, producing spiritual death; and, in the second place, it affects the body mediately, or through the soul, causing temporal death. This result comes in two ways. Let us consider them.

1. We are ignorant, as before stated, of the nature of that mysterious bond that unites spirit and matter, or soul and body together, but it is a connection that is easily broken; and when this union is severed, the body falls into decay, and, according to inspiration, "returns to the dust as it was."

This connection between the mind and the body is of such a nature, that they act mutually the one upon the other. Sometimes this action is very powerful, causing almost instant dissolution.

In the present condition of humanity, the outward tabernacle is too weak and frail for the occupant. The fluttering of its pinions often breaks it down suddenly—the prison doors burst open, and unexpectedly, the prisoner is gone.

The passions are so intensely excited, that, in thousands of instances, immediate dissolution has resulted. It is known that, not unfrequently, death is caused by disappointment in love—by a sudden shock of fear—by intensity of grief—by the sudden blasting of hope—by the welling up of the spirit of revenge—by disappointed ambition, and even by the spirit of avarice.

The frail tenement is shattered by the continued shocks, it receives from these raging passions, ever at war with the soul, battering the feeble house of clay; and it has to wear out eventually. The breaking down of the prison house is sometimes gradual, though not unfrequently, it is very sudden.

Here is an instance to illustrate the powerful influence of mental action on the body. Not many years ago, there was a great statesman who aspired to the first office in the gift of the American people, and he thought the office was just within his reach. But he was disappointed. His ambition was suddenly crushed. But it was more than he could endure. He broke down suddenly. For days and nights he could not sleep. It was said that his reason was dethroned. His last word was:

“When I was born, I died; and when I died, I was born.”

He had no sickness. It was disappointed ambition that killed him. In millions of instances, the thread of life has been snapped just as suddenly, by the violent action of various other passions on the physical system.

Now the Mosaic record, is, that it was sin which first put in motion these tempestuous waves of passion, which agitate the soul, causing it to beat and dash against the frail walls of its imprisonment, till they are shaken down. It was sin. And ever since, it is only too true, that, “the wicked are like the troubled sea which cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.”

The human body may be likened to a delicately



tuned instrument of a thousand strings. As long as they all play in unison, the music is good. But if one string gets out of tune, the music is marred. The human body has more than a thousand strings, and they have all been out of tune ever since sin introduced the first discord. Some are out of tune—some are broken—the music is more and more discordant—and ere long, the instrument is utterly worn out.

2. But there is another way in which sin leads to mortal dissolution, or causes the death of the body; and that is *sensuality*. The more a sinner is alienated from God, the less capacity he has for spiritual and intellectual enjoyment, and of course the more he will seek his pleasure in sensual indulgences. This is the reason of all the gluttony, the drunkenness, the licentiousness, and other animal excesses prevailing in the world.

When a man has a high relish for spiritual and intellectual pursuits, or when he is walking with God as Adam once did, and as Enoch did, he cannot stoop to brutishness, and degrade his manhood, by an over indulgence of his animal appetites and lusts. It is the want of this relish, or capacity for higher enjoyments, that causes men to seek the lower gratifications, such as are carnal, and common to the brute creation. They become sensual—they have no relish for pure and spiritual joys. They walk with their face downwards to the earth like the brutes, because they do not look up to God, and are alienated from Him.

Now, it is needless to say that excess of sensual pleasure is pernicious, and destructive alike to soul and body. We know that drunkenness kills. Gluttony

kills even more than drunkenness. Whoredom slays its millions of victims. Not only do sinners shorten their own days, by the excessive indulgence of their appetites, but they plant the seeds of disease and death in their systems, which are transmitted to their children, and to children's children. They not only do this, but they do it deliberately, and wilfully, just as the first man ate the forbidden fruit, though he had been forewarned of the consequences.

From these premises, it must be clear that death was not, simply and only, a judicial sentence, inflicted on man because of transgression, but that it was the effect of sin—that it was the fruit of sin, and the wages of sin—that sin produced it—that sin brought it forth—that they are, in fact, related as cause and effect. Who shall blame God, because death abounds in our world? It is the fruit of sin. It abounds, because sin abounds. This is the solution the Bible gives of the problem of death.

There is no injustice—no hardness in this appointment—it is exact justice. “According to what a man sows, that shall he also reap. He that sows to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that sows to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.” This is *moral government*.

This is the law now. And this was the law from the beginning. Every man expects in this world, certainly, to gather only what he has sown. His own consciousness, and his sense of right convince him, that he may expect this, but nothing more.

Adam died on the day that he sinned; that is, died spiritually as already explained; and at the same

time his body began slowly to decay, and to wear out—and this process went on till he sunk, finally, into the grave. The same process is going on still. It is repeated in the case of every son and daughter of Adam. This was the beginning and the cause—and this is the process of death. It is moral law in force. It is justice; and justice is the corner-stone on which moral government rests. In this respect, it differs from physical law, and from a dispensation of grace.

It is this attribute of justice that makes the throne of God, “a throne of judgment,” and a “*burning throne.*” It is this attribute of justice in the character of Jehovah, that has made the sacred volume appear, in some of its aspects, repulsive and uninviting, especially to the minds of modern sceptics. There are passages that speak of *judgment*, and *wrath*, because of sin—that represent God as being “angry with the wicked”—as “taking vengeance on His adversaries”—that speak of an “everlasting punishment,” and “chains of darkness prepared” for the wicked hereafter, and other similar expressions; and for these reasons, they object to the Bible.

But what can they do about it? They could not themselves believe in a God, who is destitute of the attribute of justice. There is not an atheist, who, if he could bring himself to believe in the existence of a God, would be willing to have the attribute of justice expunged from the number of His glorious perfections. But if our God is just, how would it be possible to give a Revelation of His will, that should not contain some expressions relative to the nature of His dealings with the wicked, who trample down the laws of His holiness?

If we could imagine a Deity who is unjust—one in whose character the perfections of holiness and justice shine not—a god who does not discern between moral good and evil, and does not recognize this distinction in the conduct of His dependent creatures—a blind deity, as some of the ancients were accustomed to paint their goddess—what would such a god be, but a monster, whose character we would naturally abhor, even if we were compelled to worship him?

Blot out this attribute of justice from the character of God, and He would be transformed into a demon. The supreme excellence of the God of the Bible over all the gods of the heathen, consists chiefly in this, that He is declared to be a holy and just God, whereas, the heathen, having no clear and distinct idea of justice or holiness themselves, never represent their deities as either just or holy.

There is a class of free-thinkers, who have an imaginary deity, possessed of a single attribute which they call "LOVE." As to the natural evils that exist in the world, under the appearance of judgments because of wickedness, they say that this "God of love," has nothing to do with them—and that these misfortunes and calamities have no connection with sin, as the moral cause of them—moreover, that their god is the universal father who embraces all alike as children, in the arms of his love, and that he is going to make all alike, eternally blessed in the next world. But if you ask them, why this God of all love, cannot make all his children perfectly blessed here, as well as hereafter, they can make no answer.

When we have clothed God with the attributes of

holiness and justice, we have to believe in the doctrine of REWARD AND PUNISHMENT. And what is the doctrine of reward and punishment, but a practical expression of the *doctrine of justice*, and the *doctrine of holiness*? A God who is just and holy, is bound by His own nature, to make an eternal distinction between the good and the evil—between the deserving and the undeserving—between the holy and the unholy.

We have seen how this law of justice and holiness, began to be executed in the garden of Eden, by the infliction of the penalty against sin, on the first transgressor. We have seen also, that it was a self-inflicted sentence—that Adam brought his punishment on himself, and that his death was really the effect or the fruit of his own sin.

This view of the subject is one that is calculated to give us a solemn and awe-inspiring view of the character of God! Well may we exclaim, with adoring angels, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints!" The principle that virtue is its own reward, and that sin shall bring its own punishment, is the principle that God has incorporated into His moral government over this world. What sounder principle than this, what more glorious conception can enter into our thoughts!

Hitherto, in the presentation of these doctrinal views, our way has been clear and unobstructed. But now we approach what many have regarded as a great, if not insurmountable difficulty, in connection with the problem of death. Why, they ask, do sin-

less and unconscious babes suffer the pains of death? And how are we to reconcile this fact with our views of the justice or the benevolence of God?

This is a question that requires us to take up the consideration of a very fundamental doctrine of the Scriptures, viz.: the federal or representative character of Adam; and the relation which all his posterity sustain to him as their federal head, and the consequences flowing from that relationship.

We speak of this as a fundamental doctrine, because it lies at the foundation of the Christian scheme of doctrine. Unless this doctrine is understood, no part of the system can be understood. An error in regard to original sin, leads to error in regard to every essential and important doctrine of the Bible.

What is Original Sin? I must confess that I feel a degree of hesitancy, and even of reluctance, to entering on the discussion of the question. Every Christian who is in fellowship with any branch of the Body of Christ, professes to believe in Original Sin. Volumes upon volumes have been written on the subject; sermons upon sermons have been preached upon it, almost enough to fill the world, which have tended, instead of placing it in a clear light, rather to deepen the obscurity that reigns about the meaning of those two simple words, ORIGINAL SIN.

There was but one Original Sin. That was the very first act of Sin. It was the act of Adam in eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. That first act of sin was the beginning of sin. And, certainly, in the case of Adam personally, it was Original Sin. That was the only test act. Adam did

not die, nor suffer the loss of Paradise, nor the loss of the favor of God for any other sin, but that first and Original Sin. It was on account of his eating the fruit of that forbidden tree, that grew in the midst of Eden, that he fell under the penalty of death, and incurred all the pains and woes connected therewith. No other act of sin, which he may have committed in his long life of 950 years, had any connection, as the procuring cause, with his mortality or any of his penal sufferings. All his subsequent pains and sufferings, as well as his death, flowed from that first act. These made up the stream, of which that was the fountain. He may have committed a thousand other acts of sin, and some of them even more aggravated than that first sin; but he was not sentenced to death, and he did not suffer death on account of any sin, but that first act of transgression.

This is what we understand by Original Sin, in its application, especially, to the first man. And perhaps every one can understand it in the same way. But, it may be asked, have the words the same sense, as applied to the posterity of Adam? Is each and every one under the sentence of death for the same act of sin—the sin of eating the fruit of a tree that grew and flourished, perhaps, thousands of years before they were born?

That is a difficult question. But if that was not the sin, for which each and every one has been brought under the condemnation of death, tell me, why an unconscious babe ever dies. For they do die! Almost every one has seen such a sight—a tender and unconscious infant gasping and writhing in the pain of dis-

solution! It has committed no actual sin. And if it does not die for the guilt of that original sin, which was the test act for Adam and his whole race, who can tell why the infant dies?

But is it just? This is the next question. As it comes to pass, and infants do actually die—thousands and millions of them every year—it must be just; for God is just, and so just that He can do nothing that is unjust. Every one probably would admit the justice of the sentence as pronounced against Adam personally, because he committed an actual sin, and brought the sentence on himself. And they would, probably, be just as ready to admit the justice of the sentence against every individual of the race of Adam, if every one had stood for themselves, just as Adam and Eve stood in the garden of Eden, in precisely the same circumstances, and had plucked and eat the fruit of the forbidden tree, and thus brought the sentence on themselves, by their own personal act. In this case, the justice of the sentence would be manifest. As God is omnipotent, He could have afforded the same opportunity to every individual of the race. But it is certain that if He had done so, the result would not have been different from what it is. The result would have been precisely what it is, under the present arrangement. And no individual has either lost or gained anything, that he came into the world by the law of generation, instead of having been created as Adam and Eve were, in an adult state, by God's miraculous power.

Having purposed to bring the human family into being, an exact and definite number of them, it was



optional with God, whether to create them all full-grown, and with their faculties fully developed, as He created Adam and Eve; or to create only a single pair, the models and types of all the rest, and through them as the progenitors and representatives, to bring all the other individuals of the race into existence. God had a right to select His plan; and He could have adopted the mode of creation, as easily as the mode by *propagation*; but what I reaffirm is, that it would have made no difference as to the result.

We believe that the first human pair were matchless—that they were absolutely perfect in their make, in soul and body, without the least taint of sin; and if they did not stand in the hour of trial, it is safe and reasonable to conclude that no others of the same race, would have stood firm in the same circumstances. Therefore, it was not unjust in God to make the first human pair types and models of all the rest, and to make their conduct a test, as to how all the rest would have acted in the same circumstances.

The old familiar couplet, so long in use among the pious Puritans, and which they taught their children to repeat with their catechisms, but which, we regret to say, is now falling into disuse,

“In Adam’s fall, we sinned all,”

is very significant, and expressive of a great theological truth.

The infant that lies gasping in the pains of death, ere it is a day old, is suffering the consequences of a sin which itself committed in Adam, its federal head, and which it would have committed in person, if it had

stood where Adam stood. As to the suffering or the penalty endured, there is no difference. It would have died as Adam died, if it had sinned personally. But now it dies, and dies in infancy, because it sinned in Adam, and was represented by Adam. In either case, the penalty is death. Nothing is gained or lost in consequence of having been born, instead of having been created.

It has been incorporated into the moral law that God does "visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate Him, but showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Him, and keep His commandments." This is a part of that law, written on the two tables of stone. By this law, children are made liable for the iniquities of their fathers.

This is what theologians call the doctrine of *Imputation*. If we acknowledge the moral code contained in the Decalogue, we must admit the justice of the principle, whether we fully comprehend it or not.

We see the same principle carried out, and proclaimed by a thousand voices, throughout the works of nature and Providence. There is not an earthquake, a pestilence, a famine, a war, or any other judgment ever sent on the inhabitants of any nation or city, that does not involve, in its consequences, children and unconscious infants, equally with the guilty fathers and mothers. Now, to say that the God of the whole earth would send these calamities and judgments on a sinless race of beings, and without any just cause, would be an arraignment of His infinite wisdom and benevolence. Unless we admit the justice

of God, there is only one way to avoid the sin of blasphemy, and that is, to say that God has nothing to do with our world, nor with its inhabitants. This would be to throw ourselves on *Fate*, or "The Beautiful Necessity," of R. W. Emerson, that makes "food and eater all of one piece."

The doctrine of Imputation implies that tender and helpless babes, who perish in earthquakes, wars, famines, etc., being involved in the consequences of their parents' guilt, are not themselves guiltless, or without sin. Though they have no actual sin, they are born with Original Sin. They have sinful souls, by nature, and sinful bodies, because of their descent from Adam. And so, if they suffer the punishment of their parents, they suffer as possessing the same sinful nature with their parents. This sinful nature is derived from Adam. This is what is signified by Imputation.

Having thus stated and defined the doctrine, let us look at the argument which sustains it.

As Adam was the federal head of the race, when he fell, they fell with him, because he represented them. But the question is made, whether it was just and right to appoint one man—Adam—as the representative of all the race, instead of giving to each individual of the race the opportunity of a personal trial, as He gave to Adam. And it is asked, whether, if all had been afforded an equal chance, by a personal probation, to choose for themselves, some at least, would not have stood firm in their allegiance to the King of heaven, and not have forfeited the crown of life?

If such a contingency could have happened, we should be compelled to say that Adam did not fairly

represent his race. We call him their federal head, and their representative, because he represented them—that is, he acted and chose for them, as they would have acted and chosen for themselves in the same circumstances. If he did not represent them fairly, they would, in justice, be entitled to another representation. But it is not likely that any will ever set up a claim or a plea like this, who can reason properly and logically from cause to effect.

It is a law of mind to be controlled by motives, as it is a law of matter that it is controlled by gravitation. It is an axiom in all our reasonings—in all systems of philosophy, that the same causes, all other things being equal, will produce the same effects. There could be no system of philosophy, and we could not reason at all on any subject, if this axiom were not admitted.

We know, that if the two scales of a balance be in exact equipoise, the weight of a grain of sand, or a feather, thrown into one of the scales, would destroy the balance, and cause the other scale to ascend. And this will happen a thousand or a million times, or just as often as the experiment is made. And so, in regard to mind—it is controlled by motives, and all other things being equal, the strongest motive will prevail.

We believe that the Infinite and Eternal mind is governed by motives. For God is an Infinite Intelligence—and intelligence cannot act without design. God had a motive, when He formed man; and when He created the world; and when He sent His Son into the world, to save man. God does nothing without counsel—"according to the counsel of His own

will," it is written ; and again, " according to His eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus."

Man was made in the image of his Maker, in this sense ; that he acts, and that he is capable of acting from counsel. He can deliberate, and choose between opposite and contrary courses of action, that may be presented to his mind. But man, when acting rationally, cannot act or choose without counsel. And the moment he ceases to act rationally, or to be influenced by motives, he acts as a madman or an idiot ; for they cannot feel the force of a motive, and they are not regarded as responsible moral agents.

Therefore, we conclude that if any child of Adam, whom he represented, had been placed in the same condition, surrounded by the same circumstances, with the same strength of intellect, and acted on by the same motives, he would have made the same choice, or else, the philosophical axiom before stated, cannot be true. So then, we say, that Adam fairly and truly represented his posterity ; and in his fall, they fell.

It is true, the Heavenly Father appointed him our representative ; but there is no cause of complaint on this score ; since, if we, the children, could have had a voice in the election of a representative, we could not have chosen a better man than Adam—the model man—the one and only perfect man, as God had formed him. And he cast our vote, as we should have cast it for ourselves, had we been in Adam's stead.

I will add here, that this principle of representation in government, is beginning, more and more, to be recognized as the wisest and best form of government among men, even in the regulation of political affairs.

Individuals as well as states, now recognize the fact, that when a representative whom they have elected, has fairly expressed their will, in the national councils, they become responsible with him, for all the consequences of that vote, even though it should turn out disastrous to their interests. And they do not complain of wrong or injustice, if the disastrous influence of that vote descends to them and their children.

Hereafter, then, when we look on a helpless infant—just born into the world, with its tender features distorted with pain, and writhing in the agony of dissolution, let us remember that there is a cause—a cause that vindicates the Divine Father, from the suspicion of injustice and cruelty. And if any of us have ever entertained feelings of this kind, let us dismiss them from our thoughts. Neither let us be too free in our censures of Adam and Eve, as if they were the sole authors of suffering and death, to us and our children. But when our thoughts revert to the solemn transaction in the garden of Eden, let us try to realize that we stood there, in the persons of father Adam, and the dear, beautiful mother Eve, and that when they plucked and ate the fatal fruit, we plucked and ate, and so brought the sentence of death on ourselves. This view of the subject clears them, and also clears God of any blame attaching to our own personal sin and suffering. And in this view of the subject, we have to say in the words of the apostle :

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judg-

ments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things; to whom be glory forever. Amen."

If we could comprehend perfectly the law of descent, or reproduction, we should not censure the first human pair for the inheritance of death and sinful infirmities, transmitted to us from them. If there were no such law, every species of things in the animal and vegetable kingdom, would run out in a single generation. But the law is something like photography—it takes impressions of persons and things as they are, and reproduces or transmits them.

Here is a law of nature, which, whether just or not, whether ordained of God or not, is universal in its operation. And if the law had not existed, there would have been only one generation of men, and only one generation of any other species of animals in the world, and special acts of creation would have been necessary to perpetuate any species. By this law it was ordained, that every species should reproduce and perpetuate its own kind. When the original law, as recorded by Moses, was issued to man and all other animals, "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth," the intent was that they should reproduce themselves, or perpetuate their own species. This law has never been changed. In its application to physical or organic structure, we understand this.

If parents desire a beautiful offspring, they understand that, it is necessary to be beautiful themselves.

If they desire children born to them with good and amiable dispositions, they know that they must be good and amiable themselves. What is more common than the remark, that, this or that child resembles his mother, and this or that son or daughter has inherited the temper of the father? We think nothing strange of this. But in what a light does it present the criminality of that man, who, being a drunkard, puts himself in the attitude of a father, well knowing that he transmits that to his offspring, which may make him a drunkard, an idiot, or a maniac! Or the criminality of that female, who, being a slave to some such pernicious habit as *opium-eating*, wine-bibbing, or snuff-dipping, consents to assume the responsibilities of a mother, knowing that the poison she takes into her system, may occasion the death of her babe before it is a day old, whereby, in the eye of God's law, she becomes a murderess! Is it a strange thing that there are so many early deaths, when we look at the habits of our modern females, and the way in which they are brought up? O then, you who are parents, do not go back to the garden, with sad and bitter reproaches, as if the first parents were the greatest sinners whoever lived, because they had children in their own likeness!

Mental and moral traits are transmitted, as well as physical. This is so well understood that there is a general expectancy, that, the offspring shall bear a close resemblance to the parents, one or both, not only in their personal features, and the color of their hair and eyes, but as to their intellectual qualities, and their dispositions. And when there are variations



from this general rule, they are accounted for by going back a generation or two, to find the resemblance in remoter ancestry.

According to this law, no species can produce or propagate any thing else but its own kind. Nothing can be reproduced that had no anterior existence: that is, parents cannot transmit a single property, faculty, appetite or instinct, or any moral or physical likeness, which are not inherent in, and essential to their own nature, as we say that a stream can never rise above its fountain. A species, or a race can never be improved, beyond the original types of the race. We do not expect that there can ever be two human beings born, more perfect in mind or body than were the original pair, the types of the race. They were absolutely perfect. We can suppose nothing else, without reflecting on the Creator. But there can be a degeneracy. Offspring may dwindle—may be less perfect than the parents, for various reasons. The law of reproduction is interfered with. There is a pressure laid upon it. For example, a father has consumption, scrofula—or he is a drunkard—or in some other way he causes a degeneracy in his offspring. In the animal and vegetable worlds, this law is obstructed in a thousand ways, but never destroyed. Take any fruit, as the apple; and when planted in a genial soil, and with proper culture and care, how rich and pleasant is the fruit. But let it grow in the woods, on the side of a hill, or in a swamp, without culture, and it becomes the wild apple. But the original germ, or the type remains in the species, and when the pressure of untoward circumstances is removed, we shall always find

the law of reproduction gradually carrying back the species, to the perfection of its original type. But beyond that point it can never go.

Hence, when it is said, that Adam begat a son in his own likeness, we understand that it was his likeness at the time when his son was born. He was a sinner—an apostate from God. His nature was much changed from what it was at his original creation. The whole brood of evil passions that belong to a depraved nature, had become enthroned in his heart. And this is the sad inheritance transmitted from parents to children, and from generation to generation.

There were certain ancient philosophers, who taught, in the first ages of the church, that sin and sinful properties belong to matter—to the body alone. This was the old Gnostic system. Some of those pagan philosophers were early converted to Christianity, and by degrees the leaven of that philosophy got into their theology, and the whole body of church divinity became leavened, of which we see the effects to this day. This idea of a material depravity, gave rise to various superstitious practices and rites, of a religious nature; as baptismal regeneration, trine immersion, baptizing candidates in a nude state—whippings, fastings, celibacy, monasticism, etc., all of which were for the purification of the body—for the punishment of the body, and to keep the body under.

But I propose to notice here, only a single error that had its origin in the same root of heresy, or false philosophy, and that is, the notion held even by some able and learned ecclesiastics, that souls are not prop-

agated with bodies, but that the souls of all infants are created by a special act of God, and that they are joined with, or to the bodies they are to inhabit, somewhere about the period of their birth, or just before. This opinion has been advocated even by some orthodox and evangelical divines. I think the objections to it are insuperable, several of which I will briefly state.

1. And the first is, that the tendency of such a notion would be to confirm and to perpetuate in the church, the absurd and superstitious practices before mentioned, to which it gave rise; such as baptismal regeneration, celibacy, etc. For nothing can be more certain than that, if all souls are created by a special act of God, and not propagated from Adam, they must be pure and holy at the time of their union with the bodies, and they don't need regeneration. There is nothing necessary but the regeneration of the body. The Gnostic philosophy, that all depravity is inherent in the body, would naturally suggest, as we know it did, the idea of baptismal regeneration, which was only a bodily washing or purification, and the kindred practices, which were designed to overcome and to eradicate the depravity of the flesh.

The advocates of this notion of a special creation of souls, would hardly pretend that God creates a sinful soul, for that would make Him the creator and the author of sin. And therefore, they must believe that all infants are, at the moment of their birth, perfectly free from the defilement of sin, as to their souls, and only sinful or corrupt as to their bodies. If this is a proper statement of what they call the *doctrine of Creationism*,

I confess that I cannot see much difference between it and the ancient Gnostic System, and we cannot feel any surprise that the early Christians should have introduced a system of rites and observances, all having one aim—the purification of the body from its original and moral defilement. This dogma of *Creationism*, must stand or fall with that whole system of superstitious practices so early grafted on the simple sacraments of the church, and which laid the foundation of the general and great apostacy.

2. In the second place, this doctrine of Creationism, or a special creation of souls, is clearly in conflict with the teachings of Moses, the servant of God. Moses says :

“ In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made He him ; male and female created He them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created. And Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image, and called his name Seth.”

If, as materialists say, Adam had no immortal spirit, and no likeness of God, we should believe that Moses meant to teach in the above, nothing more than that Adam begat a son in his own bodily shape or *image*. But that this could not have been his meaning, is very clear from the carefulness with which he records in the same connection, what the image of Adam was :— “ in the likeness of God made He him.” This was a moral and spiritual likeness, for God has no bodily form—God is a spirit. Therefore, Moses records the fact, and he took pains to make his meaning clear,

that Adam begat a son in his own spiritual and immortal likeness, in the image in which God had made him.

But they may say that Adam had forfeited or lost this spiritual and immortal likeness, by transgression before he had any son. It is true, that image had become marred by sin. But that image was not destroyed nor blotted out. That image of God was nothing more nor less than the breath of Jehovah, breathed into his nostrils at his creation, by which "man became a living soul," or an immortal spirit; for that is meant by "*a living soul.*" That has never been blotted out, and it never will be.

But if Moses meant to tell all the generations of mankind, how Seth came into existence, why did he not add that God gave him a living soul, after having informed us that Adam begat his mortal body, if that was all he meant by "his own likeness, after his image?" If Seth had a soul and a body, as well as Adam, and if Adam begat only the latter part, or the body, Moses should have recorded how Seth came in the possession of the other part, the soul or the immortal part, without which he would not have been a man, nor the son of Adam.

What is a man? A being possessed of a human soul in a human body. And what is a son of man? The same—a being with a human soul in a human body. Such an one was Seth, the son of Adam, and as such he was begotten of Adam. But all this is nonsense, if Creationism is true, that the soul is created by a special act of God, and only the body is begotten.

3. Again, this notion of the Creationists that had its

foundation in Gnosticism, is subversive of the doctrine of the federal relationship sustained by Adam to his posterity. Paul says: "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

The extent of meaning we give to that last word—"sinned"—must determine the nature of the atonement, and the relationship we sustain to Christ, who is called "The Second Adam." For the extent of the atonement is only commensurate with the ruins of the fall. If only the bodies of men existed in Adam, and sinned in him, and fell with him, then only the bodies of men are redeemed by Christ. If the souls did not exist in Adam, and did not sin in Adam, but were created pure and holy by a special act of God, then of course they are not redeemed by Christ, as they could have no need of his redemption.

I may not understand these Creationists. But I must say, that, I have no idea of a sin of the body—of the hand, or the foot, or any other member of the body in which the soul is not concerned. Sin and holiness are moral qualities, which inhere in the soul. And if Christ has not redeemed my soul from the power and the consequences of sin, as well as my body, how small is my debt to what I had believed!

"It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," but only the sinners of Adam's race. And if He saves sinners of Adam's race, it is because they are the children of Adam—because they were represented by Adam—because they sinned in Adam, and fell with him. And if they are the children of Adam,

it is because they are descended from him, and born of him, body and soul—in their entire humanity. There is no greater mystery in the fact that souls are pro-created, than in the fact that bodies are pro-created by the decree of Almighty God.

In conclusion, I will only add, that, it has been my aim in this chapter, to show the connection between death and its attendant evils, and sin as the procuring cause thereof. Death is not simply and only a penal or judicial sentence against sin, but, as we have seen, it is the legitimate and necessary fruit or product of sin. The first transgressor not only fell under the judicial curse, but by sinning, he imbibed principles into his system, which, working within, produced death and all its consequences, so that it is truly spoken of as “the wages of sin.” There is only exact justice in this, and justice is moral law in force. And we have to say, “All His works are truth, and His ways judgment.”

## CHAPTER VI.

### *The Only Perfect Code of Morals.*

Human laws imperfect—Rome in the time of the Cæsars—Not a charity hospital—Polygamy and infanticide<sup>d</sup> sanctioned—One exception, Israel—Morality of the Jewish code—A great paradox—Was Moses the author?—His idea of the Unity of God—Of the law of the Sabbath—A natural man could not have written the Decalogue—The knowledge of letters—Four marks of a perfect law—First, obedience always followed by good—Secondly, disobedience followed by evil—Third, all wrongs traced to some violation of the law—Fourth, perfect in its sanctions—Natural calamities viewed as punishments—The pantheistic refuge—Nature and Revelation—Conduct of children and idiots—Heathen sacrifices—The Divine law must be executed—Submission to authority—A miniature government—National and individual sins—Judgment of the Jewish nation—Proofs of a future judgment—Singular psychological facts—The books to be opened.

THE wisdom and learning of the world, from the earliest times, have been called into constant requisition to devise a wise and just code of laws, for the regulation of the conduct of states and individuals. Nothing has more occupied the minds of legislators and philosophers in every age, than the necessity for such a system of laws, the observance of which would conduct states and individuals to happiness and prosperity, by securing the prevalence of virtue, and preventing the commission of crime. But they have never been able to devise such a code. To be convinced of this, we have only to look at the present condition of the world, outside the countries which have, in part, adopted the Christian code of morals.



And the *status* of the nations of antiquity, as we read it in history, shows the same thing.

The Roman Empire rose to as high a pitch of civilization, and refinement in arts, science, and civil jurisprudence, as any other country that has a written history. And what was the nature of their civil jurisprudence? What did human wisdom and learning, after all the changes and experience of the preceding ages, achieve for the amelioration of Rome, in regard to the manners and morals of its people? Let us hear what a late and eloquent writer says on this subject. In giving a brief sketch of the state of Rome, in the time of the Cæsars, he writes:

“Human nature was invested with no sacred character. Men were divided into two classes—masters and slaves; and according as they belonged to one or the other, they ranked as demi-gods or brute beasts. The former held possessions, had a family, a country, and a name; the slaves were looked upon as things, not men; and were, by the laws of the times, declared not only vile, but *null*.”

“In the domestic relation the same spirit prevailed. The father of the family alone possessed rights; wife and children were held in a state of subordination, differing little from bondage; their life even being at the mercy of him who, though husband and father, recognized no duties incumbent on him as such. Women, ignorant of their own dignity, and their peculiar duties, and having no standard by which to form their opinion of themselves but that of the other sex, looked upon themselves as being created for no higher purpose than the gratification of man, and the propagation of the species. By the laws of the state, they were treated as goods and chattels; they might be bought and sold; their life was taken

for the smallest offence. Polygamy everywhere prevailed, either openly or in disguise. Prostitution was sanctioned by religion.

“At the period of the birth of Christ,\* these systems of antiquity had worked their worst. The sceptre of Rome was extended over all the countries of the West; her mission was accomplished; with her, tranquillity degenerated into stagnation, and ended in rottenness. Humanity, incapable of submitting to inactivity, fell back upon itself, and revelled in selfishness, debauchery and cruelty; the three capital errors of antiquity had reached their apogee; thirty thousand gods were enthroned in the capitol; the slaves of the wealthy citizens were thrown into the ponds to fatten the murænas; a decree of the Senate declared that all the women belonged to Cæsar.”

This was the state of the most enlightened portion of the world at the period when Christ was born, after human legislation and philosophy had done all they could to enlighten and reform it, through a lapse of several thousand years. The spirit of philanthropy almost sickens at the recital. Was this, indeed, the best, and all that the wisdom and experience of many ages, concentrated in the most august body of senators ever assembled up to that time, was able to accomplish, in the way of devising good and humane laws for the happiness of the human race? What a comment on the insufficiency of the light that is in man, as to anything good, independently of the Divine light!

Human wisdom has never been found competent to devise anything like a perfect system of legislation, for securing the peace and welfare of society. Rome, at the era spoken of, was not, in her legislation, be-

hind, but far in advance of any other nation. Suppose that we go back a thousand years earlier, to Egypt, the cradle of learning, arts and science, where Moses the great Lawgiver of Israel received his first lessons in wisdom and human jurisprudence—we inquire, did Egypt ever have a better code of laws than Rome? Did Persia, or China, or Greece ever have a better system of laws or morals? On the contrary, Rome had made, perhaps, some slight improvement on the experience of those more ancient kingdoms and states; and, at the era we speak of, it may be truly said, that, in the grandeur of Rome, the world had reached its zenith, as far as human wisdom and learning could go, or have ever gone in the enactment of laws for the government of states.

Look at the monuments left us by the legislation of ancient times—what inscriptions do they bear? None—not a single word that speaks of a civilization, or a state of morals, beyond what the most pagan nations of our own day can boast. War was the art which they studied more than any of the arts of peace. War was the most honorable occupation, and the principal business of life. The captives taken in war were lawfully put to death, and if any were spared, they were distributed among the conquerors to be slaves for life. There was nothing in their legislation teaching, that “all men were created equal, and endowed with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” On the contrary, they taught that the great mass of mankind are born “*natural slaves*”—that nature has formed them for this condition.

They had no laws providing for the erection of hospitals, asylums, or other institutions for the support and comfort of the poor, the aged, the orphan and the widow. They had no asylums for the blind, the lunatic, or the deaf and the dumb. It is not known that heathen legislation ever gave birth to a single orphan asylum, or charity hospital. But they had statutes, making it lawful for parents or states to put out of the way, by a secret death or otherwise, those who could not take care of themselves, or who were a burden to their families, or to the state.

Polygamy prevailed, and was sanctioned by law in every nation. They had no enactment recognizing the sanctity of the marriage relationship. Husbands could put away their wives, under any pretence, and even without any pretence at all. Not only so, but in most of the countries, they could sell their wives and children, and sometimes even cause them to be put to death. If we search the records of all antiquity, there is hardly a page which affords any relief to this dark picture.

There was a solitary spot—the holy land—where God's people dwelt, for whom He legislated—where just and wise, and wholesome laws prevailed. When the holy people walked according to the laws of the Lord their God, they were prosperous and happy. We can point to the Kingdom of Israel, in the reigns of David and Solomon, as presenting an example of national prosperity under wise and just laws, never seen in any country before or since, save in those countries in very recent times, that have acknowledged the authority of the Divine Code of laws recognized in the Bible.

But the Israelites were a rebellious people. They often apostatized from God, and trampled His laws under foot, in consequence of which they brought on themselves the judgments of heaven. They were scourged by wars, by famine, by pestilence; and sometimes they were carried into captivity by their enemies. And they are in a dispersed and broken condition to-day, because of their rebellion against their rightful Lawgiver and King. But scattered, and peeled, and trodden down as they are, there is not a race, or a nation of people on the globe, exclusive of those strictly Christian, that has a fourth part of the enlightenment, the wealth, the morality, or the education which the Jews have to-day.

If the eight or ten millions scattered among all nations, could be collected together in their own land as there is a promise and a probability that they will be, they would be in possession of more wealth, more learning, more refinement, a purer and higher standard of morality, a better trained and more obedient offspring than any other people. Every attentive observer of history must note, in this singular state of things, the hand of a Special Providence. It is a problem that has no parallel in the history of the world, and there is no other way to solve it.

So striking is the fact now noted, that when we hear or read of individuals greatly distinguished for wealth, learning, or legislative genius, we are ready to take it for granted that they are probably Jews. One of the greatest statesmen in modern times who has just passed away, and the only man able to measure swords with Gladstone, on the political arena, was a

Jew. The richest men in Europe are Jews. The richest and most thrifty merchants in many of the great commercial marts are Jews. It is a rare thing to meet in any country a Jew who is a beggar. It is quite as rare to find a Jew in any of our jails, or brought up in any of our courts on a charge of crime. So that we can say in truth, if all the Jews scattered about in our cities, were ordered to Palestine, and were to take all their learning, and wealth, and moral refinement, and commercial enterprise with them, they would almost spoil the nations which they abandoned, as much as their forefathers spoiled the Egyptians when they came out of Egypt.

Here is a great fact—a wonderful paradox—that stands out to the view of the whole world. The materialist—the worldly philosopher can give no explanation of it. But there is a cause, and it is found in the code of morals contained in their law-book, which has come down from their great and acknowledged Lawgiver, Moses, and which they still follow, though imperfectly. It is that, and only that, which has made them the wonderful people they are, and superior in wealth, intelligence and morality, in a ten-fold degree, to any other equal population on the face of the earth, except strictly Christian nations, who have received their moral code from the Jews.

This is something for sceptics to think about, and the great naturalists of our times, who devote so much of their leisure to the study of whatever is rare or remarkable in natural history, or in psychological developments. It is not probable that they will give their profoundest thoughts to the consideration of this

singular paradox, but the fact is too prominent for them entirely to ignore it.

The moral code recognized by the Jew, is the very same as that which the Christian recognizes. The system of morals taught in the Old Testament, is that which is inculcated in the New Testament. Christ Jesus proclaimed that he did not come to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfil. The ceremonial part of the law, which the Jew observes, was designed only for a certain age of the world, and a certain condition of the people; but it does not affect, nor in any way diminish, the claims of the moral dispensation. That can never pass away, and can never be changed, so as to be either less or more perfect, than when it was first promulgated amid the thunders of Sinai, to be the rule of conduct for all God's people, to the end of time.

The influence of that moral code is the same on the life of the Jew, that it is on the life of the Christian. The effect of it is to keep the people from idolatry—to perpetuate the worship of the One only living and true God—to secure the observance of one day in seven, as a day of religious worship and rest—to secure filial reverence and obedience to parents—a careful training of children in the paths of virtue, on the part of parents—and the performance of all those offices of love and duty to others, which we would have others perform unto us.

If this law were perfectly kept, it would make the Jew perfect in his external conduct and conversation—it would make the Christian equally perfect in his outward conduct—and if it were universally promul-

gated and observed, it would have the same effect on the entire race.

Will it be said that this law originated with Moses?—that he was the author of it? It is true that Moses was, naturally, a great man, and a philosopher. It is equally true, that, he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. We can readily believe that he was the equal of any who lived in that age of the world. But this would not be a satisfactory or a philosophical account of his having originated the most perfect system of laws, and the only code, absolutely perfect, the world has ever known. If Moses was inspired of God, that would account for it. But there is no other explanation. If Moses was only a natural man, how did he get that code of laws in the mount? Who taught him to write? He had not learned the art in Egypt. They knew nothing of writing in that age, except in hieroglyphics. Where did he get the idea of the unity of God? The Egyptians worshipped the calf, and a great variety of gods. Where did he get his notion of the sanctity of the Sabbath, incorporated in the fourth precept? They had not any Sabbath in Egypt. If Moses had no direct communication with God, he was only a natural man and an impostor. And if he was an impostor—a deceiver, how is it possible to believe that he went into the wilderness, and into a mountain, and after remaining there a very few days, that he came forth again to the people, with sublime and wonderful thoughts and conceptions, embodied in a code of laws, far beyond any legislation to which the world had attained in that age, and which has not been surpassed, nor even equalled, by any



legislation in any age of the world since? How was this possible? Let sceptical philosophers explain it, if they can.

Here I want to say, and I say it as in a parenthesis, that the most reliable historic records, show that the Greeks received their knowledge of letters from the Phœnicians, and the Phœnicians from the Hebrews. There is not a tittle of historic proof, that the art of writing was known at the time of the Exodus from Egypt. The Egyptians had not this knowledge in that age. Of course, Moses could not have known the art of writing, and the probability is that the Decalogue written on the tables of stone in the handwriting of God, was the first written document the world ever saw. I will quote here just a few words. Rawlinson, in his historical evidence, says:

“The Hebrew alphabet is considerably different both from that of Egypt, and that of Babylon, while it is almost identical with that of Phenicia.”

Again, he says:

“Eupolemus says that Moses was the first wise man, and that he first taught the Jews letters—that the Phenicians received them from the Jews, and the Greeks from the Phenicians; and also that Moses was the first who wrote laws for the Jews.”

It is not consistent with my purpose, to elaborate this argument. But I think that archæologists could make much of it.

I have said, that the moral law contained in the Decalogue, is a law absolutely perfect; by which I

mean, that there was nothing essential omitted, and that nothing could be added to make it more perfect. How shall this statement be verified?

1. In the first place, this moral law, if universally promulgated and practised, would fill the world with love, and light, and joy, and peace.

2. Any violation of this law, if broken or set aside, or repealed even as to a single precept, would be followed with disastrous consequences.

3. Every wrong, or disorder to society or individuals, comes from some infraction of this perfect law.

4. This law is perfect, in the sense, that it has its sanctions, as indeed, there cannot be a perfect law, without sanctions or penalties.

Let us examine the moral law contained in the Decalogue, by these four tests.

I. And first, we say, that the universal prevalence of this perfect moral law would fill the world with love, and light, and joy, and peace. How would it secure this result? By eradicating everything like idolatry, oppression, tyranny, pride, ambition, covetousness, wrath, sensualism, and every other evil and crime. And if all these evils and wrongs were banished from the earth, it would be full of love, and light, and joy, and peace.

The precepts of the first table, which the Saviour summed up in a single command enjoining supreme love to God, would insure the fulfilment of every obligation and religious duty which is due directly to God. There could be no such thing as idolatry in the world, because supreme love to God would require

all worship to be rendered to Him alone. And then, the two first precepts positively forbid the worship of false gods. The sins of blasphemy, profanity, and evil-speaking, would be unknown, as they are prohibited by the third precept in the law. The inhabitants of the whole earth would have one day in seven, as a day of rest from their worldly cares and labors; and in every hamlet and village, the Sabbath bells would call the joyful worshippers to the sacred sanctuary, to enjoy the more welcome spiritual rest needful to the souls as well as the bodies of men.

The precepts of the second table of the law, summed up by our Lord in one command, to love our neighbor as ourselves, would banish everything like tyranny, oppression, pride, ambition, wrath, covetousness, and sensualism. If these precepts were observed and enforced, children would be reverential and obedient to parents, and parents would love their children and train them in the way they should go. The law of love is the law that would bind families together, as well as communities.

If every man loved his neighbor as himself, there would be no tyranny, and no tyrants on earth. For who could act the part of a tyrant over his neighbor—his fellow-man, whom he loved as himself? Neither could there be any such thing as covetousness, for that is nothing else but idolatry, one of the greatest sins; and that is positively prohibited in the tenth precept of the Decalogue. The prevalence of this law would exclude everything like theft, fraud, dishonesty, deception, falsehood, etc.

Again, if this moral law should prevail universally,

we can readily understand that there could be no want, no beggary—no starvation among the children of men. For love is an active and a benevolent principle, prompting all under its dominion to do good unto others—to relieve want and suffering, wherever and whenever there is opportunity. The mother who loves her babe as she loves herself, cannot bear to see it suffer; for every pang she sees it to endure, goes straight to her own heart, and she suffers with it; and she cannot be happy till she sees her child relieved. This is the nature of love. It seeks happiness in communicating happiness to others.

Now, if this law of love united all men together as a harmonious family, the only strife that could exist among them, would be a strife as to who should do the most good. There would be no pride, no ambition, no vain striving to get one above another, or to put down one another. What then would become of the clamps which now keep society together—such as jails, prisons, courts, police officers, locks and keys, bolts and bars? There would be no use for these things; and they would be unknown, if the law of Moses held supreme sway.

II. Let us now try this moral code by the second test proposed, namely: that if it should be broken, or set aside even in a single instance, so far and in that degree, the happiness of the world would be marred. If we analyze the moral code with a view to ascertain whether there is one among the ten precepts that could be spared, or that might have been omitted, without impairing the perfection of the system as a whole, we could not select one. They are so joined

or put together to form one complete and perfect code, that it would be impossible to take out one, without destroying the unity of the whole. What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

I am perfectly aware that in taking this position I bring myself in conflict with *rationalists*, in a sentiment, unfortunately, becoming too common in our day, in opposition to the Sabbath as a moral institution, and a part of the original moral law. This is a matter of so much importance that I have considered it at length in the next chapter.

III. The third test proposed, to show the perfection of God's moral law, consists in this fact, that every wrong, and every disorder that now exist in the world, have come in some way, directly or indirectly, from some infraction of that perfect law. Can there be a doubt as to the truth of this statement? No one who will give the subject a moment's thought, can entertain a particle of doubt. For let any one try to imagine some complaint—some pain, or distress, or trouble, or misfortune, or disorder that has come on him, or on society at large, that is not the effect or the legitimate consequence of some broken law, which he or some one else has violated, and could he think of one?

In the preceding chapter, it was shown that death, with its attendant evils, was produced as the legitimate fruit of sin, so that it is not necessary to go over that ground again. If we accept the teachings of the Bible, we are sure that neither death, nor any of the pains of death, would ever have been known in this world, but for the prevalence of sin.

But let us look at this matter more from the stand-

point of rationalism. We ask the sceptic—or the rationalist, to name some existing disorder in society, which he thinks has not come, directly or indirectly, from some infraction of the perfect law of God.

Would he name war? That is a universal evil. We might admit that, in the present state of the world, it is a necessary evil. There is no nation—no state of society, no country in the world, that has escaped the bloody scourge. Yet who can say that it has not come from the utter trampling down in the dust of God's holy law?

If men loved God supremely, and loved their neighbors as themselves, could they go to war with one another? "Whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even from your lusts that war in your members?" These lusts, engendering wrath, strife, malice, revenge, result in open collisions and the strifes of arms. Hence there is hardly any land that has not been many times drenched in the blood of its inhabitants. But this is all in opposition to the law of God.

There is prevalent everywhere in the world, a vast amount of temporal want and even of starvation, which is a great evil. But there is no one who would not say that this evil has come from habitual violation of the law of God. The most of the sufferers are those who have brought their sufferings on themselves by their own fault. Of course, the righteous are often afflicted. Yet even their afflictions, we must believe, are self-induced, being directly or indirectly the effects of a violated law. "But the Lord will bring them out of them all."

The time will probably come—and it certainly will, if we are to have a millennium—when, if there should be one human being in a state of want or starvation, every other human being cognizant of the fact, would instantly fly to his relief; just as we may believe that an angel from the courts of heaven, would think it a joy to be commissioned by the King of kings, to carry relief to that suffering Child of God. It is true, there are too many so-called Christians, who do not fulfil their mission of love. But they will hear their sentence of condemnation in the great day, “I was hungry, and ye fed me not,” etc.

The Religion of Love—Christianity, is steadily restoring the equilibrium that was lost by the fall, blotting out the distinctions of caste that sin had created, levelling the barriers and walls of separation built up by patrician pride, and restoring the bond of brotherhood destined to unite the members of one common family, since all are the children of Adam, and are to be one in Christ.

IV. The moral law of God is perfect as to its sanctions. In the very nature of a law, three things are essential. It must be adequate or adapted to secure the end proposed; it must be enforced by proper and adequate sanctions; and it must be faithfully executed. In all these respects, the moral law is absolutely perfect. Let us consider this. We are not now dealing with the Gospel, but with a law dispensation. The law knows no mercy. The principle of law is, *obey and live, disobey and die*. • This principle is incorporated in the Decalogue itself.

“Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them ; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate me ; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.”

There is a penalty attached—and the perfection of law requires that there be a penalty attached to every act of transgression. Modern rationalists are horrified by the proposition that a God of Love should ever inflict any judgments on the transgressors of His law. And because the Bible teaches this doctrine, they are disposed to ignore the Bible. But what can they make of the punishments—the natural evils—the calamities, or by whatever name they choose to call them, to which individuals as well as nations are subject, in the present world?

They may say that these natural calamities come from the operation of nature's laws. If we ask here, whether God ordained the laws of nature, they are driven into their pantheistic refuge, and proclaim that God is in nature ; and God and nature are one ; and that it is absurd to suppose the existence of a personal God, because it is a proposition that cannot be grasped by human reason. Having thus got rid of the idea of a personal God, and set up on the altar of their belief, an impersonal God, which is nothing else but unintelligent and blind nature, they have no difficulty in ascribing all the evils and troubles that occur in this world, to the workings of this blind goddess. This is much more rational, they think, than to suppose the existence of an intelligent Moral Governor



of this universe, who sends judgments on the guilty subjects of His government, in the administration of a just law.

It has been shown, that, every wrong and disorder existing in the world, as war, the pains of death, oppression, starvation, etc., etc., come from some violation of the perfect moral law. I say here, farther, that they come as penal consequences of that broken law, and that there is an established and necessary connection between the violation and the penal consequence. On this point, the teachings of nature and of Revelation harmonize perfectly.

There is no law of nature—no physical law that may be violated with impunity. If a man takes a deadly poison into his system, he violates a law of his nature, and is punished. He may be ignorant at the moment, but he is punished notwithstanding. If an idiot, knowing nothing of the law of gravitation, steps into empty space from the top of some lofty eminence, or from the roof of a building, and is dashed to death on the pavement below, he has broken a law of nature, and he pays the penalty with his life. There is an inseparable connection between the violation and the penalty. And the knowledge, or the want of knowledge of that connection, never makes any difference as to the result.

The same is true of moral law. We may not always see the connection between the transgression and the penalty. But we can perceive it often enough, to be as well satisfied that it exists, as that the laws of nature are unvarying in their operation, although there may be idiots and children, who are not always

wise enough to perceive them, in season to escape harm ; as it is to be feared there will be some not wise enough, to escape the consequences of the broken moral law.

Again, the sanctions of law must be adequate to secure the ends of government, for which laws are ordained. Human laws, in this sense, are never perfect. They enact laws and repeal them, because they do not work well. They enact other laws and repeal them for the same reason. And hence the whole course of human legislation is little else but a series of experiments in the art of civil jurisprudence. This is but a fair account of the history of human legislation.

But the Divine laws are all perfect, and there is never any change in them. They are never set aside nor repealed. And it must be that the sanctions are as absolutely perfect as the laws—not too severe, and yet severe enough to secure the ends of God's government. As God was in the possession of infinite wisdom, we must believe that He knew what sanctions to affix to all His laws.

But, once more, will that perfect moral law of God, be inflexibly executed against transgressors? This is a question of painful significance. An answer in the affirmative would seem to surround His throne with a flaming fire, and to invest His character with the aspect of a stern and implacable judge, such as to keep every trembling and guilty culprit from approaching into His presence. Here, indeed, is a difficulty in the way of approaching God directly, which human thought has never been able to sur-

mount. There is the broken law—there is the judge on his flaming throne—and there is no escaping the penalty.

Can we wonder that the nations lying in sin and wickedness, have always had their expiatory and bloody offerings—that they have been willing to cut and mangle their own bodies—to walk on burning coals of fire—to swing in the air with iron hooks thrust through their quivering flesh, and to offer the fruit of their own bodies—their infant offspring, as a sacrifice for the sin of their souls? Who could approach unto that awful throne, if he had never heard of Him who said, “I AM THE WAY.”—“No man cometh unto the Father but by me.”

On the other hand, if the question be answered negatively—that God will not execute the sanctions of His law—that He will set aside the law, or remit the penalty altogether, this would argue weakness or fickleness in the Almighty Governor. For if He should enact a law which He had to repeal, or which He could not execute, would this not prove some defect either in the law, or in the Lawgiver? And if God could change, or let down His law which is holy, just, and good, even in a single instance, would he be competent to rule the universe?

No, if the law is perfect, it must stand till heaven and earth shall pass away, or as long as God Himself shall exist. It must be apparent to every mind, that there cannot be two perfect systems of law, that are not perfectly alike. Therefore to repeal the perfect law, would necessitate the re-enactment of the same law, or the ordainment of another and necessarily im-

perfect law, in the place of that which had been repealed. It would be easier to believe the universe self-made and self-regulated, than to believe in such a Deity.

There is a necessity, then, in the nature of things, that the sanctions of the perfect law be enforced. Nothing would so surely bring even a human government into disrepute, as a failure on the part of the executive to enforce the laws. If pardons were granted indiscriminately, or the laws were allowed to stand on the statute book as a dead letter, a state of anarchy would speedily ensue, and the enemies of law and order would hold a jubilee.

The best systems of human jurisprudence on earth, are those in which the laws are faithfully executed, and the fewest pardons are granted. If there could be a perfect human government, it would be one with laws few and simple, but always executed, and under which pardons were never issued. For pardon is not law—pardon is the absence of law—it is the abrogation of law, and encourages crime by holding out the hope of impunity.

There are but two contingencies, in which pardons should ever be granted in a human government; one is, when the penalty is too severe, and therefore, unjust; the other is, when there is a reasonable doubt of the guilt of the accused. These conditions make it necessary, sometimes, under the operation of human law, to suspend the sentence. But these contingencies arise from the weakness and the fallibility of those concerned in the making and in the carrying out of human laws. It is almost impossible so to adjust

human laws and their sanctions, that they shall be neither more nor less severe than the rule of strict justice demands. And it is often difficult to determine the question of the guilt or innocence of parties accused of crimes. And when there is such a doubt, it is better to lean to the side of mercy, and suffer the accused to go free, than to inflict the sentence of law against an innocent victim.

But these are contingencies that can never arise under the perfect law. All sins against that law are graduated by a scale that is most exact, and penalties are annexed, according to the nature, the number, and the turpitude of the crimes to be punished. And He who is to be the final judge can never make any mistake, as to the nature and the degree of guilt of those brought before Him to be judged.

As the government over man is moral, and as all moral government implies an inseparable connection between reward and good—between punishment and evil, the sooner he learns the lesson of absolute obedience to law as the only condition of impunity, the better will it be for him, both in this life and in that which is to come. It is a lesson that cannot be inculcated too early in childhood.

What is family government, but a miniature moral government, modelled after that which was set up in Eden? Let the child know that impunity under a broken law is not to be expected. Let it understand that obedience to parental authority is a sacred thing. This lesson can be inculcated in the mind of any child by the time it is four years old. And when this fundamental principle has been thoroughly impressed on

its heart and memory, it is prepared to be not only an obedient child at home, but to be an obedient and faithful subject of law, in whatever sphere it may be placed in after years.

Parents stand, to their children, in the place of God, for in their tenderest years, they know no other. And if they are taught the duty of implicit and unquestioning obedience to parental authority, in their tender years, they have received the proper schooling to yield a willing and ready obedience to lawful authority, in all the higher relationships of life.

Human nature is self-willed. There is a proud, stubborn, and depraved will in every heart, which has to be subdued, and brought under control. If this is done in infancy, or very early childhood, the trouble is all over. But if this is not done, and if the young and tender will is allowed to become strong, without ever being brought under control, there is danger, and a strong probability that it will never after be brought under submission to lawful authority.

There is one thing, connected with this law dispensation, which, to certain minds, involves what seems to be a great mystery, and which has even driven others to the verge of scepticism—I now allude to those natural calamities which happen through the operation of second causes; such as famines, earthquakes, storms, explosions, epidemics, etc. If these events are not accidents—the result of blind chance, but happen according to a wise law, as we have before seen that the whole universe is under the control of law, then all such events must be viewed in the light of judicial or disciplinary acts of Providence, designed

to remind the guilty inhabitants of their offences against heaven, and recall them to a sense of duty, and humble submission to the sovereign Lord of all.

In a former chapter, it was stated that national sins must be punished, if punished at all, in this world. The assembled universe, who are to be arraigned before the tribunal seat of Christ, in the last day, will meet there, and will be judged there, not as nations, but as individuals. Every soul will stand there on his own account, just as if he were the only individual to be judged. Therefore, national crimes against God are punished in this world.

National sins are such as are tolerated by the heads of government, or such as prevail generally among all classes of the people. For example, if there is a national and wide-spread desecration of the Sabbath—if the people generally are given to covetousness, which is idolatry—if the government, by its constituted authorities, makes war against a weak neighbor, and tramples on their rights, because they have the power to do so—or if they relapse into atheism, or idolatry, and forget God, there is an absolute certainty, as we may learn from the history of the chosen nation, that they will be judged and chastised in some form or other, in this present world.

A distinguished statesman once said, that he “trembled for his country, as he remembered that God is just.” That was a prophetic utterance, and how fearfully has it been accomplished! In view of the prevalence of other great national sins, Christian statesmen, in the light of this subject, can easily foresee terrible judgments yet in store for this as well as

other nations. God's judgments may linger, but they will come.

The crucifixion of Christ by the Jewish nation, as it was planned, concerted and brought about by their great national council—the Sanhedrim, was a national sin. It was the greatest crime ever committed by any nation. He was their promised Messiah, for whose coming they had waited long. But when He came at the appointed time, and the time predicted, they did not receive Him. They rejected Him, and put Him to death, not because of any crime committed by Him, but because He claimed to be the Son of God. He raised the dead, opened the eyes of the blind, and performed many miracles in the presence of vast multitudes to prove His claims, but still they would not believe in Him. They crucified Him, thus subjecting Him to the most shameful and ignominious death known under the law. It was the greatest national crime ever committed. They have not yet acknowledged their sin, nor repented.

The national judgments which have been visited on the Jewish race, outweigh all the judgments and suffering ever sent on any other people for that crime of crimes. Jesus foretold their doom, when approaching the holy city on the occasion of His last visit, and weeping as He beheld the city, He said:

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings; but ye would not; behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For, verily, I say unto you, that, ye shall



not see me, till ye shall say, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Again, He foretold the storm of vengeance that was coming on them, when He said that their enemies would cast up a trench about Jerusalem, and forewarned His own disciples, or the Christians at that time, to make their escape from the city, by fleeing into the mountains, which they accordingly did, as we know from history, during the siege of Jerusalem, so that not a Christian perished.

The pen of the historian is incompetent adequately to describe the horrors of that siege. More than a million of the wretched inhabitants perished by starvation and the sword. Delicate women were reduced to such straits, that they appeased their hunger with the sodden flesh of their own babes. Ninety thousand—all that survived the siege, were carried into captivity, and sold as slaves. But this was only the beginning of their punishment.

Jerusalem was to be "trodden down of the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." And has it not been so? Long ago, the inspired prophets foretold what has come to pass. They were to be "scattered," and "peeled," and "trodden down"—to be made "a hissing," and a "by-word among all nations." And has it not been so?

It is impossible, without a feeling of sadness, to read the history of that wonderful people for the past eighteen centuries, in view of the terrific precision with which the threatened denunciations have been visited upon them. That, people are, to-day, a monument—a living and perpetual monument—one of

God's very striking monuments, containing inscriptions upon it written in such characters that none of the nations can fail to read and take warning, proclaiming that God's works are truth, and "His ways judgment." There is the monument standing up before the whole world—a nation without a country—a priesthood to God without a high priest and without a temple—claiming to be the chosen and peculiar people of God—and looking, but in vain, during the long centuries for the promise made to their fathers—and yet not blotted out as a people! The history of the world has no parallel. They have been kept separate and distinct, though mingled among all nations, in a manner that is marvellous, yea, miraculous! Let not any nation, therefore, that forgets God, and tramples down His laws, hope for impunity, or expect that they shall escape His judgments.

But there are individual wrongs committed and suffered, which, often, are not judged nor punished in this world. This necessitates the appointment of a future Day of Judgment, that the sanctions of the Divine law may be fully carried out. And, accordingly, we read of the appointment of such a day. If the law is absolutely perfect, as we have seen, all its penalties must be executed, if not here, hereafter.

The "BOOKS" are to be opened, and all are to be "judged out of the things written in the books." There will be no omissions and no mistakes. "Every secret thing," and even "every idle word" spoken, will be found recorded in the books, which are to be opened in that day. For "there is nothing hid that shall not be brought to light." Memory is one of the books which shall be opened.

It may throw a little light on this subject of a future retribution, to know what, perhaps, every one does not know, the curious physiological or the psychological fact, that impressions once made on the tablet of memory—that the organ of the brain is so constructed that the images of things, of actions, and words, are photographed upon it, so to speak, in such a way, as to be retained permanently, and to be recalled and rendered back in certain psychological states of the mind. Now, who fashioned and formed that curious organ, and why did He make it so, but to serve as the infallible record or book to be opened in the last day, to facilitate and expedite the proceedings of the final judgment.

But, as bearing on this same matter of a future judgment, there is another book which is to be opened; and that is the book of Conscience. There are few, comparatively, who have any conception, in the present state of existence, of the nature and power of this faculty. We have seen, in a previous chapter, how it made the breach between God and the sinning pair in Eden. If it had not been for the workings of conscience, there would have been no fear, no terror, no remorse, when the voice of God was heard, and no fleeing away to escape from His presence among the trees in the garden.

Every soul has been furnished with this faculty. They may be insensible to the possession of such a dangerous gift. It may be in a torpid state; but it can be aroused from its slumber. There is no pain that may be experienced, even in this present life, to be compared with the tortures of a guilty conscience. If the rationalist could deny the fact, or if he could

annihilate conscience, then he might afford to scoff at the doctrine of a future retribution. These books of memory and conscience, which could not be, unless God had made them just as they are, afford unmistakable evidence and premonitions of that coming judgment.

## CHAPTER VII.

### *Law of the Sabbath.*

Prominence of the Fourth commandment in the Decalogue—Who are opposed to this law—Necessity of a day for rest—Morality of the institution—Why the Dutch Republic went down—A beacon of warning—Founders of our republic kept the Sabbath—The new interpretation of this law—A change in public sentiment—Words of Hugh Miller—The effect in Scotland—Prayer of John Knox—Former judgments on the holy people—The plural term “Sabbaths”—The new philosophy spreading—Some of the clergy affected—Ebenezer Presbytery faithful—Sermon of a rationalistic divine—Harmless Sunday amusements—Words of Lord Beaconsfield—Which day is the Sabbath—Numerical order not essential—When the Jewish Sabbath was instituted—Why Christians observe the First-day—Fulfils the letter and spirit of the law—A threatened universal desecration—Taking vacation—The vacant churches—Scattered flocks—Two hundred thousand Sabbath-breakers in one city—Where responsibility rests—What the clergy in one city could do—Sunday papers and street cars—The prophet’s warning to the “watchman.”

THERE is no precept in the sacred Decalogue, that occupies so much space as the law concerning the Sabbath. It looks as though, from the first, it had been anticipated that this would be the commandment more frequently ignored, and forgotten than any other. And therefore, as if by design, God gives it more prominence in that code, which He wrote with His own finger on tables of stone, and placed, as it were, in the centre of the whole, as if to guard against the possibility of forgetting or ignoring it. This is the command:

“Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six

days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days, the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore, the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it."

This one law takes up more space than the six laws, or the six commandments placed after it in the Moral Code. And concerning every one of those six commandments, we should say, that they are of perpetual obligation, and that not one could be repealed or blotted out, without marring the perfection of the whole. Now, why should any say that this fourth command, which occupies so much more prominence than any other in the Moral Code, has been blotted out, or that it is no longer a part of the moral law? Before any one who professes to believe the Bible at all can do this, he should be able to adduce from the Scriptures the clearest proof, that the law concerning the Sabbath, as incorporated in the Moral Code, and handed down from Moses, either was never a part of that code, or that it has since been changed. But this, it is not presumed, that any would undertake to do, who profess faith in the Bible.

Whenever, or wherever a class of men set themselves in opposition to the two great moral institutions that were ordained in the garden of Eden, the law of the Sabbath, and the law of marriage, it may be taken for granted, that they are in opposition to the Being who ordained those laws. They do not desire to be

under any moral constitution which requires holiness of heart and life, or which puts any restraint on their natural freedom and appetites.

Who are the men and women who array themselves in opposition to Sabbath laws, and advocate communistic ideas, and the formation of Socialistic orders? They are rationalists, if we may apply to them a general term, which they have chosen for themselves, and by which they seem proud to be designated; but in reality they are materialists, or atheists, as the great body of them ignore, entirely, the idea of a personal God, or any Divine law that was ordained of God.

The necessity for a Sabbath exists in the very nature of man—both his physical and moral nature. The Creator foresaw in the beginning that the greater part of the children of men, would have to earn their bread in the sweat of their face—that many of them would be servants—slaves—that others would be tyrants who would oppress, and task, and grind the toilers; and therefore, He enacted this Divine law, so wise, and just, and necessary for oppressed man and beast, requiring the grasping and merciless tyrants in all ages, not only to rest themselves, but to let their servants, and even their beasts of burden rest from all their labors, every seventh day.

We know of no law that could have been more humane or moral, or more necessary for the human family, as it was to exist in this world, except that other institution ordained in Eden, that was to regulate the intercourse between the sexes. If these two ordinances of God, or if either of them, should be blotted out, civilization would perish with them. And

yet there is scarcely a rationalist who is not opposed to these two civilizing institutions of the world. But the true secret of their opposition, as before stated, is to be found in their opposition to morality, to religion, and to God.

Man has a religious, as well as a physical nature. If there were no Sabbath—if all the days alike belonged to the tyrant man, and God had ordained no day for rest, what chance would the weary toilers of this world have had for stated periods to rest their weary limbs, or to gratify the longings of their nature in seasons of public or private devotion?

In the very nature of things, there was a necessity for a Sabbath. The atheist, of course, may not be able to see it. But the Divine Father foresaw it from the beginning. And He made a wise provision, in this law of the Sabbath, to meet this necessity to the end of time. The law is a proclamation to every master, to every lord, and tyrant, as if God had said—as if God were still saying to them :

*You may work during six days ; and you may require your men and maid servants, and your oxen, and cattle to work. But you must rest ; and you must let them rest on the seventh day. It is the Sabbath of the Lord your God.*

This is the law, and the reason for it. There is no guarantee, except in this Divine Institution, that there would have been any respite from incessant and unremitting toil, to the weary and heavy laden, in body and mind. Taskmasters would drive their slaves and their beasts of burden, the year round, on all days alike, for



the sake of gain, and there would be no relaxation, and no rest. But "the fiery law" from the Throne of the Eternal, issued from flaming Mount Sinai, has interposed, to hallow one day in seven, in favor of oppressed humanity.

Without the Sabbath, there could be no religion, and no Christian civilization on earth. In order to show the extent, to which national and individual prosperity depends on a proper observance of the Sabbath, let us take a case, as recorded in the history of the Dutch Republic, which was founded over three centuries ago, by that remarkable man—William Prince of Orange, who was the George Washington of his day. The Republic founded by him flourished for more than two centuries, or twice as long as our own Republic has now been in existence; and during that period it was the home of religious freedom. It was in Holland, that our forefathers sought and found an asylum from religious intolerance in England. Having tarried there, just long enough to imbibe the spirit of freedom, they embarked on a stormy and unknown sea, to seek a new home in our Western world. Of the prosperity of that noble little Republic, a historian says:

"The only country, whose national existence and independence are due to the Reformation, is Holland. To be the first to break the triumphant power of the Spanish army, would have been glory enough for any ordinary ambition, but no sooner was her independence declared, than she gave signs of great commercial and industrial activity. Her Hudsons navigated every sea, and planted the Dutch flag on shores not traced on any map of the world; her manufacturers supplied all markets, with the fruits of their labor and ingenuity;

her soldiers were a match for any European force; her De Ruyters and Van Tromps knew how to contend with the Blakes of England; her William of Orange, a descendant of the first William, whom she gave to her British neighbor, was as good a ruler as ever lived in Whitehall; her scientific men founded the systems which have continued in use till the present time; her philosophers revolutionized the thinking of the civilized world; her universities were the seats of the most thorough researches of the age; her painters founded new schools of art, and vied with the Italian painters; her theologians gave rise to controversies which brought all churches and their champions within the scene of conflict, and her pulpit orators acquired a celebrity, which, in spite of the inflexibility of the language, was second only to that enjoyed by the most renowned preachers of France and Great Britain."

Such was the Republic of Holland, during more than two centuries, while the Reformed religion flourished, and while they kept the Sabbaths of the Lord. But there came a change; and the decline of Holland, politically and morally, was about as sudden and rapid as her advance: and her greatness in the past would have been well-nigh forgotten, if Prescott and Motley had not recalled it. History shows that the principal cause of that decline, and rapid retrogression in morals was the sudden and total extinction of the Christian Sabbath. This is one of the facts of history which stands out prominently to view, and which ought to serve as a beacon of warning.

Among the philosophers—for speculative philosophy flourished then as well as now—that arose out of their schools of learning, there was a sect called

the Coccæans, from Coccæus. He had been educated a Jew, and had the belief that the Sabbath formed no part of the moral law, but that it belonged to the ceremonial dispensation which had passed away. Coccæus was a man of peerless learning and genius, and his followers becoming numerous, and gaining the ascendancy in the State, as the historian relates, "the freest customs, and gayest notions were rapidly imported from France."

Never, perhaps, in the history of countries, was there a more rapid fall from greatness and glory, with the cause more strikingly apparent, than in this case. Let us take warning. Our Republic has not yet seen half the lifetime of the Republic of Holland. But already we have had our Coccæus, whose false philosophy has undermined our Christian Institutions, and especially our Christian Sabbath.

The pilgrim fathers who sailed from the shores of Holland, settled the New England States; and the Huguenots who came from France to avoid persecution, settled the Carolinas; and these pious ancestors imported into this country the institutions of Christianity and the Sabbath. With these institutions, left us as a legacy by them, we have grown and prospered as a nation, beyond any precedent furnished by the history of nations. The duty we owe to their memory is to stand guard over the institutions which they planted on this soil. The duty which we owe to ourselves, and to those who shall come after us, as we hope to transmit this Republic in its integrity, is to stand guard over these institutions, and especially our Christian Sabbath. They were a Sabbath-keeping

people. They had no Sunday newspapers,—and no Sunday street cars,—and no Sunday excursion trains, and Sunday steamers puffing and hissing defiance every Lord's day in the face of Heaven. Every store, and shop, and office was closed every Sabbath. How great the change which has taken place since their day!

It is hardly a quarter of a century, since the first Christian scientist ventured to put a new interpretation on the law of the Sabbath incorporated in the Decalogue. But already there are Professors in nearly all our leading colleges, whose teachings are subversive of the authority of the Sabbath, as a divine institution. If the six days of creation are Geological ages, the seventh day, or Sabbath, is a vast Geological age. And if so, what becomes of our weekly Sabbath—the natural day of twenty-four hours?

Hugh Miller was the first Christian philosopher who presumed to give to the Fourth Commandment, a meaning different from that in which Moses, and the children of Israel in his lifetime understood it, and different from that in which Jews and Christians have understood it for three thousand years. The words of Hugh Miller are:

“God the Creator wrought during six periods, and rested during the seventh period; and as we have no evidence that He recommenced His work of creation—as, on the contrary, man seems to be the last formed of His creatures, God may be resting still. The presumption is strong, that His Sabbath is an extended period, not a natural day, and that the work of Redemption is His Sabbath day's work.”

Mr. Miller possessed a brilliant genius, quite equal to that of Coccæus. But let his philosophical views be adopted, and who cannot foresee that our weekly Sabbath of twenty-four hours, will certainly and rapidly go into disuse? There is something in this movement—I could wish that this were only a fancy of my own, but I am afraid it is not—something that seems to portend the Divine displeasure against our great Republic. God is the Governor among the nations. And no nation ever yet was so great, that He could not, or that He did not judge them for their wickedness.

Already we begin to see the effects, or the fruits from the seeds planted by Miller. Hardly a quarter of a century has yet elapsed, and already the land of John Knox—the land of blue stockings, and of orthodoxy for three hundred years, which has produced so many philosophers, and theologians, and able defenders of the faith—that land so long the home of the orthodox faith, is even now threatened with a universal declension. They have Professors in their universities, quoted with approbation by such writers as John Tyndall. They have rationalistic Professors in their theological schools. Volumes of “Scottish Sermons” are published, filled with rationalism, and the rankest heresy. Movements have been made to obtain the convenience of Sunday street cars in some of the cities. And all this is only the beginning. Probably they will soon be asking for the luxury or the convenience of Sunday newspapers. If the great Reformer, who as a wrestling Jacob and prevailing Israel, cried to God in his prayer, over three centuries

ago, "Give me Scotland, or I die!" which prayer was so signally and wonderfully answered—if he could be cognizant of the change that is going on around and over his very grave, we may imagine his slumbers would be so disturbed, that he would want to come back again to renew the contest, and wrestle again in agony with the angel of the covenant, crying to God, as of old, "Give me Scotland, or I die!"

But the ocean wave once put in motion, does not stop till it touches the most distant shore. It were to be wished that this wave of *liberalism* and free thought, were confined to Scotland. But as Mr. Miller was a genius, he has had his followers—ardent admirers who do all they can to propagatate his views. The leaven of the new philosophy is beginning to permeate the public mind, in England and America. A systematic effort is made to popularize the theory of vast geological periods, and to prove that God's Sabbath was a vast age, not a natural day of twenty-four hours—a theory which is a pure fiction having no foundation in science or religion, but only in Mr. Miller's glowing imagination. Scientific lecturers, on invitation, visit our colleges and our theological seminaries, delivering a series of lectures, of such a nature as to impress the minds of young men with the belief, that life and death reigned on this globe long ages ago—or for thousands and millions of years before man came on the stage of action, and even before the present arrangement of our planetary system. And the young men thus instructed, must take it for granted that this is science. Then what respect can they have for the Mosaic record of creation? There

is a logical tendency in the very nature of things. And the necessary logical tendency of these theories is away from the Bible, into rationalism and infidelity.

When the writer was on a visit in Canada two summers ago, he formed the acquaintance of an excellent Christian gentleman, a minister of the Methodist church, and his wife. They were lamenting the scepticism of their son, a brilliant and promising young man, twenty years of age. He was just from college, where the geological principles he had been taught, had undermined the early teachings of infancy and childhood, causing parental hearts to be filled with grief and sorrow. Alas! how many within the last decade of years may have the very same sad story to tell! We are entering on the dangerous way that the Dutch Republic went.

“Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.” The Lord judged and punished His ancient covenant people, because they kept not His Sabbaths. This was the charge preferred against them:

“And I will scatter you among the heathen, and draw out a sword after you, and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste; then shall the land enjoy her Sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye shall be in your enemies’ land; even then shall the land rest and enjoy her Sabbaths.” *Deut.*

And is it not so? The holy land is desolate, while her people—the once holy nation, are still in exile, because of their transgressions, and because they polluted God’s holy Sabbaths. And when long ago, they went into the Babylonish captivity, to be under the

yoke for seventy years, this was the charge against them, that they had polluted God's Sabbaths. The prophet says :

“And them that had escaped from the sword, carried he away to Babylon, to fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah the prophet, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths; for as long as she lay desolate, she kept Sabbath to fulfil threescore years and ten.”

Again: “Moreover, also, I gave unto them my Sabbaths to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them. But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness; they walked not in my statutes, and they despised my judgments, which if a man do he shall even live in them; and my Sabbaths they greatly polluted; then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness to consume them.”

Almost everywhere, we see that the plural term is used—“*Sabbaths*”—not Sabbath, as if there were one long Sabbath since the creation—“But I gave them my Sabbaths for a sign”—“and my Sabbaths they greatly polluted.” How strangely such words must have sounded, if those in whose ears they were spoken, had believed with modern Scientists, that the Sabbath of the Lord is a vast geological age—that God has never had but one Sabbath—and that He is resting still. But Principal Dawson tells our Theological Students who are to be the teachers of religion in the next generation, in his course of lectures :

“The seventh day is not said to have a morning and evening; nor is God said to have resumed His work on the eighth day. Hence the seventh day is the period in which we live. Our Saviour sustains



this view of God's Sabbath in His remarkable expression, 'My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.' "

In the above paragraph we do not see the connection between Principal Dawson's premises and his conclusion. Moses said that "God rested on the seventh day"—that He ceased from labor, and "was refreshed." Principal Dawson says that God works, or that God is working on his Sabbath—is there no difference between *resting* and *working* on God's Sabbath?

The leavening influence of this false philosophy, is far more wide-spread than many, even good Christians seem to be aware. When I was in the city of churches a year or two ago, I was credibly informed that nearly all those preachers who had preached as candidates for a certain vacant pulpit, that seemed a very desirable prize—and these candidates were not a few—preached philosophic discourses that were highly seasoned with the evolution philosophy. Can we expect anything else than that preachers, holding such rationalistic views, should be candidates for pulpits which are rich, and have rich perquisites connected with them? When a preacher, or when any other man has lost faith in the Sabbath as a Divine Institution, he is then a rationalist. He then has no belief in any part of the Divine word, which he cannot bring into harmony with his own imperfect and low conceptions of things.

The Presbytery of Ebenezer, in Kentucky, acted very wisely and judiciously a few months ago, in suspending from the ministry one of their members, for publicly proclaiming his disbelief in the Sabbath as a

Divine and moral institution. He had been over to Germany to complete his theological studies, and while there, had imbibed some of the principles floating in the philosophic atmosphere of that region. But there is many a Presbytery, we regret to say, where this preacher might not have been disturbed, or molested at all, for the proclamation of his peculiar views. There are many occupying the sacred desk, who no more believe in the sanctity of Sabbaths, than did that deposed minister. As reported in a secular journal, one of these rationalistic divines thus discoursed upon the Sabbath, in one of his pulpit ministrations :

“I have attempted to show that the Hebrew Sabbath is nowhere in the Bible, clearly established as a religious ordinance, before the Exodus. I have attempted to show as well as I could, that there is nothing in the whole New Testament that can be advanced to prove the establishment of what is called ‘the Lord’s day,’ to take the place of the ‘Mosaic.’ With all the earnestness of my heart, I wish there could be more genuine religion among the people of this great city. I wish the churches could be thronged with multitudes anxious to know the truth; but I do not believe these great results can be brought about by denouncing harmless and refreshing recreations on Sunday. For this denunciation has no warrant, either in the Bible or in the conscience of men. If you feel that harmless amusements constitute a valuable part of your Sunday rest, I have no Christian right to interfere with your rational enjoyment, and have no Scriptural right to declare such enjoyments sinful.”

If the old Mosaic law of the Sabbath, as this reverend preacher argued, was not moral in its nature,

and also, if there is nothing in the New Testament to prove that the Lord's day, or the Christian Sabbath was intended to take the place of the Mosaic, then, of course, there is no law requiring either the seventh or the first day of the week to be kept holy as the Sabbath of the Lord. All men are free from the law of God as to the observance of any Sabbath. And he argues that he has no right to dictate to others the manner in which they shall spend their Sundays; and that if they feel that harmless amusements constitute a valuable part of their Sunday rest, he is not going to interfere with their rational enjoyments.

We know not what the rationalist might regard as "harmless amusements" for Sunday. But he lays down the principle that, there being no Divine law on the subject, all men are a law unto themselves, and are to be governed by their own *feelings*—"if you feel," he says, "that harmless amusements constitute a valuable portion of your Sunday rest," etc. Now we know how men *feel* on this subject in every city, and in every country. We know what kind of amusements, and harmless recreations, fill up the hours of the Sabbath, on the part of the multitudes, who ignore the authority of the Holy One—the gaming tables, the billiard saloons, cock fightings, bull baitings, beer gardens, and dance houses, the open Sunday theatres, where low comedies are enacted for the amusement of the idle, where lascivious songs are sung, and beautiful danseuses dressed in close garments, on the public stage, display all their charms. It is in this way, men *feel* that they have a right to spend their Sabbaths. And this minister of the Gospel says, that,

“*if they feel*” that these amusements are refreshing to them, he has no Scriptural right to interfere, for the purpose of restraining them in their pleasures.

This is the argument of rationalism. Let these views be universally adopted and carried out in practice, and not only would there be no Sabbath, but there would be no national morality. Any nation or people who should enter on this course, would at once, and rapidly, sink into corruption and licentiousness.

Lord Beaconsfield lately, in one of his public addresses, said :

“Of all Divine Institutions, the most divine is that which secures a day of rest for man.”

And he added :

“I hold it to be the most invaluable blessing ever conceded to man. It is the corner-stone of civilization.”

When a stream has been poisoned at the fountain head, all who drink of the waters must imbibe the poison. What Coccæus did for Holland, Hugh Miller has done for Scotland and America. How the dark wave has spread, and is spreading! He threw the deadly branch into the fountain, which has poisoned all the stream. The waters will not be healed till the deadly branch shall be taken forth, and the sacred covenant, written on the tables of stone, and so long kept in the ark of God, shall be restored in all its integrity to its proper place.

Some people, I do not say Christians, raise an objection to the observance of a Sabbath, on the ground

that we cannot tell which day of the week is to be kept holy as the Sabbath of the Lord, seeing that Jews keep the seventh day, and Christians keep the first day of the week as the Sabbath. Which is the true Sabbath? How can we tell?

But those who raise this question are those who have not looked at the law of the Sabbath, and apprehended its meaning, in letter or spirit. The language of the law, and the spirit and meaning of the law, require one day in seven, or the one-seventh portion of our time, to be set apart for rest from all our cares and labors—every seventh day. That is the law. And the reason of the law—the only reason given, is, that when God had wrought for six days, He rested on the seventh. Therefore, if the Jew works six days, and then rests from all his labor on the seventh day, in obedience to the Divine command, he has kept the law both in its spirit and letter. And if the Christian works six days in the week, and rests religiously from all his labors on the first day of the week, which is his seventh day, or the day that succeeds his six working days, he has fulfilled the law in its very spirit and letter. And it can make no difference in the eye of God, whether the Jew shall observe, as the Sabbath of the Lord, what we now call “the seventh day” in the week, or whether the Christian shall observe as “the Lord’s day” what we now call “the first day” of the week. The Jewish Sabbath—or the seventh day of the week—if properly observed, is just as holy to the Lord, and just as much a Sabbath to the Lord, as is the first day of the week, when properly and religiously observed by the Christian. It is not the

number of the day, in the order or succession of days in the week, but the proper observance of the day, that is essential to the Sabbath. Let us look at the letter of the law :

“Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work ; but the seventh day”—that is, the next day, or the day that succeeds the six working days—that “is’ the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.” And the Christian’s First day, which succeeds his six working days, is equally the Sabbath of the Lord our God, when faithfully and religiously observed in the spirit of the divine command. The numerical order of the days is not essential to the holiness of the Sabbath.

If Jews, or if Christians, were bound by that law, to observe the identical seventh day which God kept as His Sabbath, in the order or succession of days, as they occurred or succeeded one another in the morn of creation, this would be a very different thing. And if it were essential to keep God’s seventh day—or the seventh day from the date of the beginning of God’s work—if that were necessary to the validity of the law of the Sabbath, then there could be no Sabbath for Jew or Christian. For that original Sabbath had become obsolete—had been blotted out. We know that the antediluvians, who had been destroyed for their wickedness, did not keep it. They had no Sabbath. That was one of the reasons why they were overwhelmed in a universal destruction. Then the Jews, in their land of bondage, when they were under Egyptian taskmasters four hundred years, had no Sabbath. There was no Sabbath in Egypt. That was urged by Moses, in his last exhortation to the children of Israel,

as the reason why they should keep the Sabbath, and let their servants and their beasts of burden rest, because, they were servants in Egypt, where they had no Sabbath—no day of rest.

The children of Israel obtained their Sabbath in the wilderness, after the exodus, but before the publication of the moral law from burning Mount Sinai. It was when God began to feed them miraculously with manna—the bread that came down from heaven. They gathered manna the first morning, and that became to them the first day in the week. Then they gathered manna the second morning—the third morning—the fourth morning—the fifth morning—and the sixth morning. But what seemed to them a strange and mysterious thing, they gathered twice as much on the sixth morning, or enough for two days. That was their sixth day of the week. “And all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And Moses said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, *To-morrow is the rest of the Holy Sabbath.*”

That was the way in which the reckoning of the Jewish Sabbath began. And that Seventh day has been their Sabbath ever since. It is possible, nay, we will say, it is even probable, that Seventh day may have been identical with God's Seventh day, when He rested from the work of creation. And if so, it was the original Sabbath renewed or revived, after having been lost for ages. But there is no evidence of any such identity in the days. We can never know it. Neither was such identity, or knowledge thereof necessary to the validity of the ordinance concerning the Sabbath.

In like manner, the Christian Sabbath is the day that Christ arose from the dead. He had finished the work of Redemption, a greater work than the work of creation, and it was only meet that the day which succeeded that finished Redemption should be celebrated as a day of rest. In the observance of that day, Christians only follow the example of the holy and inspired Apostles. We have no special precept or positive command for the change in the day, for the reason of the change is in the great fact of Redemption itself, and the practice of the apostles and all the primitive Christians, is all the law we need on the subject.

But the law is still maintained and kept, both in spirit and in the letter. Because we give to God the seventh part of our time, or one day in seven, as really as the Jews did under the former dispensation. By hallowing one day in seven, we still commemorate the creation of the world in six natural days, and by consecrating the First instead of the Seventh day, we at the same time commemorate the Resurrection of Christ from the dead. So that our Christian Sabbath has a higher significance attached to it, than the Jewish Sabbath. And when the Jews shall acknowledge the Messiah, as doubtless they will, in due time, they will naturally and easily fall into this change—of observing the First instead of the Seventh day, as their Sabbath. But till then, they must, and they ought to keep the Seventh day. The general law of the Sabbath is of perpetual obligation, and can never cease to be binding, till the Decalogue itself, of which it is a part, shall be blotted out.



But now we come to the question, how is our Christian Sabbath to be saved from a threatened and utter annihilation? A son of the church has proclaimed, in the name of science, that the Sabbath of the Lord is not a natural day of twenty-four hours—not the seventh day in the week, nor yet the first day, nor any other natural day—but a geological age—a vast geological period, extending through thousands and millions of years. Other scientists have endorsed the lie. Tens of thousands in the church, as well as out of it, have adopted the false belief, and it is spreading with an ominous rapidity. We do not wonder that people of the world lose their reverence for God's day, when professed Christians have such notions of science, that they think all days alike, and that the Sabbath is not a moral institution. In this state of public sentiment, we do not feel surprised that the time has come, that pastors leave their churches, two or three months every year, and go abroad to spend *vacation*, leaving their flocks to scatter abroad, and spend their Sabbaths as best they can.

Here the author takes occasion to state that he was in the city of New York a year or two ago, when he saw an editorial item in certain of the city papers to the effect, that two hundred thousand of the population left their homes every Sunday morning, for pleasure and recreation. From fifty to one hundred thousand would go to Central Park. As many more would go to Ocean Grove, Long Branch, Atlantic City, or some other fashionable and cool resort, where every kind of Sunday amusements and refreshing recreations were provided for them. Every steamer,

every passenger train, the street cars, and all the vehicles in the livery stables, were called into requisition, to accommodate these crowds of pleasure-seekers, every Sabbath. But the churches were nearly all empty. The pastors were absent. If any pulpit happened to be supplied a part of the day, it was usually by some stranger—some unemployed minister, glad to get perhaps ten or fifteen dollars for such a perfunctory service. But as the pastor is away, the people of course do not attend. The present writer went into one of these churches one pleasant afternoon—there had been no service in the morning—when a stranger was to preach, and he is certain that there were not over thirty persons in attendance. He went to another church on another Sunday afternoon—one of the largest and wealthiest churches in the city, with a seating capacity of over two thousand. There were not over a hundred persons in attendance and they were mostly strangers, as was evinced by the fact that they were shown to seats by ushers. The flock will scatter when the shepherds forsake them. It is a deplorable state of things. It may almost be said that we have no Sabbath.

Fifty years ago, public sentiment would brand a preacher who should desert his people two or three months in the year, except he was ordered to do so by his physician, for the recovery of his health. Sylvester Larned, the most eloquent preacher of his day, fell a martyr to this public sentiment. He could not leave his post to take vacation in summer, even though yellow fever raged in the city, and he fell a victim to the scourge, the second season of his pastorate.

The change that began in the church a quarter of a century ago, which is the very root and core of the prevalent rationalism of the day, has by no means reached its acme. And the question still remains—and it is the most important question of this hour, what can be done to save our Sabbath from utter annihilation? If the Sabbath is ignored, piety must become extinct. And when religion perishes from among a people, their national ruin and dissolution cannot be far off. As it appears to us now, unless there shall come a speedy reformation, judgment must be in store for us as a nation.

But where shall the reformation begin? If there is any truth in the oft repeated saying, "Like priests, like people," it is certain that the reformation will have to begin with the priests—with the teachers of the people. We know, if the blind lead the blind, what the consequence must be. But how shall the reformation begin with the preachers? Are they Sabbath-breakers? We bring no accusation against them. But if they hold such peculiar views in regard to the law of the Sabbath, that they do not preach and enforce its moral obligations, they not only break the law themselves, but they teach others the same.

In a late number of the *Presbyterian Journal*, it was editorially asserted that the Presbyterian element is one-sixth part of the city population. This is probably true. But the Methodists may certainly claim to control an equal portion. This would be two-sixths, or one-third of the city population. The Baptists and the Episcopalians together, would certainly control another sixth. The Catholics might claim another

sixth. Then there are Lutherans, Congregationalists, Unitarians, and several other denominations, enough to say that three-fourths of the city population are Christian, in opposition to one-fourth who are infidel or anti-Christian. Now what is the reason that Philadelphia cannot be under Christian government? Why cannot the mayor close the liquor saloons on Sunday? Why do the street-cars run on the Sabbath, the same as every other day? Why do the great printing offices keep their force employed, and do a larger business, and sell more papers on the Sabbath, than on any other day, causing thousands of men and boys to become utterly demoralized, as to any obligations they owe to the God who made them? Is it because these acts are not open and wicked violations of the fourth commandment? No: it is because those who are the shepherds of the flock, are acting the part of dumb dogs. Probably some of them patronize the Sunday street-cars, and the Sunday newspaper. What would be the effect, if every minister of the gospel, should stand fearless and faithful at his post, on the watchtowers of Zion? But they are afraid. There are so many in the church who read the Sunday papers—so many merchants, so many bankers, and business men who want to see the latest news, and to read the prices current, that they dare not say anything against the printing, the buying, or the reading of Sunday papers. If the watchmen would lift up their voice, this whole thing could be stopped in less than six months. But they don't lift up their voice. They pay little or no attention at all to God's message:

“Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore, hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand.”

What must be the fearful doom of that watchman at last, who has failed to deliver God's message, and on whose garments shall be found the blood of souls!

## CHAPTER VIII.

### *Law and Gospel, a Mixed Dispensation.*

Antagonistic principles—An insoluble mystery—Law knows nothing of mercy—Pardon is law suspended—What philosophers taught—An anomalous state of things—Only three possible theories—Atheism, materialism, or moral government—Prisoners at law—The prisoners before the flood—How they were under guard—A fragment of history—Sinners who defy God—Cannot escape from their prison—Voltaire and Paine—Julian the apostate—Shut up in a penitentiary—Why prisoners of hope—Why judgments come—Why the righteous are afflicted—A mixed dispensation—Complaint by the Psalmist—The doom of fallen angels—Under strict law the doom of fallen men must have been similar—A special interposition—Human reason could not have devised a way of escape—It could not be known without a revelation—State of the heathen world—Privilege of living in this mixed dispensation—God's monuments of grace—Résumé—Exhortation to gratitude for the gift of gifts.

**T**O our human view at least, Law and Gospel, or Justice and Mercy, seem to be antagonistic principles. The claims of Justice can never be compromised, and Mercy ought never to be exercised at the expense of Justice. If the Law of God is absolutely perfect, no finite mind can conceive how that law, when broken, can be set aside or suspended, and the guilty go free.

That was the mystery or the problem, the created universe could not solve. Angels desired to look into it. Wise men, and prophets of old, desired to look into it, but in vain. An impenetrable veil covered the mercy-seat. The Apostle says of this mystery, that, "from the beginning of the world, it hath

been hid in God, who created all things by Christ Jesus—even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations.” It must be the mystic book in Revelation, “sealed with seven seals, which no man in heaven, neither in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open, neither to look thereon.”

If there had not been a moral constitution ordained, man would have been, as we have before seen, under the control of physical laws alone, and there would have been no Dispensation of righteousness and Justice, and there would have been no knowledge of these principles as principles of government, and as attributes of the Divine nature. If the communications of the Divine Will, had ceased with the giving of the holy law, which suspends life and happiness on the condition of obedience, and makes death the penalty of disobedience—if no further revelation had been given, nor angel nor man could have conceived how that penalty could have been remitted. The law knows nothing of mercy. The law says—*obey and live—disobey and die*. This is all the law can say. This is the conclusion which the oldest philosophers who philosophized on the subject, had to come to. Plato said, *God cannot pardon*. This is the voice of reason. And no one can say aught against it.

An act of pardon is a case of law suspended—law abrogated—law blotted out. And if this may be done in one instance, why not in any other, and in every other instance? But how can a law absolutely perfect—a law just, holy and good, be set aside or suspended, in a single instance? To suspend a just law, is to suspend the course of justice. To blot out the

law of holiness, what would it be, but to blot out holiness? And not to enforce a good law, would be to cease from goodness. This is the way that wise men and philosophers have reasoned on the subject. And, indeed, it would be impossible to reason otherwise. Therefore, pardon is impossible under a law dispensation. It is absurd, and a contradiction in terms, to talk of pardon under a law dispensation.

What then? Can there be no exercise of pardon? Yes, but not under a dispensation of law, but under the dispensation of grace or mercy, which is something very different, and entirely contrary to the law. Has the law, then, been abrogated, and are we living under a new dispensation—the dispensation of grace or mercy? Jesus said, “till heaven and earth shall pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled.” God’s perfect law, as we have seen, cannot be abrogated. It is in full force, and must ever remain so, till the Judgment Day.

It is evident, then, that there is a very anomalous state of things existing in this world. We seem to be living neither under a law dispensation, nor yet under a system exclusively of grace. It is a mixed dispensation. Judgment and Mercy seem to be mingled in almost equal proportions. Now one seems to prevail, and now the other. Justice seems to be standing with drawn sword, ready to execute the sentence of the fiery law; and the angel of Mercy holds back the hand of Justice; and there seems to be a constant strife going on between the two. It is a singular state of things, that we cannot suppose to



exist either in heaven or hell, but only in this world. In the former, the cup of joy is unmixed; in the latter, it is unmingled woe. In this world, it is alternate joy and sorrow; judgment and mercy. It is an anomalous state of things, which many are by no means able to comprehend. The impenitent wicked do not understand it. Those who look to the light of reason alone, ignoring the Bible, will never be able to comprehend it.

It is the mixed state of affairs in this world, that leads some to say, there is no God; and others, that there is no government of moral law in force, but only the government of the laws of matter and blind chance. And they conclude that the natural evils existing, have come from these laws of matter over which God Himself has no control, and that when the souls of men shall be delivered from their bodies, they will, at the same time be delivered from the dominion of these laws of matter, and mercy will reign supreme in another state. Such are the absurd and false reasonings of men, in view of the strange state of things existing in this world. Let us try to bring the light of truth, and of the Scriptures to bear on this subject. Only three hypotheses are possible, by which to account for the present disordered state of this world: 1, that there is no God—and this is atheism; 2, that all things are under the absolute control of physical laws, which is materialism; or 3, that there is a moral government, the laws of which are in force, but that by some special interposition, which may not be perfectly and always understood, a respite has been obtained for offenders against the law, on certain conditions. This last sup-

position expresses the true state of the case. On this supposition, the offenders against the holy law are, in reality, prisoners of that law, and so they will be, till the conditions on which they were respited, shall be complied with, or till the term of that respite shall have expired. All the sinners in this world, who have broken the holy law, are held as prisoners under guard, by officers of the law that never sleep nor slumber.

Take the case of the antediluvian sinners, as an illustration. They were granted a respite of one hundred and twenty years, while Noah preached to them. Were they not prisoners during all that term? If they had complied with the conditions for which the respite was granted, by repenting in sackcloth and ashes, the flood would not have come. But they were prisoners, and under guard till the time was out. The old world was their prison house, and how could they escape? How could a single soul get away from the officers of God's law? When the last day—when the last hour came, and those officers received their commission to execute the sentence of the law, then all the natural elements were let loose, for they are God's ministers, and the law was avenged, and a drowned world is the monument to the inflexible justice, and holiness of that law.

There is a fragmentary scrap of very ancient history, which might be considered as affording a case strikingly parallel to that of the antediluvian sinners. The inhabitants of a certain city, had rebelled against their lawful king, for which act of treason, they had been condemned, men, women and children, to be beheaded

on a certain day. The army of the king surrounded their city to prevent any from escaping. They were actually prisoners in their own city, shut in, and guarded on every side by the king's officers, so that there was no possibility of escape. But they had sent ambassadors to sue for pardon. The day appointed for the execution had dawned, but yet there was no word from the king, and hope had almost died out in their hearts. Still they were prisoners of hope, and though it was almost hoping against hope, they hoped on till the very hour, when the executioners were to begin their bloody work of death. Then, almost at the last moment of their reprieve, the straining eye could discover in the distance, the swift coming messenger, bearing in his hand a white flag, the signal of pardon. The scene that followed could not be described. Some swooned away for joy; others fell into each other's arms, mingling their tears and sobs. They were prisoners even in their own homes, till the moment they knew that a pardon had been obtained. The difference between their case and that of the antediluvians, is simply in the fact, that the latter did not sue for pardon, and seemed all unconscious, of or indifferent to the coming doom.

Now in what essential feature, it may be asked, do the cases which have been given, differ from the actual state or condition of every unpardoned sinner on earth? Are they not transgressors of the Law? And is not that law as much in force now, as it ever was? We have seen that it is impossible to believe, that the law can ever be abrogated. Therefore, they are under the sentence of condemnation. This is what

Jesus Christ said. And if so, are they not prisoners, awaiting the day of execution? Suppose that the world is their prison house—can they escape from it, or find any way to evade the execution of the sentence, when the time of their respite shall end? They have their day of respite, just as the antediluvians had, and for that reason, they are said to be “prisoners of hope;” as the prophet says: “By the blood of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water; Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope; even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto thee.” That is the light in which inspiration puts the case—“prisoners of hope”—yet prisoners—and prisoners of hope, only because there is a stronghold—and an opportunity, and a day of grace afforded, to turn to that stronghold. But, suppose that the opportunity passes by, and the day of grace, or the term of the respite comes to an end, and they have not turned to the stronghold; what then? Is the law of eternal holiness and justice blotted out? No! the sentence is executed. Can any sinner escape from his prison, or avoid the execution of that sentence? They may hope for impunity. “Because sentence is not speedily executed against evil doers, the hearts of the sons of men are fully set in them to do evil.” As it was in the days of Noah, so it is now. They may become very bold in their wickedness, mouthing the very heavens with their insults and blasphemies. But they will get to the end of their respite. Suppose that an Ingersoll shall exclaim in his insane folly, in defiance of God; as he is said to have done—“Liberty is my

religion; I'd rather live free in hell, than serve in heaven; I despise such a God as the Hebrew Jehovah!" Suppose that he is *free*—and that is a fact not to be denied, for God made him free, and that will only make his impiety the more inexcusable—suppose he is thus daring and defiant, can he expect to escape from his prison, or to get beyond the power of God, or to evade the final sentence of the supreme law, when the day of his respite has ended? Have any ever escaped? Have any ever evaded that penalty? Voltaire was just as bold as any who ever lifted pen or voice against Christ—did he escape? Chateaubriand, the exquisite classical French author, says:

"Tronchin assured his friends that Voltaire died in great agony of mind—'I die forsaken by gods and men,' exclaimed he, in those awful moments, when truth will force its way. I wish, added Tronchin, that those who had been perverted by his writings, had been present at his death. It was a sight too horrid to support."

Tom Paine was another, equally bold and free in poising his lance against the Man of Calvary—did he escape? Who can tell where his grave is? Dying in want and misery—without a friend—indebted to Christian charity for even the show of kindness in his last moments—denied the rites of burial in a Christian cemetery—his bones transported from continent to continent seeking repose, and at last, as if all lands abhorred him, going down beneath the waves of the ocean, to mingle with the bones of the sinful race, that were overwhelmed in the universal deluge! It is a terrible instance of

retribution! None have ever escaped, and none will ever escape. Think of the fate of Judas the traitor. Think of the end of that Roman emperor who made bonfires of the bodies of Christians and of the holy Scriptures, of whom the historian says, that, in his last hours, he was eaten of worms. Think of another emperor, an apostate—Julian, who made war against the whole church—did he escape? What made him, at the last hour, taking some of the blood that was oozing from his veins, and throwing it upward, exclaim in an agony of remorse, “Thou hast conquered, O thou Galilean!” “Let the potsherds of the earth strive with the potsherds of the earth, but woe unto him, who striveth with his Maker.”

There is a law. That law is in force. The execution of its just sentence can never be evaded. Those who have broken the law, are prisoners. Whether they are conscious of it or not, they are prisoners. What made a great rationalistic preacher say of this world, that it is a vast *penitentiary*? Are there not many indications which show that it is a vast prison? This is the stern and indisputable fact, which made John Stuart Mill say, there is no God. Some have said that this earth is a graveyard—a charnel house—a battlefield. No one can ever feel that he is safe anywhere, or at any time. No one can know, at what moment his respite shall end. The officers of the law surround us. All the elements of nature are ever in motion, and no one knows when the fatal blow shall be struck. A man may be crossing the ocean by steamer, or he may be travelling by railway, or he may even be sitting in his counting-room, or in his parlor—

no matter where he may be, or what he may be doing, when the fatal moment has come, a stroke of lightning, or a sudden blow from some other appointed minister of the law, settles his account forever. There is no escape. We are all shut up in this *vast penitentiary*. Let Mr. Ingersoll scoff, and defy the Almighty—his hour will surely come.

If men would accustom themselves to look on the present dispensation, in the light now presented, how easy it would be to account for the natural evils, which so abound in this world? If there is a respite, and certain conditions on which, or for which that respite is granted, and if the time is nearly out, and men have not turned to the stronghold, ought they not to be warned? If mercies will not draw them, ought they not to be startled by judgments? Can we wonder that there are epidemics, fires, explosions, losses of property, the sudden blasting of worldly hopes, alienations among friends, the sudden casting down from pinnacles, and a thousand evils? What can be the design of these judgments, but to serve as warnings, and to teach the children of men to turn their thoughts upward?

But the righteous also suffer, as well as the wicked. And this is the argument often used by the sceptic or rationalist, against the idea of a moral government. It is very true, the righteous often suffer as well as the wicked. I will even admit, that, sometimes they seem to suffer more than the wicked in this world. But their afflictions are not judgments. They are not punishments, but chastisements, sent, not in anger, but in tender pity and love, as a means of discipline.

Thus, there is a Christian home, where a tender mother's heart has been wrung with anguish. She folds in her arms, the lifeless form of her only child. She had thought it the most perfect babe ever born. She doated upon it. It was fast becoming the idol of her heart. She was beginning to love and worship the beautiful one, more than she ever loved or worshipped the Saviour. And the Gracious Father saw there was danger, and the temptation was taken away. It was a severe trial. But the lovely flower transplanted to the bowers of the upper paradise, blooms a thousand times more beautiful, than it ever could have done in the mother's earthly bower. And now she has an attraction to draw her to heaven, she had not before, and her chastened heart can say, "It cannot return to me, but I shall go to it"—and—"The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." It was severe, but it was the very discipline the mother needed. And she is made to ripen for glory herself more rapidly, than if the chastisement had not been sent. "Whom the Father loveth, He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son or daughter whom He receiveth." And again, "Our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, shall work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

The afflictions of the righteous are not judgments—not the penal consequences of a broken law; but they are chastisements. God deals with his children as a loving parent—He corrects them in measure for their good. It is not so with the impenitent wicked. Their afflictions are really *warnings* and *judgments*,



which often, instead of making them better, render them harder and more wicked still.

But now we come to the discussion of a very important question—what is the reason of this mixed dispensation—this mysterious and anomalous state of things, which we have been considering? What is the nature of the respite by which it has been brought about, and by what special interposition has that respite been obtained? These are questions which no naturalist—no human philosopher can ever answer. They lie entirely out of the province of natural reason. They belong to the sphere of Revelation. To discuss them fully, we should have to draw aside the veil which covers the Mercy Seat, and thus anticipate what we shall have to say in the third part of this work. Let it suffice here to say, that, as to the special interposition by which this respite, or this day of grace was procured for sinners, there is some intimation of it given in that wonderful passage, before quoted from the prophet, wherein they are called prisoners of hope—“By the blood of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water; turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope.” There was a covenant, and that covenant was sealed with blood. The consideration of that might take us to Calvary, and as I have said, this would be to anticipate what I shall have to say in the third division of this work.

But this I say, it is a subject on which human philosophy or learning can throw no light. As we have already seen, the law knows nothing of mercy. The only sentence that speaks of mercy, is that which

is heard in thunder tones from Mount Sinai, saying:

*"I the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments."*

Here is mercy indeed, in the sense of goodness or bounty, not grace—but to whom? To "thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments," but wrath and vengeance "unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate me."

The mixed dispensation that has been described, affords a very satisfactory solution of the irregularities and inequalities seen everywhere in the world, as the triumphs of the wicked over the just—the oppression of the righteous—the prosperity of the ungodly, and the thousands of ills that seem never to be rectified in this life. These things cannot be in strict accordance with the rule of justice, and not even in accordance with the dictates of any system of mercy or grace. For not even mercy could sanction, under any circumstances, the triumphs of wickedness and falsehood over innocence and truth. Yet these irregularities and wrongs are witnessed everywhere in this apostate world. Many a good man has occasion to complain like the Psalmist:

"I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no bands in their death, but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men. Therefore, pride compasseth them about as a chain. Violence covereth them as a

garment. Their eyes stand out with fatness. They have more than heart could wish. They are corrupt, and speak proudly concerning oppression; they speak loftily. They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth."

The Psalmist could not understand this at first, till he went into the sanctuary :

"When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me, until I went into the sanctuary, then understood I their latter end. Surely, thou didst set them in slippery places; thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation in a moment? They are utterly consumed with terrors!"

The triumphs of the wicked are short. They have their respite—their brief day of grace, but it soon runs out, and then justice takes its course.

But now for the mystery. If we should ask the greatest philosopher who ever lived—if we should ask Plato—if we should ask Solon, or Aristotle, how mercy can be exercised, even for a day, consistently with the demands of strict justice, they could not answer. There is no finite mind—no angel who could conceive how mercy can be exercised at the expense of a just and wise law.

As we understand the Holy Scriptures, there were rebels against the Divine government before man became an apostate. We read of certain angels who "kept not their first estate" and were cast down from heaven, and who are "reserved in chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day." And nowhere in the word of God is there any intimation

that a respite was granted to them, after they had sinned. "God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment."

There was no mercy in that dispensation. It was in strict accordance with law. It was not a mixed dispensation. There was no judgment tempered with mercy, as in the case of rebels on this earth. The rebel angels are shut up in the prison of despair—sinners in this world are prisoners of hope.

Could any finite intelligence have devised a plan, by which the rebel angels could have escaped the just penalty of their apostacy, without blotting out the holy law which they had broken? It was not possible. Therefore, of necessity, they were cast down. No more would it be possible for a created intellect to conceive any way by which rebel men could be spared, without compromising the claims of the holy law. Yet Infinite Intelligence did devise a scheme of mercy, in perfect harmony with that law.

That scheme has been revealed to us in the Gospel. Unless it had been revealed, neither man nor angel could have conceived how a rebel sinner could be saved under the law, or by the law. Under the operation of a strictly just and holy law, mercy could not be exercised except by a repeal of the law, that is, by blotting out its sanctions; or by an atonement—a satisfaction rendered by some third party for the original offender. Let us consider these two methods.

1. And first, was it possible to set aside the sanctions of the law in the case of the guilty? To our mind, the asking of the question is a sufficient answer.

Clearly, it was impossible. A suspension or a repeal of law in one instance, would imply a necessity for a suspension, or repeal of law in any other, and every other instance, or else God would be a respecter of persons. Then there is a cessation of law. And if we say that God could ordain a law that is holy, just and good, and then abrogate or repeal it, because He could not execute it, we should suppose either a weak or a mutable God. But God is neither weak nor mutable. Moreover, the law is absolutely perfect, and for that very reason, must stand whether we can understand these things or not, and we could not affirm the contrary without guilt.

But there remains still the insoluble mystery. The law has been transgressed. Sin has invaded the dominion of Jehovah, and he must maintain His law. By all the perfections of His own nature, He is bound to do this. But yet, "God is Love"—and God is merciful—and the question is, how can He be both merciful and just? How can the two attributes be harmonized? Without a special revelation, no one could show this.

2. Now let us consider in the second place whether it would be possible to conceive of an exhibition of mercy on the ground of an adequate compensation to the law, either by the sinning party or by a substitute. And let us go back in our thoughts to the beginning of sin—to the sin of Adam—or to the sin of the rebel angels. Who could have died for Adam? Who could have atoned for the sin of the fallen angels? As we have seen, they were cast down to hell, and are suffering the vengeance of God, "being reserved in

everlasting chains unto the judgment of the great day." In what other way could they expiate the guilt of their sin? How could they be delivered from the penalty of the law, and restored to their original state of holiness? Could they become holy again? For, sin once committed, leaves its dark stain upon the soul, and the fires of hell could never burn out those stains, and make the soul pure and holy again.

Could the sinless angels approach the flaming throne, and say, here are we; let us take the place of our brother angels, and suffer for them—let them be released, and let us be bound with their chains, and be cast down to hell in their place—would that be satisfactory? Would that be an adequate atonement for the fallen angels?

But would the sinless angels have a right to interpose in favor of the rebels? Would they have a right to leave their own place, to enter into another sphere, and another region, and undertake a work for which they had not been created? But suppose they had the right thus to interpose, would God be pleased with the vicarious suffering of the innocent for the guilty? Would He not say that the redemption of the sinning, at the price of an equal number of un-sinners, would bring no glory to Him, and that He could take no pleasure in the death or suffering of sinless beings?

Again, even if we suppose it possible for super-angelic beings to be in possession of such a disinterested love as to be willing to die eternally in the place of others, this would be nothing but a creature com-

passion on behalf of their fellows who had fallen—the sympathy or pity of one fellow-creature for another. It would be no exhibition of mercy on the part of God—and if no mercy, no glory to Him.

The guilty angels had to suffer, or God's law had to be annulled. Creature intellect could not have conceived any other alternative as possible. There may be those who believe, and say that though God cannot blot out the holy law, yet He may annihilate the souls who have transgressed that law. There is a class known perhaps as annihilationists, who have some such idea as this. But to say that God would ordain the existence of immortal souls, and then annihilate them for any reason, would make Him as mutable and inconsistent, as to say that He would ordain an infinitely perfect law, and then blot it out because He could not execute it. God is neither so mutable nor so weak. He does nothing for the sake of undoing it again. We don't know that God ever annihilates anything that He has once created. We cannot in this state, certainly, know that a single atom now in existence, will ever cease to exist. It is certain that it will not, without an act of the Almighty and miraculous power which created it at first.

But if there were none who could have made an atonement for the fallen angels, who could have died for Adam? Death was the penalty of the law—and who could have suffered that penalty in his room? Even supposing that there were angels in existence at the time of man's apostacy, it is certain that no one could have offered himself to take the place of man. For an angel is either more or less than a man, and

therefore, the ransom would have been either more or less than the law demanded, and justice would not be satisfied. But the Eternal Judge might have said, that the rebel worm of earth could be better spared from His service, than one of those bright, flaming spirits, who minister in His immediate presence—therefore, let the law take its course! Let the guilty die! Adam could not have made a satisfaction for his own sin, without suffering the penalty of the law, which was death, and the race must have perished forever. No created being in the universe could have suffered that penalty for him, for the reason that no one could stand up before the flaming throne, and say, “I have found out a ransom.” The angel Gabriel could not have interposed for man, saying, “*I have the price—let me ransom man—let me die for him!*” No created being—not the loftiest seraph, or archangel had such a price, as a ransom for man. No one had authority to say, “I have power or the right to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again.” He must have been uncreated, self-existent, and independent, to have said this.

Who then could have found out a ransom? Who could have procured deliverance for man? or even a momentary reprieve from the sentence of the broken law? There seemed no possibility of escape. There was no eye to pity, and no created arm that could bring salvation.

This shows the necessity of a Divine Revelation. And that Revelation is contained in the Bible. Alas! for the race, if God had not in infinite pity, vouchsafed such a revelation in their hopelessly lost condition.



He who labors to knock away that only prop which supports the hope of humanity, should be deemed the worst enemy of his kind.

As we have seen, we are living under a mixed dispensation—law and grace. How did mercy enter? Who has procured a respite from the sentence of the broken law—a respite that extends to all men, in heathen lands as well as Christian? Who has interposed? Shutting the volume of Revelation, who could answer that question? Who could satisfy the heavy laden, and sin-burdened soul on that point? If we had no Bible to cast a ray of light on this subject, it had been better for us if we had never been born!

The state of mankind in all heathen countries, shows the necessity of this knowledge. Look at them in their bloody rites and ceremonies—their voluntary offerings of the fruit of their own bodies—their painful systems of penance and self-inflicted tortures—their whippings, and fastings, and vigils, to make satisfaction for their own sins! Do they know that One who was almighty, self-existent and Independent—and who had power to lay down His life, and power to take it again—that such an One has indeed come, and paid the ransom—satisfied the claims of Justice, and stayed the execution of judgment? No! they can never know it, without the Bible! None have this knowledge, and none can have it, except those who have listened to the song of angels, first sung over eighteen centuries ago, o'er Bethlehem's plains, “unto you is born, this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord!”

And now, we seem to be drawing near "*the Mercy Seat.*" But I shall not yet lift the veil, that, for ages, concealed the Holy of holies from vulgar gaze. My aim at present is, simply, to show the need of a special Revelation—and that such a Revelation has been received from above. There are not many who appreciate the boon, or who seem to know the day of their merciful visitation.

There are but few, comparatively, who realize the blessedness of being permitted to live under this *mixed Dispensation*. Some complain against God; and some openly denounce God, on account of the Dispensation. If this respite of Grace is rightly improved, it becomes the vestibule of heaven, and is made a stepping stone, from which the redeemed soul shall rise to a sphere of blissful existence, higher than any to which sinless angels will ever attain. But they who shall despise the day of merciful visitation, and cast away the boon that is within their reach, will find eternity too short to bewail their folly! Reader, if thou couldst comprehend this—if thou couldst fairly get this idea of grace in thy thoughts, thou wouldst rather be the meanest, helpless babe, born in the darkness, and then strangled out of existence as soon as born, by some unnatural mother to hide her shame—yea, to be that despised thing, than to wear for a brief season, the crown set with gems, of any earthly monarch! For how canst thou know what a monument of grace, and what a star in the upper firmament of God, every such outcast infant soul shall be, when earthly crowns shall have lost their lustre forever! "God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to

confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen; yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in His sight."

Who can tell, in adequate terms, what it is to live under a *Law and Gospel Dispensation*? Strangely enough, "Justice and Truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." It was long ago foretold, that this should happen, and it has come to pass according to the prediction; but O, how far above our comprehension was the scheme devised by the Eternal and Sacred Three in heaven, to bring it to pass!

A brief résumé will conclude this chapter.

The present state of mankind, as we have seen, is not wholly, or exclusively, a law dispensation; nor yet is it altogether a dispensation of Grace. It could not be exclusively a dispensation of mercy, without entirely cancelling the claims of the law.

In several of the preceding chapters, we have seen what is meant by the Moral constitution; also, when it was introduced, and why it was necessary to establish moral Law. We have seen that the law is just, and holy, and good; wherefore, of necessity, it can never be repealed. On the contrary, its sanctions must be rigidly enforced, as long as the throne of God shall stand.

The aim, in this chapter, has been to show that the sanctions of the law have not been rigidly executed, in this present state, because of the special interposition, by which a system of mercy has been introduced,

—but not absolute or exclusive mercy, seeing that good and evil abound in this state; and judgment and mercy have been strangely combined, proving that we live under a mixed dispensation. As we have seen, there is in existence an order of things, which our natural and finite reason, does not enable us to comprehend, or to explain. And this accounts for the fact, that, such multitudes have strayed off to opposite extremes of error; one portion vainly endeavoring to work out salvation by their own imperfect obedience to the law—the same law to which their life has been forfeited, by disobedience and rebellion—and others imagining that the law, even supposing that there ever was a law, has been set aside or abrogated, so that, now, exclusive grace abounds, wherefore, all without distinction, are to be saved, and to enjoy the favor of God forever—a conclusion, which they must know, contradicts all that they see of God's providential dealings with the subjects of His government, in this world, where mercy and judgment are mingled.

Further, it has been explained, that, from Revelation alone, comes all the knowledge we can ever have, as to how this state of things was brought about, and how mercy came to be mingled with judgment. This was a mystery which human reason or philosophy could never have solved. And were it not for the Word of Divine life and light, we could only stand with the ages, and the generations that are past, on the outer limits of this necessary knowledge, inquiring in vain, and praying for some celestial messenger to come to the world, to show the way of salvation. But we know that we have the Revelation, which the

world stood in need of, and without which gloom and despair would have rested over our moral destiny. How thankful we should be for this light of lights, and this gift of gifts!

## CHAPTER IX.

### *Doctrine of Free-Will; or, What Constitutes Moral Accountability.*

Plane of a higher existence—Definition of Free-Will—Essential conditions of Free Agency—Nothing so powerful as the Will—A mistake of ethical writers—Extract from Dr. Thornwell's theology—Sin a transgression of law—The law Adam transgressed—A prevalent belief—Dr. Thornwell again—What makes an act sinful—The crimes committed from right motives—Illustrations—The good motive that influenced our first parents—Double aspect of that first sin—The rule of moralists contrary to the Divine rule—Divine enactments—The sin of ignorance—Theory versus practice—Doing evil that good may come—Conscience not a law—No self-determining principle—Who are not responsible, and why—To act *rationaly* is to act from motives—The proper objects of choice—The knowing faculty and Free-Will—The serpent that tempted Eve—Her sin not a deliberate act of rebellion—A mere preference is not choice—What constitutes the nobility of man—A principle of the Divine government—Illustration from Foster's essays—The great reformers of the world—Examples of the power of Will—Recapitulation.

AS we have seen in previous chapters, man might have been left under the operation of physical law, and might have been as absolutely controlled by physical law as any other creature, and, as certain philosophers believe, that he is controlled. But in giving man a rational soul, and a moral sense, and then in proposing to him a positive law as a rule of conduct, adapted to that moral sense, God, thereby, took man out, from under the operation of physical law, where he had stood on a level with the irrational creatures, and placed him on the plane of a higher

existence, and on the platform of moral accountability.

The simplest definition of Free-Will, is to say, that, it is *the power and liberty of choice*.

The first man was invested with this prerogative, in the day when God said to him :

“Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.”

It must be confessed that the doctrine of man's free agency is a fruitful theme, which has been discussed in every age, by philosophers, and theologians of every name and rank, in books, and essays, from the pulpit, and the platform. Yet, it is to be lamented, that the ideas of most persons are in a confused and chaotic state, in regard to this subject.

If *Free-Will* means, simply, the liberty and power to choose, then, if either the liberty to choose, or the power to choose, were wanting in man, he would be not a voluntary, but a necessary agent, and therefore, not a free agent, and not, properly, responsible for his actions.

The essential conditions of moral accountability, are, *the possession of a reasoning faculty, and a moral faculty, or a conscience, together with a positive law as a rule of conduct*.

As the materialist denies moral accountability, he must deny the essential conditions thereof. He must either deny the existence of any moral law, or he must deny to man the possession of a moral sense, or a

conscience. In his view, conscience can be nothing else but a superstitious feeling, the result of a false and superstitious training.

In Chapter IV., as the reader will remember, there is quite a full discussion on the gifts or endowments of the mind, which are necessary to the acquisition of knowledge of any kind. It is only necessary now to show whether, in the possession of the reasoning and moral faculties, and under law, man is in a condition to will, and to choose freely, when opposite courses of action, or different objects of choice are placed before him, soliciting his will. Our definition of Free-Will, asserts that he has this ability.

In the discussion of this question, let us go back to the garden of Eden—to Adam in Paradise, before he had fallen. He was intelligent, for he had been endowed with the gift of reason. We must believe that he had this faculty as fully and as perfectly developed as any human being who has lived in any age since. He had also a moral faculty, and he had a positive law; and the question is, was he able, and was he free to eat, or not to eat of the fruit of that forbidden tree? If he was equally free to eat, or to abstain from eating, he was a free agent. But if there was a necessity in the case, and he was compelled to partake of that fruit, then he was not a free agent. The settlement of this single question, decides the whole controversy involving the doctrine of a *free will*.

The truth is, we know of nothing, and we can think of nothing, so free, or so powerful as the human will. Indeed, all power, here on earth, seems to be vested in the will of man. He has control of the inferior crea-



tion. The irrational creatures, and even the elements of nature are subject to his will. And who shall say, that will is not free? What is there that may not be controlled or checked, except this indomitable and free will of man?

Man, in his fallen state, has exactly the same power or freedom of will, that he had before he fell. Man did not lose the power of will, nor any of his mental faculties, in consequence of the fall. But there was a change in his character, and in the state of his affections in relation to his Maker. He became alienated in his mind from God, whereas, before, he was united to Him in love.

At this point, a difficulty arises, which has greatly perplexed all those who have tried to investigate the subject of the origin of evil. If Adam was without sin, and united to God in communion and love, they do not comprehend how it was possible for him, voluntarily, to apostatize from Him. This mistake—for it is a mistake—has arisen from the idea that there can be no sin without malice, or a malicious motive in the mind, at the moment when the act of sin is committed.

The ethical writers and theologians who fall into this error, must believe that Adam was a fallen and depraved being, before he committed the first act of transgression, or, in plainer terms, that he was a sinner before he sinned. Their reasoning is, that he was already an apostate, when he conceived the thought of eating the forbidden fruit, even before he had raised his hand to do so; and further, that it was because Adam was already, in his heart alienated from

God, that he determined to disobey the command. Some of our most distinguished divines are very pronounced and emphatic in their teachings on this point. Thus, Dr. Thornwell, in his *Theology*, says :

“ To suppose that man was merely taken in, and did not mean to transgress the law of God ; that he sinned ignorantly, and by involuntary mistake, is to make a representation which every moral understanding will instantly pronounce to fall far short of the intense rebellion, which the Scriptures uniformly ascribe to the first sin of the first man. It was a falling away from God ; a deliberate renunciation of the claims of the Creator ; a revolt from God to the creature, which involved a complete inversion of the moral destiny of man.”

The same writer expresses himself in a similar strain in giving a definition of sin proper. Thus, he says :

“ It has been shown that the formal principle of sin, is enmity against God—an attitude of hostility to His nature, His being and His law ; and enmity can only be conceived as manifested in throwing off its allegiance, and claiming to be its own master. From every point of view, therefore, we are conducted to substantially the same conclusion ; and that conclusion presents sin in an aspect which should make every reflecting being shudder. The notion of a creature whose being is a gift, setting itself up against the great God, and assuming a position of open and undisguised enmity, is surely enough to fill our minds with horror and dismay. Sin stands revealed in awful malignity as a profane attempt to dethrone the Most High, and to exalt ourselves to His glory and sovereignty.”

The theology, contained in these extracts, would

make Adam to have been a very fiend, even before he had transgressed any law. Yet the Scriptures teach, that, "sin is a transgression of the law;" and that "where there is no law, there is no sin." We must look at this theology, for there must be some error in it, since we know that Dr. Thornwell's *Theology* is a standard work, and that many other standard works contain the very same theology.

If there was such a degree of enmity in the heart of Adam against his Maker, that, under the influence of this feeling, he revolted from Him, and attempted to usurp His throne, we would know what was the origin of this fearful state of hostility against the Supreme and blessed Father, whom he had loved and adored with all his heart? The theory supposes a great and sudden change in the state of his affections, and that too before he had violated the positive law. If there was such a change, what was the cause of it, since there is no effect without a cause?

When God formed man, He made his heart, and He must have implanted every pure and right affection. Then how could he love God supremely, and at the same time be at enmity against Him, and seek to dethrone Him?

There must be something wrong in the theology, or the philosophy, which leads to such a conclusion. They do not mean to charge God, as being the author of sin. But to make Him the Creator of that antecedent and malignant state of heart, which prompted Adam to rebel, would certainly involve this charge.

In the consideration of this question, we must discard human philosophy, and casuistry, and appeal to the ethics and the casuistry of the Bible alone.

In deciding on the question of Adam's guilt, we have to inquire first, whether he violated any law, and then, what law; for "sin is a transgression of law." If he had a law given him as the rule of his conduct, and he knowingly transgressed that law, that act of disobedience was his guilt—his sin. We cannot go back of that, to inquire concerning the state of his feelings. If he knowingly transgressed the command, what difference would it make as to his guilt, whether the act had been influenced by love or enmity? If sin is a transgression of law, Adam could have had no sin, till he transgressed the command by eating the fruit of the forbidden tree.

I do not endorse the sentiment that the antecedent disposition, or the intention in the mind of Adam, had in it the essence of depravity, or was so malicious or diabolical, as certain theologians have been in the habit of representing. For that, as before remarked, would make God the author and the Creator of sin. For the soul of Adam, with its antecedent affections and instincts, was the gift of God. And from such a pure fountain, nothing impure could have flowed, before it had become corrupt. But nothing had happened yet to corrupt the fountain. When Adam had actually transgressed, then his eyes were opened—conscience accused him—then he began to have a sense of fear—he wanted to escape from the presence of God, and that was the beginning of his hostility to God—because alienation or enmity is naturally begotten of fear.

What the intention was, which moved our first parents to partake of the forbidden fruit, or whether

that intention was right or wrong in itself, are considerations which it is not necessary for us to go into, in forming an estimate of their guilt or innocence. The main question is, was there a law, and did they knowingly disobey that law, while they had the power of obedience? This is a plain question, which admits of but one answer. This is as far as we can go in this direction, and this is all that it is necessary for us to know.

There is a very general belief, that the acts of moral agents may be good or bad, without regard to the motives from which they spring. In truth, we know not how a perfect system of moral government, could be maintained without recognizing this principle. Hence, we have Dr. Thornwell, in another passage of his *Theology*, saying :

“It is not required that a man should actually mean to do wrong. The probability is, that the deliberate choice of evil as evil, or the making of it, because it is evil, the good of the soul, is a degree of wickedness very seldom reached by man in this world. That is the characteristic of lost spirits in the world of wo. It is enough that a thing is embraced as a good, notwithstanding it is evil; that the heart can cleave to it while it is abominable to God, and destructive of the comeliness and beauty of our own natures.”

It is almost impossible to believe that the above was written by the same author, as the two previous extracts. And yet Dr. Thornwell is ranked among the most logical writers and thinkers, the American church has produced. But the most ordinary reader will see a manifest contradiction between the sentiment of the

last paragraph, and the position assumed by him in the first two extracts quoted. The last paragraph contains sound doctrine. It places the evil of an act in the act itself, not in the intention. "It is not required," he says, "that a man should actually mean to do wrong." And the choosing of evil, because it is evil, "is a degree of wickedness" he further says, "that is very seldom reached by men in this world." We can endorse this sentiment fully. But it is utterly at variance with the sentiment of the former paragraph, wherein the sin of the first man, is pronounced an "intense rebellion," and "a deliberate renunciation of the claims of God," etc.

It is probable that, in practice, there is more wrong done in the world from right motives, than from wrong ones. Thus, when the Romish Inquisitors were accustomed to place their victims on a rack, or in a dungeon, to reclaim them from their heresy, they always professed to be actuated by a love for their souls, and the desire to save them, which, in itself, could not be considered as an evil disposition. But we should not argue from the uprightness of the intention, in this case, that they were sinless in the persecution of God's saints.

The best of men may be deceived as to the spirit or nature of the law, and, under the influence of motives very pure and upright, commit the greatest crimes.

Take the case of Paul—he thought he was doing God's service, while persecuting the church. As a devout Jew, he thought the only true system of religion in the world, was in danger of being blotted

out by the new heresy, as he considered Christianity, and his sole aim was to defend the religion of his fathers—to save it from destruction—and thus to honor God.

Paul was a wonderful man, always doing with his might, whatever his hand found to do. He had the same zeal for Judaism, which, after his conversion, he displayed for the Cause of Christ. The prevailing disposition in his heart was not enmity to God, or the cause of God, neither before nor after his conversion to Christianity. On the contrary, he was actuated by a holy zeal for the glory of God, both before and after his conversion.

When he discovered his mistake—when he found that he had been persecuting the Lord of glory, he had an overwhelming sense of his guilt, confessing that he was “less than the least of all saints,” because he persecuted the saints. He never attempted to offer any plea as a justification of his conduct, on the ground that his intentions were pure and right—and that his sole aim was to maintain what he regarded as the only true religion. When his eyes were opened, as were the eyes of Adam and Eve, he saw his conduct in all its enormity and guilt. It is certainly a fundamental error, in estimating the guilt of sin, to refer it in all cases, to the intention or the motive of the actor. Perhaps we do not know what the intention or the motive was, which actuated the first parents of mankind, to put forth their hand, to pluck and eat the fruit of the forbidden tree. But if the inducement held out by the tempter, was that which mainly influenced their will, we can only say, it was the strongest

possible motive which could have been suggested to influence a mind that was in a pure and holy state. What was that inducement? "Ye shall be as gods"—or like God—"knowing good and evil."

Man was formed in the image of God; and his highest destiny is to be like God. There was nothing wrong or sinful in that motive. To know God "is life eternal." And the exhortation which comes to every one is, to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." There is no more sacred command than this, and he who has no desire to grow in this knowledge, is not of God.

"Ye shall be as God"—in knowing good and evil—in being able to distinguish right from wrong. And who shall say, there was anything improper in desiring this kind of knowledge? In itself considered, it is one of the highest and holiest motives, that can actuate a pure and sinless being. And for this very reason, it was offered as a temptation to our first parents. I shall enlarge on this thought, for it contains a solution of a great problem.

The Scripture saith, "The woman, being deceived, was first in the transgression." And Eve herself said, "The serpent beguiled me." And why should we not suppose the possibility of a deception in the case? It would be against nature to believe that the most beautiful and perfect female, in body and mind, who ever trod this earthly footstool of God, could have wilfully and wickedly offended against the Supreme Father, whose only daughter she was, and whom she must have loved with all the power of her soul, unless she had been deceived.



There never has existed on this earth, a mortal man or woman who was infallible. The fact is, that the offence of our mother Eve, considered simply as her individual sin, is the merest peccadillo as compared with the sins of her degenerate daughters, committed every day and hour against the same Universal Father.

The first sin of the first pair of the human race, has two very different aspects. It must be viewed, first, as their individual sin, and secondly, it is to be considered as the sin of the race, on account of their federal connection with Adam, as already explained, in the Chapter on Death. It is that relationship between Adam and his posterity, which gives to that first sin, its significance. Viewed simply as the personal or individual act of our first parents, it is no more, or it was no more than any other act or offence of any individual, who transgresses the law of God. Indeed, the most common sins of the most ordinary transgressors now, may be said to be far more flagitious and aggravated, than was that simple act of tasting the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. Of course, it was a sin. But the sin of deception is not so great or aggravated, as when there is a deliberate purpose of rebellion in the heart, or a premeditated act of opposition to God, as we cannot believe there was in the case of Adam and Eve.

The mistake of moralists, and ethical writers, has been, in always referring the moral qualities of acts, to the moral state of the affections in the actors. This is in opposition to the Divine Rule, and contrary to the entire practice of the world.

1. In the first place, I say, it is in opposition to the

Scriptural rule for estimating the moral qualities of an action. In the Theocratic form of government established over Israel, in the days of Moses, we have such enactments as the following :

“When a ruler hath sinned, and done somewhat through ignorance, against any of the Commandments of the Lord his God, concerning things which should not be done, and is guilty ; or if his sin wherein he hath sinned, come to his knowledge, he shall bring his offering ”—“and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his sin, and it shall be forgiven him.”

“And if any one of the common people sin through ignorance, while he doeth somewhat against any of the Commandments of the Lord, concerning things which ought not to be done, and be guilty : or if his sin which he hath sinned come to his knowledge ; then he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he hath sinned. And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin-offering, and slay the sin-offering in the place of the burnt-offering. And the priest shall take of the blood thereof with his finger, and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt-offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar ”—“And the priest shall make an atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him.”

From these Divine enactments we learn certainly these two things : first, that an act that is sinful and to be punished, was something or *somewhat*, that had been done “against any of the Commandments of the Lord ;” and secondly, that ignorance, or a mistake on the part of the offender, did not, and does not nullify

the guilt of such acts, but that they require atonement in order to forgiveness.

It might, indeed, be said that all this was incorporated in the old Levitical and ceremonial law of the Jews, which has passed away, and been superseded by the Christian dispensation. But no orthodox or evangelical commentator, would argue that the sound ethical and moral principles incorporated in the old Theocratic institution, have passed away, although the ceremonies have ceased. No part of the moral law has been blotted out. If under the Theocratic code of morals, a sinful act was defined to be something, or *somewhat* done against *any of the commandments* of the Lord, even though it was done in ignorance, the same must be true under any form of government, and in all time. It is not necessary to the existence of sin therefore, that there should be an evil intention in the mind of the doer of the sinful act, at the moment of transgression.

What do we know of the nature of sin, or what it consists in, except as we learn it from that old Theocratic code? If anything is clear, it is, that under that system of legislation which was God's, there were sins of "*ignorance*"—sins that proceeded from no evil intent or disposition—sins of error or mistake, which yet had to be repented of, and atoned for, as soon as discovered.

It was certainly in accordance with this rule of estimating the guilt of sin, that the great apostle, who had been educated in the Theocratic code, condemned himself, when he discovered his mistake in persecuting the Church, and acknowledged his sin by a life-long sorrow and repentance.

2. But, in the second place, I said, that the modern rule of estimating the moral quality of actions, is against the general practice of mankind. The truth is, such a rule would be really impracticable in the conduct of human affairs. The modern rule resolves itself into this, that if a good motive can be pleaded in justification of a bad deed, then it is lawful to do evil that good may come.

There has been, alas! too much bad legislation in the world, that has proceeded on the principle of raising crimes of the deepest die into the most exalted virtues, merely by finding something good in the motives. It is known that lying, perjury, and murder have been tolerated, and rewarded, and recorded as meritorious actions, when committed for the interests of Church or State. It was by this plea, that States justified themselves in enacting statutes against education, and in binding their subjects in the fetters of ignorance. This was certainly a crime against humanity itself. But they had a good motive. It was, to keep their subjects contented in their state of bondage. They did not want insurrection and bloodshed. The legislation of God strikes a death-blow to all this unsanctified human legislation, by making the Divine law itself, the standard of right and wrong in human actions, without going back to ascertain some antecedent state of mind. This point can be made clear by a simple illustration.

There was one who, in the days of slavery, held that all slave-holding was a sin, or, in the words of John Wesley, "the sum of all villainies." He was what was then called an *ultra abolitionist*. But he

bought a slave, and endeavored to justify himself for the act, by the *purity of his intention.* The circumstances were these. The slave was about to be sold to a Southern slave-holder, and to be carried to Mississippi; and he besought the abolitionist to purchase him, in order to save him from a fate which he dreaded more than death. He bought him, and thereby became a master and a slave-holder, under the laws of the State. He claimed his service, but agreed to allow him wages, till such time as he could repay the sum that he had advanced for him. But whether that period were a year or fifty years, made no difference in the principle; he was a slave-holder during that period, and he had bought and paid the price demanded for a human being.

Now, I say nothing of the act, in itself considered, whether it was right or wrong, but I affirm that if the buying or the selling of a slave was, or is a *malum per se*—a sin under all circumstances, as this man believed, then he committed a crime by purchasing that slave, and he could not justify himself by pleading the purity of his intention. If he had a right to buy one, he could have bought a hundred or a thousand under a similar plea. It was simply asking the privilege to do evil, that good might come. Every slave-holder in the South, could offer, and did offer a similar plea, for purchasing and holding in bondage every negro brought from Africa. They said they were savages—barbarians—and that they never could be civilized or Christianized only by enslaving them. This was the opinion expressed by Dr. Samuel Cartwright, and others of their best writers. One of them, Chancellor

Harper, even went so far as to affirm that, if the poor laboring classes in England—white people—could be transferred as slaves to their Southern plantations, their condition would be so materially improved, that it would be an act of emancipation to them.

Even in the most ordinary affairs of domestic or social life, we should find it impracticable to carry out this rule of making the moral qualities of actions, depend on any prior state of the affections. A kind father, for example, uses the rod with his son. He does not do this, because he hates his son, or because he takes any pleasure in giving him pain. The severity he uses proceeds from love, not from hatred. But he pleads, in justification of the act, the law of God: "He that spareth the rod, hateth his own son."

But here is another father, his neighbor, who never uses the rod with his son. He loves him so affectionately, that he cannot "chasten him betimes." Moreover, he thinks this system of rod government, a system of domestic tyranny, and he has discarded it from the discipline of his family. I do not here discuss the question, which of these opposite courses of discipline is right, and which is wrong. But I affirm, that, if one is right, and the other wrong, the right or the wrong cannot be in the motive, since both parents are alike influenced by the impulse of love or affection to their sons, and the desire to train them in the way they should go. If either is wrong, as one or the other must be, the wrong must be traced not to the motive or the wrong state of his affections, but to the wrong state of his knowledge. If he did not know the Divine rule, which is to govern all parents in the

discipline of their sons, and if he sinned through ignorance, the law still abides, and there will be punishment in some way. If a son, thus humored and indulged, should grow up to be self-willed, and the foolishness "bound up in his heart" is never driven far from him by the rod of correction, as Solomon says; and if he should become at last, an apostate from man and God, would that father be able to plead, at the last, that he loved his son so tenderly that he could not chasten him betimes?

So we are brought to the conclusion, that sin is *a transgression of some positive law*; and not simply a departure from the dictates of a pure conscience. The conscience may often be wrong, but the law of God can never be wrong. When we know that conscience is such a pliable thing, and so often misinformed, it is most surprising, that many Christian moralists should lay so much stress on the efficaciousness of right motives, in determining the moral qualities of actions.

There is, probably, no subject on which there has been more vain and absurd theorizing, than this subject of a *Free-will*. Some have even advocated the theory, that, unless man has the power of volition, independently of the influence of any motives whatever, acting on his mind to control his volitions, he is not a free agent. Therefore, as they hold, to be absolutely free, he must be above the influence of motives; and must possess what they call a self-deterring principle in the will, by which he can choose or refuse, despite all motives, and even in the absence of all motives whatever, to influence his volitions.

This theory has been advocated, but I am not sure that it is held by any late writer, as it would legislate the doctrine of free agency forever out of existence. On that theory, there could be no such thing as freedom of will, as the term is understood by all intelligent divines.

We can think of only three classes of human beings, who can act or think, or will at all, without the influence of motives to govern them. The first class consists of very young children, who are not old enough to weigh or compare motives; and, therefore, they are not considered as free agents. Another class is the idiotic part of mankind, born so, or made so by some accident to their brains. They cannot weigh or consider motives, and they are not responsible as free agents. And a third class is made up of those who are sent to our lunatic asylums, because of some misfortune or accident which has deprived them of the exercise of reason; and they are not held as responsible for their actions. These, I believe, are the only exceptions. These three classes can, and they do, put forth volitions in the absence of any motive power, to determine their volitions, and for that very reason, we say they are not free agents. And I repeat, that, to put all mankind on a level with them, and to say that they can, and that they do act, without motives to control their volitions, would be to legislate the doctrine of Free-will out of existence.

Whenever a man acts wisely or rationally, we may be sure that he acts from motives; and that the motives are of the strongest and the best kind. It is of the essence of mind, to act and to resolve in view



of motives. The process of reasoning—thinking - reflecting, which ever goes on in every rational mind, is nothing else but the weighing, and balancing of motives against one another, so as to determine how to shape our conduct. Therefore, to say that a man can will or resolve anything, without the influence of any motive whatever to sway his will, is to say that a man can cease to reason—that he can be a fool or an idiot. It is not possible, when a man acts rationally, to act or to resolve except in view of some motive, as this is the way in which mind or intelligence always acts. It would be easy to show that the Infinite Intelligence Himself, must always act from the wisest and best motives.

Once more, there has been a prevalent theory, now happily going out of date, that the moral state of the affections has much to do with this matter of a Free-will. It was argued that, a soul dead in trespasses and in sins, as the Scriptures describe every soul in a state of nature, cannot put forth volitions which are good and holy, and therefore, cannot possess the attribute of Free-will. But though the premises here assumed be true, the conclusion does not follow. If it was implied in the nature of free agency that the soul could, by a mere volition, change the whole current of its affections, or impart spiritual life where there was spiritual death, then the inference would be correct. For there is no such power in the will. It is the office of the Holy Spirit to quicken the soul that is dead in trespasses and sins. One who is a sinner by nature, cannot choose, in the sense of preferring, the employments, or the enjoyments of saints, because

he has no relish or taste for them. But this is not to say, that he has no power of will *to choose life, in preference to death*, when placed before him as objects of choice.

What the Saviour complained of to the Jews, was, that they would not come to Him, that they might have *life*. For these—life and death—and only these are the objects of choice, and whatever else may be involved in these.

It was life and death that were placed before Adam —“in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” And Moses, in rehearsing the dealings of God’s Providence towards the children of Israel, said unto them: “I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death; blessing and cursing; therefore, choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.”

This is the power that is implied in the possession of a Free-will—and this is all—the power to choose life instead of death—to choose good instead of evil. Now we know that, irrespective of any peculiar state of the affections, every rational soul has the power to choose life in preference to death. Whoever has knowledge to discern between life and death, between blessing and cursing, is able, and is perfectly conscious that he is able, to choose between them. And this is all that we understand by Freedom of will.

The knowing faculty in man has as much to do with his volitions, as the state of his affections, or his appetites. And volitions are more frequently determined by the state of our knowledge, than by our affections. It is only in this way that we can account for the choice of Adam in the garden of Eden.

The knowing faculty leads every rational being, when opposite motives are placed before him, soliciting his attention, to deliberate, and to weigh the motives, before deciding on any course of action. It was for this purpose, doubtless, that the reasoning faculty was conferred on man—to enable him to weigh and consider motives—to compare and balance them one with another, to the end that he may intelligently determine between them, and regulate his conduct in accordance therewith.

It was in this way, we must believe, that Adam exercised his prerogative of free agency. He certainly must have exercised his reasoning powers in the peculiar circumstances that surrounded him. It is natural for us to suppose that he had many questionings in his mind, as to the peculiar properties, for example, of the fruit growing on the prohibited tree—the reasons of the prohibition—the nature of death, or what was meant by dying. For assuredly, as they had never witnessed an instance of death—as it was something yet unknown, they must have had a very vague and indefinite idea of what was meant by it. It is even possible they may have thought it meant, that their eyes should be opened, and they should be as gods, knowing good and evil. This was something they could better comprehend. But it is impossible to believe that they could have known what was involved in the threatened sentence of death, as that was something they had never seen, and as there is no reason to suppose that the Maker had explained it to them. They may have confounded what was threatened by God, with what was promised by the

tempter. However this may be, they could not have known that the serpent was deceiving them. What was the serpent? One of the creatures in the garden which God had formed, and which He had pronounced very good. For one, I certainly believe that the serpent was not only the most subtle, but the most beautiful creature in the garden, with the exception of Eve herself. We know not what its original form was. But the words of the curse on the serpent, imply that it was changed—struck down from a high original state. The probability is that it had gorgeous wings, and could move as easily in air as on land. And what renders this probable is the fact that the ophidian tribes of creatures still retain the roots or germs of what may have been wings or paws, in the parts of their bodies where wings or paws should be, as if it had been the intention of heaven, that these marks of the curse inflicted on the serpent should be perpetuated.

However this may be, there was nothing in the appearance of the serpent to make Eve recoil from his presence, as she would have done, and fled in horror, if she had known that it was a deadly enemy, seeking to deceive and ruin her. But she did not know this. Without guile herself, she did not know that there could be guile or enmity in such a beautiful creature. And she was deceived. Eve did not sin deliberately, or with her eyes open. Her eyes were not opened till after she had sinned. This is the record in the case. But she was deceived. The serpent said that she should not surely die. And she did not know, and she could not know at the moment,

that the aim of the serpent was to deceive her. The serpent said that her eyes would be opened—her understanding—the eye of knowledge, and she would become as God himself in knowing good and evil. She believed this. And if she loved God with all the powers of her soul and body, what could she have desired more than to be like God? There is not a human being on earth, who would not have done exactly as Eve did, in the same circumstances.

But the point I would make here, is, that our first parents, had the power, when their minds were in a pure and sinless frame, to choose evil—to choose death instead of life. And this shows us what we are to understand by the Scriptural Doctrine of Free-Will. The whole proposition may be stated thus: Adam and Eve, with minds perfectly holy, could be deceived so as to choose evil, therefore the converse of this must be true; namely, that minds in a sinful or unholy state have the power to choose good—to choose life.

If one who has a sinful nature, cannot change his own heart, nor convert himself, that does not alter the fact of his responsibility, nor make him any the less a free agent. He is not required to change his own heart, and the doctrine of Free-will does not involve any such impossibility. But he is required to choose life, and to refuse death. And every rational being is conscious that he has this power and freedom of choice. It is natural for every one who is in his right mind, to prefer life to death. This preference is just as easy and natural as to prefer pleasure to pain—health to disease—or wealth and affluence to poverty and want.

But this mere preference of the mind does not amount to a positive choice of good. A man who should only say that he preferred pleasure to pain, but should never put forth any act of his will, to seek pleasure or to avoid pain, could not properly be said to *choose* the one in preference to the other. He would pervert the very end of his being, and live below the dignity of his nature. A man who should only say that he preferred wealth to poverty, but should never put forth a single active volition, of such a nature as to prompt him to seek wealth, and guard against want, but should spend his days in indolent ease, could not, properly, be said to choose the one, and refuse the other. His whole life would be a contradiction of his words.

Are not all men free agents in seeking riches, and guarding against want and poverty—in seeking pleasure, and avoiding pain—and in following the laws of health, to avoid sickness and death? No man ever yet complained that he was not a free agent in all the practical pursuits of life. When a man prefers a thing in such a sense, as to put forth an effort of his will to seek that thing in the only way in which it can be secured, then he comes up to the dignity of his nature, and he will almost infallibly succeed in securing the object of his wishes.

Those motions of the will, which are accompanied with some effort for the attainment of the objects willed, can only be spoken of as the acts of a Free-Will. Thus, a man says, "I will be a prince merchant"—and this volition or purpose leads him on—he studies the laws of trade—he enters on a mercantile career—he keeps a careful eye on the fluctuations

of the market—he endeavors by all proper means, to secure a large run of customers—he keeps on hand such a stock of goods, as he knows will be in demand—and, in short, he makes diligent use of all the means necessary to the end he has in view, and he becomes a prince merchant. It is not chance, nor an accident, nor fate, but his own free-will that has made him a prince merchant.

This only serves to show what is meant by an energetic, active Free-will. This faculty has more to do than any thing else, in the creation of that wonderful diversity of characters seen among men in the world. We shall notice one just moping along through life, apparently, without any energy or purpose of will at all. He is too indolent to do his own thinking. Another just says, *I will*—and whatever it is that he has willed, he puts into execution. And wherever he goes, whatever he does, or wherever he puts his foot down, he makes his mark.

Indeed, it is this Free-will that constitutes the greatness and nobility of man. But it is the birth-right of every man, and a relic of that Divine image, originally instamped on man.

Let a man say, “I will seek wisdom—I will know the truth”—and let him steadily keep this aim in view, and he will hardly ever fail. There is a Divine promise connected with all such seeking, and it would scarcely be possible for him to be disappointed.

The government of God in this world, seems to be established on the principle, that, to him who improves the talent already given him, “shall more be given, and he shall have more abundance;” but from

him who buries his talent, (his Free-Will) "shall be taken away even that which he hath."

From the premises already laid down, we see that freedom of will consists in the power of volition, with liberty and ability to carry out the volition, in the use of the necessary and legitimate means to secure the thing willed. In this sense, all are free agents, in prosecuting their secular affairs and pursuits. This is a proposition which no one would deny. In the same sense, all are free agents in the affairs that relate to their spiritual interests. There is no difference, except that in the latter case, there is a promise, that they who "give all diligence to make their calling and election sure, shall never fall." But in both cases, the diligence and the seeking originate in the volition. And that volition must be free. There can be no constraint put on the will, to force it one way or the other. God will not, force the will of any, as that would be destructive of liberty and of moral government. The strength and power of the human will, may be better exhibited, perhaps, by a simple and easy illustration, than by any metaphysical discussion.

Foster, the British essayist, relates a case which is exactly in point. Some years ago, there was a young nobleman who had left him a large patrimonial inheritance, which he managed to spend by gambling and fast living, in the brief space of three years. And he found himself reduced to the condition of the Prodigal in the Gospel, who had spent all his living, starving in a far country. In a state of desperation, he wandered forth one day with the intention of committing suicide. Scarcely knowing whither he went, by a good or bad



fortune, he found himself on a rising ground which overlooked what was once his splendid domain. He sat down on the ground, buried in thought. Thought was busy, but he did not remain in that position very long. He arose from the ground a new man. It seemed as if he was born again. The gloom of despair had passed from his countenance. It was nothing else but a motion—an impulse of his will. He had *resolved* to be the owner of that estate again. He had also determined on his plan. He had never worked, and he did not know how to work, but he resolved to learn. The first job he undertook was to shovel a load of coal from the pavement, into the place where it was to be deposited. For this he received a few pence; and then, in accordance with the saving part of his plan, he asked for a little cold victuals, which was given him. And so he went on from one thing to another, doing whatever he could find to do, and saving his money. At length, he found himself in possession of a sufficient sum of money to purchase a few cattle, the market value of which he had been careful to ascertain. These he sold for a profit. This was the way he began. And Mr. Foster's narrative states that when that young nobleman died, he had more than recovered his former inheritance, and was worth at the time of his decease, three hundred thousand pounds sterling, or a millien and a half of our money. The revolution in that young man's life was effected by the power of a single volition. And it shows the power of the human will.

The same faculty is in every mind, and belongs to every human being. A man's soul may be perfectly

free, while his body is in chains. On the other hand a man may enjoy the full and perfect freedom of his limbs, while he is a wretched, cowering slave in his spirit. If the soul of man is great or noble, it is because he has a Free-Will. The distinctive superiority which one man possesses over another, is in the fact, that he asserts his freedom as a man, and dares to think for himself. The great reformers and benefactors of their race in all past ages, have been those who had independence and magnanimity enough to rise above the prevailing superstition and errors of their day, and to proclaim the truth as they knew it, fearless of consequences.

The exhibitions of this intellectual greatness and superiority are truly rare. But when one such man appears on the stage of action, the world seldom fails to be impressed with the sublimity of the spectacle, as if he belonged to some higher order of beings; and not unfrequently has it happened, that, they have been ready to worship such a man, in his lifetime, and to enroll him among the gods, after his death.

Who can read the merest sketch of the life of such an one as Paul, without a feeling of admiration rising almost into adoration, as if he must have been more than a mortal man? The account of his labors—his journeyings, his imprisonments, and the continued opposition he met with to the end of his life in propagating the faith, strikes us as almost surpassing credulity. By his dauntless courage, and his indomitable resolution, he had made that faith, the faith of almost the entire world, at the time of his death. Look at

that wonderful man in one of the attitudes of his life. He stands a prisoner in chains, in the presence of one of the most august assemblies, composed of princes, senators and nobles, summoned to answer for the faith that is in him—does he quail? Does he recant through fear of the face of man? Who was the freer—the nobler of the two; the haughty king, before whose tribunal he had been dragged, surrounded by his courtiers, the slave of ignorance and superstition, and ready to do the bidding of the populace even at the price of his soul; or that noble prisoner of the Lord with pinioned hands and limbs, but whose soul seeming to have no connection with the imprisoned body, asserts its own dignity and heaven-born origin, in such tones as to make the haughty monarch tremble on his throne?

Such examples of the power of the human will, are not often seen. There is a similar instance afforded in the life of Mahomet. He had determined to do a certain thing. He had taken his resolution. And then he deliberately set about the work to carry out his purpose. He labored ten years, patiently, to make his first twenty-five proselytes. But he wavered not in his purpose. He persevered—he labored on. And a third part of the civilized world, at last, acknowledged the greatness of his genius.

At this point in our inquiries, there arises a question: if the will was thus made free originally, what is it that makes slaves and cowards of the masses of mankind? What is it? It is ignorance—it is superstition—and their own base passions and lusts. But this is a voluntary enslavement. They make them-

selves slaves, and they hug the chains that bind them.

The power of a human will, when perfectly free and independent, is astonishing, and affords, perhaps, a truer or a better demonstration of the omnipotence we suppose to belong to the Divine Mind, than any other exhibitions ever witnessed by us in this world.

In the life of Oliver Cromwell we are afforded a memorable example of this power, especially on the occasion, when the Parliament of England, refusing to be prorogued by his order, he went to the house; when, by his words, by his gestures and his aspect, they were so frightened, that they fled in all directions in the utmost consternation, as if they thought the day of judgment had come.

We have a similar instance in the life of the great Napoleon. By his iron will, he swayed the destinies of France, and had the best disciplined army ever marshalled on a battle-field, absolutely under his control. When, on one occasion, that army hesitated to make the passage of the Alps in the winter season, from the impracticable nature of the undertaking, he placed, as it were, the lever of that iron will beneath that army, and raised it, and carried it over those ice-bound mountains!

What is there so strong as the will? It tames the wild beasts. It brings the elements of nature into subjection to its mandates. It turns the courses of rivers, calls the lightnings from the clouds, levels mountains, joins severed continents; nor is there anything strong enough to bind it.

It never could have been intended that the will

should be bound, except by the golden chain of truth. There is a profound meaning in the words, uttered by Him who spake as never man spake—"If the truth shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." But to be made free by the truth, is to be bound by the truth. And that kind of bondage is the highest, noblest kind of freedom, of which we can have any conception; and the very freedom for which the soul was originally formed.

We can scarcely help feeling a sort of pity for those, who cannot break away from the many petty tyrants which, in turn, lord it over them, such as sin has created—ignorance, superstition, their own brutal lusts and appetites, and the tyranny of man, to which they voluntarily surrender themselves. But the soul made free by truth, can never sink down into this abject slavery and degradation.

I will close this chapter on the will, with a brief recapitulation.

1. A Free-will consists in liberty and ability to choose between moral good and evil, between life and death, when placed before the mind as objects of choice.

2. The conditions of moral agency, are the possession of a reasoning faculty, a moral faculty or a conscience, and a positive law as a rule of conduct.

3. Taking the Mosaic Record, we know that these conditions of free agency existed in reference to the first man, Adam.

4. Man lost not his free-will, nor any of his faculties by the lapse into sin; only the state of his moral affections was changed.

5. Sin is a transgression of law, and without a law, which can be discerned as a rule of conduct, there could be no sin.

6. The moral qualities of actions cannot always, nor altogether, be referred to the motives, or to a pre-existing state of the affections. For, under that rule, a pretext might be found, and often has been, for the commission of all sorts of crimes.

7. The first man, when innocent, and without any pre-existing bias to evil, had the power of choosing evil, when good and evil were placed before him; which is proof, that, man in his lapsed condition, has the power to choose good, when good and evil are set before him as objects of choice. If he had not this power, he would not be a free agent.

8. There is no such thing as a self-determining power in the will, whereby a man can choose either good or evil independently of all motives whatever; for this would be to act in a manner which is contrary to the nature of mind or intelligence. And this theory would legislate the doctrine of free-will out of existence, since the Supreme Intelligence Himself, always acts according to the wisest counsel.

9. The power to choose between good and evil, or between life and death, does not imply a power to change, by a simple act of the will, the natural or moral state of the affections. That work belongs to the province of the Holy Spirit. But where one has chosen good, or chosen life, which every one can do, and has entered on the pursuit of that good, in the diligent use of means, then he realizes the truth of the saying of Jesus, " To him that hath shall be given,

and he shall have more abundance." This is the plan of God's moral government. When a man has improved his one talent, then another talent is given him. Gracious gifts are given only to those who improve their natural gifts.

10. We know of nothing in nature that is absolutely free, but the human will. That is Free. And God purposely left it free, as without that freedom, there could be no such thing as a moral government. And without a moral government, there could be not only no sin, but no holiness in the universe. And without sin or holiness, neither man nor angel could know that God is holy, or just, or merciful, or render due praise to Him for His glorious perfections. The universe, and, perhaps, God Himself, would be bound together by the chains of an adamant fate, which Mr. Emerson calls "*The Beautiful Necessity!*"

## CHAPTER X.

### *The Philosophy of Truth.*

Belief of the Agnostics—Truth immutable—Five propositions stated—There is such a thing as the absolute Truth—Or there could be no essential error—And all religions would be alike indifferent—Emerson's belief—The creed of Robert Owen—Views of O. B. Frothingham—Man an automaton, according to Huxley—The only law of materialists—What Socialists in Paris and Boston believe—What is the absolute truth—Defined in the Scriptures—Two volumes of Truth—Where Plato discovered it—The law of Belief—A wise and beautiful constitution—Why error exists—Ground of merit and demerit—A chief cause of unbelief—Where moral agency comes in—Loving darkness rather than light—Argument from the universe—Two sceptics in England—No false belief without its penalty—The final victory of truth—March of improvement in this age—Christianity is the power—The spirit of liberty free again—Recapitulation and conclusion—Supplement on the Intuitional Philosophy.

THE Agnostic philosophers—and all materialists are Agnostics—do not believe in any such thing as absolute and essential truth. One way is just as good as another for them, and it makes no difference what a man believes, if he is earnest and sincere. If the philosophy were sound, or if they could prove that there is no such thing as absolute truth, it would make no difference what a man believed; and perhaps, sometimes, it would be even more advantageous or profitable to him to believe a lie than to believe the truth. But unfortunately for the philosophy, a man's believing a lie, does not change it into truth, nor avert from him the consequences of



his false belief. For example, if a man should take a dose of arsenic into his system believing it to be calomel, his wrong belief would not change the nature of the dose, nor avert from him the penalty of death, notwithstanding he had been very sincere in his belief.

This common-sense philosophy furnishes a rule of conduct perfectly safe, which we cannot suppose to admit of any exceptions. If some poor idiot, or blind man should assert that the sun does not shine, because he does not behold his rays, the sun would not cease to shine, but would continue to pour forth his mild radiance and glory, causing all things to rejoice in his beams, and the earth to bring forth an abundance for man and beast, though the blind man should persist in his unbelief, even denying the existence of the sun. And so, let the atheist deny the existence of a God, his denial, or his unbelief, will hurt no one but himself. God does not cease to exist, because of his unbelief. A whole nation once denied the existence of God, and published a decree that "there is no God." But God did not consent to be annihilated, because they wanted it so, and they were severely punished for their madness, and had to rescind the decree.

Truth is immutable. It is not affected by our belief, or our want of belief. It is never warped nor modified, to suit the ever-varying opinions of men. Times and seasons may change; men themselves may change; yea, all things earthly may change, and will change. But the source of truth is eternal, and therefore, it cannot change.

If this is a philosophic and a true statement, the necessary and logical inference from it is, that the belief of error or falsehood must always, and under all circumstances, be attended with evil consequences. Every departure from the straight line of truth—every single infraction of the law of truth, no matter how slight or trivial, has its penalty.

I will now endeavor to establish the five following propositions, viz. :

1. That there is such a thing as essential and absolute truth, which is unvarying, and eternal in its nature.

2. That this absolute and essential truth, is something that may be discovered, recognized and certainly known.

3. That there is a law of belief, as old as philosophy itself, by which truth can be certainly and infallibly distinguished from error.

4. That ignorance and prejudice are the sources of all the false beliefs that exist in the world.

5. And lastly, that there is a certainty that, in the conflict between truth and error—or between light and darkness, that has been going on in the world, even from the beginning, truth is to gain a final and universal ascendancy in the earth.

Let us examine these simple and self-evident principles.

I. And first, it may be remarked, in a general way, that, to many minds, it must appear as a self-evident proposition, that there is such a thing as absolute truth, irrespective of the false and varying beliefs of men. But the maxim of these Agnostics, or the ration-

alists, that it makes no difference what a man believes, if he is honest and sincere, is one that strikes at the foundations of all truth, and even annihilates the distinction between truth and error. This renders it necessary to give some consideration to this question, as it forms the very sub-stratum of all our inquiries, in every branch of knowledge.

If there were no such thing as absolute truth, there could be no error or falsehood; for they are contraries; and the destruction of one, would be the annihilation of the other. And so, in an ethical point of view, all creeds would be, purely matters of indifference. Whatever a man might happen to believe, that would be truth, or the same as truth, to him. And then, how useless and vain would be the question, "What is truth?" It was under the influence of this thought, that a rationalistic preacher not long ago said, that he was looking forward to an age, when we should have a better form of Christianity than that which now prevails—"a Christianity that shall be creedless."

In matters of religion, the Jew would be ready to say that all truth is embodied in their system of Judaism. The Mussulman, probably, would say that it is contained in the Koran. The bigoted Hindoo, on the other hand, would affirm that it is summed up in their Brahminic creed; while the Christian would be equally positive, that, in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is to be found the only true system of religious faith. Now what is the difference between these various and conflicting systems? These materialists would say, there is no difference—that one

system is just as good as another—and that they are all equally good and proper for those who can sincerely believe, and adopt them. This is to teach that there is nothing, essentially, good or bad—nothing true or false in religion. It is a thing of indifference, to be received and believed, or not, according to every man's own notion or caprice.

As there may be those who are not entirely posted, as to the nature of the teachings of these philosophers, and as I would not knowingly do them injustice, I shall permit them to state their doctrine in their own words.

Ralph W. Emerson is one of the great lights of this school, in our day; than whom there is no one more looked up to as an oracle; and he gives us his moral creed, in the following expressive words:

“Let us build altars,” he says, “to the beautiful Necessity, which secures that all is made up of one piece; that plaintiff and defendant, friend and enemy, animal and plant, food and eater are of one kind. In Astronomy is vast space, but no foreign system; in geology vast time, but the same laws as to-day. Why should we be afraid of nature, which is no other than philosophy and theology embodied? Why should we fear to be crushed by savage elements, we who are made up of the same elements? Let us build to the beautiful Necessity, which makes man brave in believing that he cannot shun a danger that is appointed, nor incur one that is not; to the Necessity which, rudely or softly, educates him to the perception that there are no contingencies; that law rules throughout existence.”

This is materialism. And this law which rules

throughout existence, must be that impressed upon every atom of matter, which, therefore, he might have called the law of gravitation. Man is just as much under the control of this law, as any other material body—as the food he eats—as the plants that grow from the ground—as the natural elements—for they are all of one piece—all the same matter—and there is no moral responsibility—that is out of the question.

Let us take the creed of another materialist, whose name is considered as high authority among writers of this school—it is the name of Robt. Owen. In his debate with Mr. Campbell about fifty years ago, more or less, he laid down this proposition :

“I am willing to rest the merits of the whole controversy upon this single affirmative proposition, that no human being ever had the power of belief or disbelief at his will ; and therefore, there cannot be merit or demerit in any belief.”

Here again, we have materialism in a nutshell. Every man's belief is a necessity to him, since he cannot help believing as he does. Does not this make man a machine or an automaton? Some of our later intuitional philosophers assert the same principle, in almost as summary a manner, when they speak of certain intuitive beliefs, wrought into the very texture of the man's soul, which, therefore, he must believe.

I will give one other authority—the name of one who has been the president of a Liberal Society in Boston, and for several years preached to a Society of Unitarians in N. Y.—Mr. O. B. Frothingham. He says :

“Take Herbert Spencer’s system, which knows nothing of the Bible—is his loose thinking? His life is one daily sacrifice to thought, and of such sweetness and purity, that he must be a very good Christian who would equal it. Why is that? Because it is founded, not on loose, but on very close, ardent, pains-taking thinking.

“Materialism is the bug-bear of religion. The very word suggests bestiality. Have you ever talked with a materialist? His idea of matter is as fine as is yours of the spirit. Loose living—there are no such austere livers as these materialists. Robert Owen was a materialist, and he devoted his life to the good of mankind.

“If the Church had combated indolence of thought instead of loose thinking, it would be far better. It regards the latter as the greatest evil; but what is really the greatest trouble, is not thinking at all. When these idle and really loose acceptations of established creeds, will have been supplanted by earnest rational thought, the old dominion of hell will vanish from the view, and in its place will arise the dominion of light and love.”

Now putting the most favorable construction that we can upon these thoughts, thus candidly expressed, they mean simply that truth, or doctrine, is nothing—that a man’s sincerity or earnestness is everything.

Here is materialism and Spencerism, that knows nothing of the Bible—put in the same category with other beliefs—all useful and good, and equally productive of good results, when they lead to earnest thought—and one just as good as another. And the conclusion is, that when these loose acceptations of old established creeds shall be supplanted by honest, earnest thinking on the part of men, the old dominion of hell will vanish out of view for ever. Then what is

the difference between truth and error? You may be a Calvinist, though he calls that creed a most horrible dogma—or you may believe universalism, which, as he says—and he was a universalist himself—makes the thief, the debauchee, and every other criminal, so many puppets or footballs of God, each playing his ordered part, without any responsibility—or you may be a materialist, or an atheist—it makes no difference, only be earnest and sincere.

Another of these eminent philosophers of the present day is Prof. Huxley, who has devoted his life to the task of trying to prove that man, and the monkey, and the dog, and the goat, and the fish, and the plant, and the elements of nature are all of one piece. In one of his most recent lectures before the British Association, he elaborated the proposition that man is an *automaton*—that his actions are automatic—that is, not performed under the influence of a free-will, but under the force of the material circumstances surrounding him, and over which he has no control.

I have referred to these leading authorities, for the purpose of showing what materialism is, and what it teaches on the subject of moral responsibility. The very essence of this system is, that man, that every man believes from necessity—and therefore, his belief, not being a voluntary, but a necessary act, he must believe just as he does, and so he is not properly a subject of praise or blame. There is no liberty or free-will in the case.

The only law that a certain class of rationalists admit to be of any binding force, as a rule of moral conduct, is what a man may, or may not think that he

finds in his own conscience. This class is represented by such teachers as Freeman Clark, Mr. Frothingham, Mr. Beecher, John Snyder, and others. And what is Conscience? Well, if there is anything in nature that is more elastic, we know not what it is. It can be stretched to suit every clime and country, and the condition of every people, and the circumstances and peculiar notions of every man. Conscience a rule of moral conduct! Indeed, it was in obedience to that law the Jews crucified the Son of God! In pursuance of the very same rule of conduct, Saul of Tarsus persecuted the church, breathing out threatenings and slaughter against Christians! It was an intensified conscience that in the persecuting church of mediæval times, precipitated thousands of hapless mothers and babes down the Alpine Steeps, whose bones were left to bleach on the rocks below—that erected the dungeons of the inquisition, and kindled the fires of the *auto da fe*, for the extinction of heresy!

There are scores of thousands, not only in Paris, but in Boston, and New York, and Chicago who conscientiously believe the doctrines of the Communists, and the Socialists. Now let these gentlemen of the liberal philosophy, harangue these bodies of Socialists at their nocturnal and secret meetings, persuading them, that, the moral law of the Bible is a nullity, and that Conscience is the only law, and that every man has a right to do what seems right in his own eyes—let them do this, and what insurance companies would be willing to insure our houses, our stores, or our banks, for a single night?

Let it be proclaimed by these eloquent haranguers—



the Huxleys, the Tyndalls, the Beechers, the Ingersolls and others, that men are not responsible for their belief, and that it makes no difference what they believe, if they are honest and sincere, till this doctrine shall permeate the mind of the lower and the oppressed classes, and there is no power that could keep them from seeking to carry these views into practice, and society would be upheaved from its deepest foundations.

There must be, then, somewhere in existence, a *straight line of Truth*—something that is not elastic, and that is not stretched to suit every man's conscience. Yet, how shall we attempt to prove that there is such a thing as truth—absolute truth, that never varies, but is eternal as the source of truth? How shall we describe that essential and necessary truth, or what name shall we apply to it? There is no better or fitter term for this purpose, than the word, "WISDOM," as used in the inspired volume—"The ways of wisdom are pleasant, and all her paths are peace"—in which sublime and beautiful passage, if we substitute the word *truth* for the word "*wisdom*," we shall have, perhaps, without changing the sense, a better and clearer understanding of the passage; thus, "the ways of *truth* are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

When we have removed the fear of God, we have let down all the bars that fence in the citadel of a nation's goodness and virtue. We have thrown the reins on the neck of passion, and set open a cage of wild and savage beasts to prey on society. When Tom Paine had written "The Age of Reason," and

spoke to Thomas Jefferson about the matter of publishing it, the simple remark of the sage of Monticello was, "Don't unchain the tiger."

"The fear of the Lord"—that "is the beginning of wisdom." That is a rule of conduct, and also a law of safety, that can know no change. It is as broad as the earth, and as extensive as the needs of humanity, adapted to all times, and all countries. "For," says the apostle, "God is no respecter of persons; for, in all nations, he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him." If a Socrates, a Plato, or a Cyrus, though living in Pagan lands and Pagan times, devoutly worship God, and work righteousness, according to the light they have, they are accepted. These illustrious men belonged to the same class as pious Job, and a host of others in all ages, and all countries, who revered and feared God; and who, though the light that shined into their minds, was comparatively dim, shall stand up in the judgment against the men of this generation, justified freely through the merits of the great sacrifice for sin.

II. My second proposition or thesis, affirms that, this essential wisdom or truth, is something that may be discovered, recognized and certainly known. If, as Lord Bacon said, "it is heaven on earth to have a man's mind move in charity, rest in Providence, and turn upon the poles of truth," we conclude that there must be some way by which this celestial visitant from heaven to earth, and the offspring of the Divine Mind, may be certainly known. It would be altogether unsatisfactory to the children of men, who desire to

know the truth, and to be conformed to her image, to tell them, that, though she has her abode on earth, yet, that her beautiful form can never be known.

There are two volumes—Nature and Revelation—both of them divine—in which truth is clearly revealed. Modern scientists affect to believe, that there is a conflict between the teachings of Nature and Revelation. This is because they do not read them aright. As both proceeded from God, there can be no conflict between them. Both volumes abundantly proclaim their own Divine Original, and attest the existence of the Supreme One. The truth that “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth,” is as clearly legible on every page of the volume of Nature, as it is written on the first page of the Bible. “The invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead.”

There have been many in Pagan lands who could read this volume of Nature. Plato was a heathen, and he gave utterance to the following sublime sentiments which, though quoted in the first part of this work, will bear repeating:

“The cause of all impiety and irreligion among men, is the reversing, in themselves, the relative subordination of mind and body; they have in like manner, in the universe, made that to be first, which was second, and that to be second which was first; for while, in the generation of things, mind and final causes precede matter and efficient causes, they, on

the contrary, have viewed matter and material things as absolutely prior, in the order of the universe, to intelligence and design: and thus, departing from an error in relation to themselves, they have ended in a subversion of the Godhead."

Who will not say, that is the logic of nature? That was the way in which the voice of nature was heard by Plato, two thousand years ago. And may we not believe that millions have heard that voice giving the same sound? And that is all the proof we want, that all philosophers could understand nature in the same way, if they did not, as Plato charges, wilfully reverse in themselves the relative subordination of mind and matter. His words contain a standing rebuke, not only to the materialists of his day, but to sceptics of every age.

To what end was man endowed with the peculiar gift of Reason—a gift denied to every other creature on this earth but man—unless it was to enable him to understand the volume of Nature—to search, to investigate, to "prove all things," and thus arrive at the knowledge of the truth? Reason is not truth—nor a set of truths in the mind—but only the instrument of truth, as shown in the introductory chapter—by the help of which, we are able to discover and find out all truth. Right here, at this point, as we think, a certain class of philosophers have made a great mistake. They seem to imagine that reason is not simply a faculty of the soul, but a revelation—a set of fundamental truths, not discovered by reason after it has been developed, but previously written in the very

structure of the soul, which, therefore, every one believes, and must believe, of necessity.\*

III. The law that governs all belief—or how to distinguish between truth and error, is the next proposition to be considered. This law is simple, and can be easily understood. Philosophical belief must always rest on *evidence*. That is the law of belief, as universally conceded. Unbelief, on the contrary, results from lack of evidence. It must be admitted that philosophical belief, or credence, as materialists argue, is a necessary intellectual act, and not a voluntary or a moral act of the mind. We could no more withhold belief in view of convincing evidence, than we could believe without evidence, or contrary to it. I believe, for example, there is a certain city named Jeddo in Japan. I never was there, and I never saw that city. But the evidence that there is such a city is so conclusive, that I am bound to believe it, and it is not optional with me to believe or not to believe. And so, in a thousand other similar cases. This is the law of belief—a law as well understood as any other fixed law of nature.

Take the evidence in favor of the historical fact that Jesus Christ was born, and that he lived and was put to death in Judæa. It is of the same nature as the evidence on which we believe that Julius Cæsar, that Cicero, that Horace, that Mahomet, or any other person of historic reputation lived and died at the time, and under the circumstances related of them. No sane person would think of calling in question the

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\*For a particular account of this Intuitional Philosophy see supplement.

fact of the existence of such historical characters as Aristotle, Plato, Zoroaster, Lycurgus, Homer and a thousand others. They believe the historical facts, because it is impossible to disbelieve them. This is the law of belief. It is on this ground that every one must admit the historical facts connected with the life, death, and sufferings of the man Christ Jesus, on earth, over eighteen hundred years ago. There is no difference, in the nature of the evidence, only that there is no historical character supported by anything like the amount of evidence, as that which authenticates the human existence of Jesus. The admissions of such famous infidels as Renan and others, afford proof of this. Therefore, they must believe in the humanity of Christ, whether they believe in his divinity or not.

Their infidelity consists, then, not in the want of credence, or belief of the facts, but in their false reasonings from the facts, and in resisting the logical conclusions which the facts warrant. We neither believe nor disbelieve—we neither assent nor withhold assent to the truth of any given proposition, at our option, but only according to the evidence in the case. But, as Robert Owen said, there is neither merit nor demerit in these merely mental acts, not being moral. In all such operations, the mind acts necessarily, not voluntarily. There is no more voluntariness in believing, than there is in remembering, or thinking, which intellectual processes go on in the mind, without any effort of the will.

Now what I want to show is, the infinite and benevolent wisdom exhibited in this constitution, or this law

of the mind, as if it had been specially designed to guard man from dangerous error, and keep him in the way of truth. What is the fact in the case? All men seem to be shut up to the belief of truth—why? Because truth is always based on, or maintained by evidence, and error is never supported by evidence. No man, therefore, can rationally disbelieve the truth upon evidence, nor believe a falsehood against evidence. For in doing this, he violates this law which God has written in the physical and intellectual nature of every man.

If these general principles be admitted, and they cannot be contested, several important inquiries arise, which demand a brief consideration. And one is, why there is vastly more of error than of truth abounding in the world, if the law has been so framed as to render the belief of truth necessary, and the belief of falsehood impossible? Another inquiry relates to the question whether there can be merit or demerit, in these intellectual or necessary acts of belief and disbelief. The consideration of these points comes under the discussion of the next proposition.

IV. And the next, or the fourth proposition, affirms that ignorance and prejudice are the sources or the causes of all the false beliefs that exist in the world. The discussion of this proposition opens up to us, at once, the whole subject of moral accountability, and shows in what it consists.

1. Ignorance seems, in the present state of the world, to be almost a universal evil. But it comes for the most part, from want of study and reflection. The examination of evidence, often necessary to ar-

rive at just conclusions, may require much time and patient study; and the masses are averse to this. There is a certain sluggishness or indolence that is the infirmity of most persons, which makes them shrink from the toil and investigation, and from the severe mental effort that must often be put forth in order to arrive at truth. This is no libel against human nature. Earnest and persevering toil in any manly and noble pursuit is a rare virtue, but a virtue that richly repays those who possess it. The masses of men the world over, are predisposed to seek their ease in a state of inactivity and indolence. Mental effort is even more irksome than physical labor. And in this state of things, it cannot be expected that truth shall pervade all minds, and knowledge become a universal inheritance.

Every one knows what self-sacrifice and persevering toil are often involved, even in the acquisition of material treasure. The gold, and the precious gems have to be dug from the bowels of the earth, or brought up from the ocean beds, at great risk and labor; and then, they have to be ground, and cut, and polished by a severe and toilsome process, before they are fitted to be set in the crowns of kings and queens, and to sparkle on the fingers of beauty and fashion. And it is not to be thought that the gems of truth, which adorn souls, and are more valuable than rubies, shall become the possession of any without an effort, and even without being desired or sought after. Labor must have its reward. But the reward will not come without the labor. The moral principle obtains here, as well as elsewhere. The voice of truth itself is heard, saying:



“If thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding ; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hidden treasure, then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord giveth wisdom ; out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.”

We see, then, where moral agency comes in. They who would become wise, must cry after knowledge. They must seek for it as men seek for silver, and for hidden treasures.

We can comprehend, therefore, why there is so much ignorance, and so many absurd opinions prevailing in the world. Men do not, and they will not search for the evidence on which truth is founded as on a rock. They have neither the inclination nor the leisure requisite for the study, and the thorough investigation of truth. The temple of knowledge stands on a lofty eminence, and he who would enter its portals, must climb the ascent, and undergo a long and weary labor. And this has been wisely ordered, since man has reason and liberty, and has been placed under a moral dispensation. The possession of wisdom, or the knowledge of truth, are awarded to those willing to seek them.

2. Another cause of the predominance of error over truth, in the present state of the world, is to be found in the manifest repugnance against the latter, that seems almost universal among men, which can only be accounted for by the lapsed condition of humanity. This is well expressed in the words of Him who spake as never man spake—“Men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil”—the

sense of which is, that men *love error more than truth*, "because their deeds are evil." Here we have a clue to the understanding of what would otherwise appear an inexplicable paradox, that some men, who seem to be endowed with liberal parts, and a capacity for reasoning well on many subjects, nevertheless, fall into atheism, and conclude against the existence of a Supreme Being—"their deeds are evil." They desire to believe that there is no God in existence, who will judge all men according to their works; and so, as the wish is father of the thought, they may succeed, at length, in actually persuading themselves that there is no God.

They do not arrive at this conclusion from a careful and candid examination of the evidence in the case. They refuse to look at the proof, because they do not wish to be convinced. They may be said to be in the condition of a man who has put out his own eyes, to keep from seeing the light. In this state of mind, and with this disposition, they catch at false appearances, or whatever may seem to their blurred vision, to indicate that there is no God; and they pervert these false appearances into arguments, for the purpose of satisfying themselves and others, of a like disposition with themselves, that there is no God. It is a common but very true adage that says:

"A man convinced against his will,  
Is of the same opinion still."

But here is where *voluntariness* or moral agency comes in. It is not the philosophic act of believing or not believing, in view of evidence clearly perceived; for that, as before explained, is an involuntary, and

necessary act of the mind. But when a man, for any reason, refuses to look at evidence, that *refusal is a voluntary act*, and that is where the guilt or the demerit lies. If the atheist is to be condemned, it will not be so much for his want of credence, as because he wilfully and persistently refused to look at the evidence, which would have produced belief, if he had permitted himself to see it. The Poet says:

“An undevout astronomer is mad.”

With equal truth it may be said that an undevout chemist is mad—an undevout anatomist is mad—or an undevout botanist is mad. For the whole organic universe constitutes one grand argument, that demonstrates the existence of a God. There is not a grain of sand on the seashore—not a wing of the tiniest insect that cuts the unseen and ambient air—nor a leaflet that flutters on the trees of the boundless forest, that does not afford evidence of the wisdom and handy work of God. As said St. Paul:

*“For the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead.”*

This argument from design is one that must stand as long as the visible frame of the universe. By it Plato, and Socrates, and tens of thousands of the wisest and best men, in all ages and countries, were convinced, and led to the worship of the Great Author of nature. And they shall stand up as witnesses in the last day against modern materialists, who, we must believe, have willingly made themselves blind.

For the same reason that some men deny the existence of a God, others deny the truth of his word. The Bible condemns their evil practices, requiring holiness of heart and life, and therefore, they have no wish to believe it true. They reject the Bible, not on any intrinsic evidence that it is false—for they have not examined the evidence—they know nothing about it—but some scoffer, like Voltaire or Paine, has said that it is a book of fables and lies, and they are willing to take his word that it is so, because they are willing to believe the Bible false.

Let any intelligent and candid person sit down, to a patient and thorough examination of the facts and evidence which sustain the truth of the Bible, and that immutable law of evidence, governing all belief, will bind him in a firm belief of God's word. The effect would be similar to that, once experienced by two noted sceptics of England. They had mutually agreed to frame, each, an argument against the Scriptures. One took for his subject, the supposed miraculous conversion of the apostle Paul, and the other the supposed resurrection of Christ from the dead. Their purpose was to prove both these accounts false. But when they met again, to compare notes and the results of their labors, it was found that both of them had become convinced of the truth of the Bible. That very investigation, and searching for evidence, by which they proposed to overthrow the Bible, had carried such irresistible conviction to their minds, of the truth of the Sacred volume, that they changed their views, and became afterward, eminent Christians, and able defenders of the faith they once assailed.

The law of belief is a universal law, and can admit of no exceptions. It would be quite as impossible to disbelieve Christianity, after a clear and full view of the evidence on which it rests, as it would be to disbelieve that the city of Babylon once existed, or that Julius Cæsar once lived, and swayed the destinies of Rome, or to disbelieve any other fact or proposition thoroughly established by evidence.

In order to believe anything intellectually, the only process necessary is to get at the testimony. If the testimony exists, a wise man will search for it. If the proposition to be believed involves life, or happiness, or even the destiny of the soul itself, he will search for it. If the evidence exists, he will not give over the search, nor even think life too long to be devoted to the study, if he may find the truth, and obtain Heaven at last.

It may be added here, that a neglect of this law of belief, as well as every other law of God, has its penalty. It is surely followed by ignorance and blindness—and ignorance we know to be the parent of nearly all the ills of this life. Whoever shall believe a lie, whether wilfully or ignorantly, must, in due time, in some form or other, suffer the penalty. I mean to say, that, whoever shall believe a lie—or believe without evidence, or contrary to evidence, sins against this moral constitution of God, and the penalty for every such transgression is just as certain, as that connected with any violation of the law of gravity, in the material world.

V. The foregoing propositions, as they have been stated and defended, lay the foundation for the fifth

and last proposition, namely: that in the conflict which has been going on in the world, between light and darkness—between truth and error, truth is to be finally victorious, and light and knowledge are to cover the earth. Glorious consummation! This is what is promised and predicted! And the laws are in force, and the machinery now in operation, which insure this consummation.

There is something truly sublime in the contemplation of the grand march of improvement, that has marked this 19th. era, in which we live. There has been no age in the past like it. Christianity is the agency, not philosophy. The Bible is the ark that bears Christianity, and Christianity is the power that is converting the world, because it is the embodiment of truth—living, sacred, and eternal truth.

Let rationalists continue to weave their fine-spun webs of sophistry, and talk of the fancied triumphs of "science falsely so called," and the end of all superstition, there is a King, whose triumphal forward march they cannot retard nor oppose—it is "the King of kings"—Jesus—whom they affect to despise as an impostor. But if He was an impostor, why is it that after eighteen centuries, the most enlightened and powerful nations in the world, own Him as their Lord and King? If He was an impostor, how do they explain it, that the system of fanaticism and falsehood, as they must view it, which He originated, is still marching forward, overturning, one after another, the old institutions, and the systems of philosophy that had grown venerable for their antiquity?

No, the nations are becoming more and more

convinced, that, as a great philosopher once said of the Bible, "It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without mixture of error for its matter."

Time was, when the spirit of free inquiry was almost totally suppressed, and when the key of knowledge was taken away from the people. They were slaves then, and despotism forged chains of ignorance to hold them still in bondage. But the spirit of liberty is living now; and it spurns the hateful bondage, throws off the galling fetters, and asserts the original dignity and divinity of the soul, proclaiming its allegiance to God alone.

That spirit of liberty was born of the Gospel of Jesus. It was that which gave to the world its first martyrs, and made stout men, and delicate women willing to go to the stake, and to death in every form, rather than to be slaves. It was that spirit which sent the pious pilgrims, and the persecuted Huguenots from the realms of tyranny in the old world, to plant the colonies of the new, that they might have freedom to worship God, according to the dictates of their own conscience.

It is the same spirit of truth and holiness, that is grappling with error now, in all its forms. This is the great and last conflict, but let it go on. The final issue is not doubtful. The spirit of freedom is the very soul of truth. "If the truth make you free, ye shall be free indeed." What words! No human sage or philosopher ever uttered such a sentence. The progress of truth in the world, and the progress of true liberty, must be cotemporaneous, and co-extensive.

In closing this chapter, I have to say, that, the principles I have endeavored to set forth, amount to nothing more than a few simple, plain axioms, which appear to me self-evident, and which may be briefly stated, thus :

1. Belief rests on evidence.
2. Belief is impossible without evidence.
3. Belief is necessary in all cases, when the evidence is conclusive, and is clearly before the mind.
4. All truth is contained in the two volumes of Nature and Revelation.
5. Man has been furnished with a faculty—reason—which capacitates him for exploring these volumes of truth.
6. If he fails, from indisposition or indifference, to search for the truth, this is a voluntary act of the mind, and in this his responsibility consists.
7. As all truth is attested and supported by evidence, and as error lacks this support, there is a certainty, that, in the end, truth will gain the ascendancy over error.

This, in brief, is our system of mental philosophy. This summation of principles touching the laws of belief, is not in opposition to any of the commonly admitted principles, not even the philosophic axiom of Mr. Owen, that “no man has the power of belief or disbelief at his will.” On the contrary, I admit the proposition, and on the absolute truth of it, I have predicated the doctrine of man’s moral responsibility.

The laws of belief which have been unfolded, are applicable, alike, to the investigation of physical, men-



tal, and moral science. They are of such a nature as to insure the final prevalence of Christianity throughout the world. This is our hope and our joy, amid the storms and conflicts, and the opposition through which the militant hosts of Christ, have had to press their onward, but ever upward march.

There has been, as it appears to us now, a twilight of knowledge—a dim twilight of Christianity—and for several ages, the world has been circling around in that twilight. But now, the sun of righteousness seems clear above the horizon, and the full orb of his glory is beginning to be seen. How the beautiful radiance of his beams once shot forth, and played, and danced from hill-top to hill-top, in the first three centuries, till Palestine, and all Asia Minor and Greece, and imperial Rome, became luminous with the light thereof, and their sublime systems of mythology, the growth of a thousand years, melted away, almost like snow before the tropical sun. And long ago, the whole earth would have been resplendent in that light, if there had been nothing to “*let*” or “*hinder*.”

## SUPPLEMENT.

### *The Intuitional Philosophy.*

The Intuitional Philosophy teaches, that there are certain primary truths or beliefs, which are innate—which are independent of all experience—which we bring into the world with us, and which even belong to the structure, or the plan of the soul itself. Sometimes they speak of these original beliefs, as “the moral law written in the heart.” Sometimes they call

this original law "*a revelation.*" Thus, the Rev. Joseph Cook said in his lectures :

"The necessary beliefs, or perceptions of self-evident truths are a part of the *original Revelation*, given to the soul by its Author, in the very plan, according to which it exists and acts."

Mr. Cook may not have designed to inculcate the idea of fatalism or necessity, but it is implied in his words. For how can any soul—how can any man help believing those self-evident truths or beliefs, which form a part of the original Revelation, given to the soul by its Author, in the very plan or constitution of its nature, according to which it exists and acts? Such a sentiment is utterly subversive of the idea of moral accountability.

Again, Mr. Cook says :

"The necessary beliefs of the intellect and conscience, are the supreme and final tests of truth."

These are the words of Mr. Cook—that which is necessary is unavoidable—and if a man's beliefs are unavoidable, in what sense is he free, or accountable? But the worst of it is, that these necessary beliefs which belong to the soul, prior to all experience, are made "*the supreme and final tests of truth!*" A Christian always makes the Word of God the supreme and final test. But here, a man's natural intuitions are made the final test. Thus, they make *the inner revelation*—the man's own intuitional ideas superior to the revealed law, as the final test of truth.

This is the very essence of rationalism. Every rationalist expounds the Bible by the inner light of

his conscience—by the revelation which he thinks was originally inscribed on his heart. Dr. Channing, the prince of Unitarians, held the very same philosophy, as witness the following :

“We must start in religion from our own souls ; for in them is the fountain of all divine truth. Outward revelation is only possible and intelligible, on the ground of conceptions and principles previously furnished by the soul. Here is our primitive teacher and light.”

One who adopts this philosophy, is necessarily a rationalist and a sceptic, and he is made so by his philosophy. It was this philosophy which led Channing, Theodore Parker, Immanuel Kant, Goethe, Emerson, Robt. Owen, and other great intellects away from the Bible. They all believed that they had the fountain of truth within themselves, and that the outward revelation was only to be expounded by that inner light, in their own souls.

Sir Wm. Hamilton, who belonged to the same school of metaphysicians, complained that the doctrine of intuitive beliefs, was generally perverted, and that few or no philosophers have been content consistently to follow the dictates of consciousness, *i. e.*, the intuitive beliefs of the mind. He says, that, in philosophy men have abused the code of natural revelation, as in theology, they have abused the positive revelation. Probably Mr. Cook followed Mr. Hamilton, in calling the intuitive or necessary beliefs of the soul, “*a revelation.*” But Mr. Hamilton complained that this perversion of the original or natural revelation of truth

in the soul, has led to "the multiplication of philosophical systems, in every conceivable aberration from the unity of truth." Yet he consoled himself with the hope that the same causes, still acting, might produce better fruit for philosophy in the future—not a very logical ground of hope, as we should say. With good reason he complained:

"Each dogmatic speculator looked into his own consciousness"—the "natural revelation," as he elsewhere speaks of it—"to discover his preadopted opinions." And then he makes this astonishing admission—"how, it is asked, do these primary propositions—these fundamental facts, feelings, beliefs certify us of their own veracity? To this the only possible answer is, that, as elements of our constitution—as the essential conditions of our knowledge, they must by us be accepted as true."

No reason—no proof can be given—the only possible answer is, we must accept them as true. Is that a philosophical mode of reasoning?

The Kantian philosophy, or modern rationalism, is a superstructure built on this fundamental error of an original code of beliefs written on the natural heart. Unitarianism stands on the same foundation. Pantheism, materialism, and every philosophical system of "aberration from the unity of truth," as Mr. Hamilton justly complained, can be traced to this fundamental error.

There are many insuperable objections to this form of philosophy, which I will now specify in order:

1. And first, it admits of no proof. It is a system

without any foundation—a house built upon the sand. How can any one know that there is a code of morals—a system of intuitive beliefs wrought into the plan and texture of the soul as a part of its nature by the Creator? The advocates of the theory do not pretend to know it. At the best, it is only a speculation. We have seen what Sir Wm. Hamilton says, in answer to the question, how do these fundamental facts, feelings, beliefs certify us of their veracity? “that the only possible answer is, that, as elements of our constitution—as the essential conditions of our knowledge, they must by us be accepted as true.” That is simply to say, *it is so because it is so*, and no other answer is possible. It is as if Sir William had said, *we do not*, and we cannot know these assumed axioms or primitive beliefs to be true—and no one ever did, or ever will know that any soul, and that every soul has been furnished with an internal revelation of moral truths, inscribed on the soul itself, as a part of its original constitution. Sir Wm. Hamilton, it is believed, brought more learning to the advocacy of this speculative philosophy, than any other single author who has written in defence of it, and if he felt bound to admit that no possible reason can be assigned, why we must accept it as true, we hardly need go further to find any plausible defence of the theory.

2. The theory is entirely indefinite as to what primitive truths, axioms or beliefs are thus wrought into the texture of the soul. Hence the advocates of the theory are wholly at variance among themselves. Hence also, the just complaint of Mr. Hamilton, when he said:

“In philosophy, men have abused the code of natural, as in theology the code of positive revelation; and the epigram of a great Protestant divine, on the book of Scripture, is certainly not less applicable to the book of consciousness :

“ *Hic liber in quo quærit sua dogmata quisque,  
Invent, et pariter dogmata quisque sua.* ”

Every man goes to the Bible to find his own opinions there, not to learn what he ought to believe. And so, admitting that there is another authoritative book—the book of consciousness—every one will treat it in the same way—will look into it to find arguments for opinions and notions previously adopted, not to learn what he ought to believe.

Hence, there can never be any agreement among these philosophers, as to what has been written in this book of consciousness. Every philosopher will have his own system. They cannot absolutely agree on any one principle as a first truth, made known to them by the inner revelation. President McCosh, for example, has found that the idea of God is spontaneous to every mind; and that we get even a more perfect idea of His being, especially of His infinity, from the book of consciousness, than from the external Revelation. But what would Ralph Waldo Emerson say to this? He, it is known, is a pantheist. If President McCosh and Mr. Emerson have both been favored with this inner revelation, why is one a pantheist, and the other an orthodox Christian? If there exists, in every mind an original and true idea of God, what is the reason that they differ so widely in their systems of philosophy, one advocating the

existence of a personal God, and the other as strenuously opposing any such idea? Is it because one or the other, or both of them have failed to read aright this book of consciousness? If that answer should be admitted, then we must say, in vain was it written. For no intelligent being could ever hope to read it, if Ralph Waldo Emerson and President McCosh have utterly failed.

Mr. Cook asks, "how are we to justify anything like clearness of thought in ethical philosophy, unless we can justify these fundamental beliefs, which materialism itself takes for granted, but with which it plays fast and loose?" Yes, that is it—plays fast and loose—just the complaint made by Sir Wm. Hamilton. But how could this always happen, if the fundamental beliefs are so very clear? Does Mr. Cook himself hold a single fundamental belief in common with materialists, which is independent of all experience, and all previous education?

There is no belief, axiom, or first truth, on which all these philosophers can agree, as being intuitional or spontaneous to the mind.

3. This leads to the consideration of a third objection to this speculative philosophy. It makes conscience the higher law. Every rationalist will say that conscience is the higher law, and more authoritative than any positive law. And why? Because it speaks within us—we are conscious of it—we cannot be mistaken—and therefore, we know it must speak truth. So they reason. But of the written or positive law, we cannot be equally sure. It may, or it may not be true. And we are not certain that we rightly

interpret it. But the voice that speaks within us we cannot misinterpret. And if God is the author of both, we must follow that which we are sure that we understand. So reasoned Kant—so reasoned Channing, and all others who have listened most attentively to this Delphic oracle, speaking alone from the depths of the human heart—that heart which, as the Holy Scriptures teach, is “deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.”

No, there is no greater absurdity conceivable than this philosophic opinion, that conscience is the higher law, and that this has been furnished with certain original and necessary beliefs, of higher authority even than the positive law. Take a man who is no religionist at all—who was brought up under no religious system, like John Stuart Mill, for example: and he may be a naturalist—a rationalist—a philosopher—and most assuredly he will believe in the Intuitional Philosophy—but he cannot have the same conscience as a Christian, a Jew, a Turk, or any other religionist. He will not find written in the book of consciousness, the same moral and necessary beliefs as the Christian, the Jew, or any other religionist thinks he finds written there.

4. Another serious objection to this system of philosophy, is the confusion of ideas of which it must ever be the prolific source, in Church and State. Whenever a man appeals to the inner light, or the higher law—to his own consciousness, there is no further argument with him. He cannot listen to argument. What he believes, he knows to be true, because he thinks there is an inner voice that tells



him it is true. Now how can we argue against that inner voice—that soul-voice, as some one has called it? How is it possible to reason against that? The dictates of that inner consciousness must, by him, be accepted as true, though he can give no reason. And if the man is wrong, it must be impossible for him ever to be undeceived.

Every one will interpret the meaning of the inner voice by the circumstances that surround him, by the bias of his mind received in the course of his early training, and especially by the natural instincts, that lead almost every individual to pursue the path in life dictated by self-interest. For these are the sources from which all these so-called spontaneous truths and innate beliefs spring. They could not have been implanted in the mind by an all-wise and unerring God!

Probably no greater natural philosopher has ever arisen, in ancient or in modern times, than Aristotle. He was a philosopher of nature, and he was a philosopher by nature. But a Christian philosopher, whose mind has been but partially illuminated by the rays of heavenly truth, would be ashamed even to have it known that he adopted as self-evident truths and axioms, many of the philosophical and moral axioms laid down as natural and intuitive beliefs, by that justly celebrated and profound philosopher. His genius has made his name to live through more than twenty centuries. And if there are any modern philosophers, who can read the laws of nature more clearly than did that extraordinary man, it is because a light has come into their understandings, not from nature alone, nor from inner consciousness, but from the illuminated pages of God's Holy Word.

5. The theory under review, is dishonoring to the Supreme Creator, as it implies an impeachment of His infinite Wisdom, in having written a law on the hearts of all men, as they say, to guide them into the knowledge of truth, but which has utterly failed of its purpose, and which never leads nor guides any man in the way of truth. How infinitely dishonoring to God, to hold a system which implies that He has made such a mistake, or such a failure!

There is no mistake in the written volume—the positive revelation. In the volume of nature there is no mistake. All his works are truth. If they should say that the inner revelation is free from mistakes, but that men fail in the reading of that revelation, this would not remove the difficulty. For if God has given a revelation, written in the inner consciousness of every man, which He knew that no man would ever be able to read or understand, that would be the greatest mistake of all.

6. Another objection to this theory, is the fact that it is illogical in its method, and in its fundamental statements. The language in which its propositions are stated is inconsistent and unphilosophical, and therefore, calculated to mislead. What do they mean, for example, when they speak of an intuition, as “a faculty of the soul”; or of a necessary belief, as “a capacity or power to believe”? and of a fundamental perception, as “a capacity of the soul to perceive”? Is not this a confounding of things, which are separate and distinct in their nature? A belief, and the power to believe are two things—a perception, and the capacity to perceive, are not the same, no more than

the eye that sees, and the light that is seen are the same.

There is not clearness in their statements, and there is, evidently, a confusion of ideas in their minds, in reasoning on the subject. Mr. Cook said, in one of his lectures:

“When we hear the noise of the falling-water, or the hiss of the steam which drives a loom, we do not confuse the force of these agents, with that of the weaver.”

That is a clear and a true statement; and yet, in the same lecture, he makes the following statement:

“Among the faculties of the soul, provided for in the plan which antedates the germ of the body, are the perceptions of self-evident truths, both intellectual and moral.”

Here he calls the faculties of the soul, *perceptions*—“the perceptions of self-evident truths.” This is not clear, or, at least, not logical nor philosophical. The word, *perception*, refers to, or is expressive of *an act* of the soul. But the soul, and *an act of the* soul are not the same. The soul remembers, thinks, wills, reflects—but these several acts of remembering, thinking, willing and reflecting, are not, one nor all, the soul, no more than cause and effect are one and the same. The soul has its endowments or faculties, which enable it to perform certain acts or operations; but we cannot confound the faculties of the soul and the acts it performs, no more than we should confuse the weaver with the steam, and the water power he uses to produce certain effects.

Again, there is a want of logical accuracy in the statement, that "the necessary beliefs of the intellect and conscience are, therefore, in the original plan of the soul." We are at a loss whether to call this *philosophy*, or an old metaphysical speculation, such as, in the mediæval times, made the university halls resound with noisy declamation.

What is a necessary belief? Have any of this late school of metaphysicians ever defined what they mean by a *necessary belief*? I must say, I have never seen such a definition; but this may be my fault.

I affirm only a self-evident proposition, when I say, that, if antecedent to all experience, there are intuitive beliefs in the mind, then there must be, likewise, intuitive perceptions of the propositions believed, and intuitive perceptions of the evidence which is the foundation of these several beliefs, as there is no belief without evidence. The mere statement of this difficulty shows that the theory is self-contradictory and absurd. For no one ever did believe, and no one can believe, in reality, and while in the possession of all his faculties, that such complicated processes of thought are going on in the chambers of every infantile soul, that comes into the world. There can be no belief without something to believe, and no act or process of belief without evidence, as this is the law of belief. This is our mental philosophy.

7. This speculative philosophy, making certain primitive beliefs, created in the plan and texture of the soul, the final tests of all truth, must ever prove a barrier to the progress of knowledge and truth in the world. The tests are uncertain, and more likely

to lead to error than to the discovery of truth. They are subversive of the *Inductive Method*, and we could not hope for better results than when it was the prevailing philosophy before the times of Bacon and Locke. They philosophised—and they speculated and philosophised—and that was all; just as the philosophers speculate now.

No system of science or truth can be erected on a *Speculation*. Every system of truth known to us that has a foundation, has been established on the Inductive Method. Christianity itself is established on the Inductive Method, and built on this foundation, it is destined to prevail, and to become the science of the world. The fall of man is a great fact—a fundamental truth. The atonement for sin is a great fact. The Resurrection of Christ is a great fact. And all these facts are established by such an array of evidence, that disbelief becomes absolutely impossible, when that evidence is duly weighed and considered.

We see then, how, in this regard, all men stand upon the same level. One is just as much bound to believe as another, when they have reached the evidence. If there is a plan in the soul, this is the plan; and this is the law which is to govern it in every attainment of knowledge. But this law is in exact harmony with the nature of moral government. It does not subvert the doctrine of Free-will and free-agency, by supposing a system of necessary beliefs.

This plan which I have tried to make clear to the comprehension of the most ordinary reader, requires every man to form his own creed, by the diligent use of his faculties, in the search for truth, and in exploring the evidence on which it is supported.

If, on the other hand, we accept the doctrine of intuitive beliefs—necessary beliefs—which are without experience, and in no sense depend on the exercise of reason, but exist prior to reason or experience—if we adopt this system, at once the door is opened for every form of error, that can be imagined. Witness the admissions of the Rev. Joseph Cook, in one of his Boston lectures :

“Let us with the faith of Emerson, with the insight of Theodore Parker, with the acuteness of John Stuart Mill, as well as with the deadly precision of Kant, and of all clear and devout souls since the world began, hold unalterably in this age of unrest and orphanage, that, if these four quadrants agree, we may implicitly trust them as tests of truth.”

Now here are given the names of four representative men ; and we may say that Mr. Cook is, himself, the fifth, who all trusted, or do implicitly trust the four quadrants named by him, as tests of truth. And these five men represent just five different and conflicting systems of belief! What are the so-called quadrants worth?

It has not been an agreeable task to the author, to expose the false theories of men, who have occupied so largely the attention of the world. But he can only say, that as he is old, and his work must be nearly done ; and as he is conscious that he has aimed only to subserve the interests of truth, he has no apology to make for what he has written. We shall all stand at last, before the one infallible tribunal.









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